
Portland Friends of the Dhamma

Board Meeting Minutes

September 20, 2017
At 1404 SE 25th Ave, Portland, OR

Directors Present: Greg Satir (Chair), Charla Chamberlain, Kristen Saxton, Sakula (Spiritual Director), Stephanie Allderdice

Officers Present: Tena Hoke (Secretary), Alistair Williamson (Vice Chair), Bonnie Wilson (Treasurer)

Community Members Present: Tom Lockett, Chad Lublin, Matt Pulcini, Beth Linkenhoker, Robin Donovan, Jeanette Mena, Steve Diamond, Doug Faneuil

The meeting convened at 6:40 with a brief meditation guided by Sakula.

A quorum was declared, with 5 of 5 Directors present.

The agenda was approved.

Vision Statement Exercise. Robin led the meeting attendees through an exercise in which each person stated their greatest hope (if money were not an object) and fear for the future of PFOD.

Five-year Expense Forecast. Greg reviewed the five-year budget forecast. The difference in projected expenses between this year (\$88,000) and five years out (2022 - \$132,000) is \$44,000 – dividing by 5 years gives an increase of \$8,800 per year, which should certainly be achievable. This forecast will be available for review during the budgeting process; aside from that, there is no set date for revisiting this.

Planning for 2018. Greg explained how planning was accomplished last year, and he introduced a similar process for this year. Everyone wrote ideas on sticky notes for Board projects to consider for the coming year (ideas and suggestions for programming were not part of this process, as programming is Sakula's purview and not the Board's), and placed them in one of eight categories on the wall. Each idea was then briefly reviewed to make sure it was properly understood. Ideas that were similar were grouped together. Voting was accomplished with 3 red dots (project to be done this year) and 2 green dots (project to be done within three years) per person. The result is shown on the last page of these minutes. At the next Board meeting the highest ranking projects will be prioritized.

Spiritual Director's Report.

Completed

- I've arranged with Luang Por Pasanno to join in the Kathina and to check in with him regarding programming here at PFoD and get feedback on my role as a Lay Minister of Abhayagiri.
- Jessica's three month trial period review has taken place. I will be reporting on that in detail in a moment.
- The weekend retreat with Cator was very well received. The attendance suffered due to (I believe) it being Labor Day weekend and another daylong event happening elsewhere.

Cator has agreed to come again next year and in looking at scheduling her in for winter time rather than the fall, I'm looking at her possible return for 2019.

- My 63rd birthday coincided with the Sunday Sila program. Jessica brought the kids upstairs to sing me happy birthday, the adults chimed right in. I found this very touching. One of the children asked me what I hoped to get for my birthday which inspired me to share with the community that at this age it's just as fun to give presents on my birthday as receive them so I invited folks to join me in giving dana to the Pacific Hermitage for the Pah Bah. The following weekend I was able to deliver \$1,206 to the Pah Bah.
- The visit from Luang Por Pasanno, Ajahn Siripanno and the Pacific Hermitage monks went as smoothly as any event here at PFOD. Luang Por was very pleased with how many folks were involved in the seamless care of the monastics.

On Going

- Ajahn Sudanto and I are considering his visits for next year. We hope to get those pinned down within the next several weeks. Ajahn has been invited to consider adding more Sunday Sila/Kids programming events into his jaunts into Portland.
- Progress on the Website and the Youtube channel is slow. Regarding the Website, I'm re-evaluating how I prioritize new design with feet-on-the-ground assistance. Regarding the Youtube channel, with the upgraded system of our audio there has come some technical challenges which has led to a lack of recordings for August. James Gregg is keeping me informed as he addresses the issue.
- Programs may be moved around a bit coming January/February due to possible travel to Britain to attend to family matters.

Jessica has done a phenomenal job with the Children's Program, resulting in increased PFOD attendance by families. She has been tracking her time, and including the Sunday on-site time, it takes about seven hours per week to conduct the program. She will continue to run the program until one year is up. Prior to the Board meeting, Jessica and Sakula reviewed Jessica's report, which Sakula in turn delivered to the Board:

Report from Jessica

I can't believe what we have accomplished in just 18 classes. We have served approximately 10 to 14 participants each week, or about made 200 kid connections since May. We have had about 30 individual children come through our program from nearly 20 families.

We have connected with our Buddhist lineage through the celebration of Vesak Day, practicing bowing, caring for our altar, practicing the traditional meal offering, learning about the paramis and the four requisites, short meditations, and directly serving the monks.

We have connected with the larger community through the collecting, assembling and distributing blessing bags to those less fortunate than we are, leading a meditation at the community gathering and tea social, making thank you cards for our zafus, hosting the monks together, and making offerings at the Pah Bah. We are preparing for a Walk for the Hungry for Buddhist Global Relief.

We have connected with families and parents through a weekly email listing the successes and challenges of the previous week, what kids can expect each week and long term future plans. Parents are encouraged to connect with me each week, and we often connect individually in person and by email as needed. Parents have signed up to volunteer in the classroom, taken part in larger projects such as the blessing bags and monks' visit, and offered supplies and weekly snacks to share.

We have addressed classroom management and engagement with a routine that the kids follow each week and have worked directly on participation, transitions, voice volume, appropriate games and activities, reinforcing positive behavior and cultivating multi-age harmony.

Two other quiet stories of “success”:

- One family has committed to come together on Sundays for a year, and their older kids will help with the younger kids downstairs
- One family has transitioned their youngest children into the program, though it took a month of practicing together downstairs with mom present

Challenges and goals:

- Creating an engaging environment and programming for teens and tweens through service and age-appropriate activities
- Ensuring parent volunteers when needed downstairs
- Incorporating movement and kid-friendly meditations
- Continuing to beautify and make functional the classroom space
- Obtaining appropriate training and certifications
- Increasing safety with door chimes and other measures

Auction Report. Kristen has gathered 5 donations so far for the auction. Additional publicity is needed. Robin volunteered to help Kristen with the ask. Charla volunteered to talk through making the plan with Kristen. Sakula gave Kristin the go-ahead to ask former donors if they will donate again.

Sustainable Operations / Cleaning the Center. Sakula presented this report on the work by the committee that was gathering information for the Head of Operations role:

Head of Operations Sub-Committee - identify the level of interest and capacity within our Organization for a Head of Operations Role and recommend next step

What we did

- Produced a flyer to both 1) inform the community of a new opportunity to serve our community was in process of being structured and 2) invite folks to participate in the forming of this new role by seeking what talents they might have to bring to the table.
- The invitation was intentionally vague in hopes that folks would consider how they might contribute as volunteers while we design this new role rather than to put out a specific job description for someone to match.
- The flyer was made, sent out to the egroup and set out in the Shrine room. Announcements about the volunteer opportunity and the flyers were made for one month following our gatherings.

Here is the outcome

- Four people responded; Steve, Doug, Michael and Beth.
- Steve sent in his resume and later declined involvement due to a new job and a new volunteer opportunity to work on a book with Ajahn Sudanto.
- Doug offered to help design the Operations role though is too busy at this time to take on the role itself.
- Micheal sent in his resume and offered to share his experience in working with volunteers.
- Beth sent in her resume and offered to help in several ways.

Recommendation for Next Step

- This committees recommends the Board be sent this report and carry on discussion and determinations via email.

- Having completed our purpose this Sub-committee deems itself now dissolved.

Following this report there was discussion on the short-term need to ensure the building is cleaned regularly, resulting in consensus on the following:

RESOLVED: That someone be hired to do cleaning for the next 7 weeks, and that the Board work out the details (who, how much, etc.) by email.

Action Item Review and Calendar Update. All action items from the previous meeting's minutes were completed. The following items have been modified:

- **Action item Tena** – By the February 2018 Board meeting have agreed with Sakula on the questions to be asked for her informal review.

Minutes Approval. The minutes from the previous meeting held July 19, 2017 were approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45.

Additional Decisions Approved by E-Mail

The following proposal regarding **cleaning the center** put forward by Greg was unanimously approved by email on October 15:

The Board welcomes Beth's offer to:

- Clean the upstairs through the end of 2017
- Create a system to sign up cleaning volunteers for November and December - likely using Signup Genius
- Reach out to all Team/Committee heads to offer to add their needs to that signup system
- Reach out to Sakula about communicating this system to the community

The Board will continue to discuss (likely at the next Board meeting):

- How to ensure the downstairs stays clean
- Next steps on a Head of Operations

The following proposal put forward by Sakula / Greg / Kristen was unanimously approved by email on October 16:

We would like to propose **dedicating 50% of the live auction proceeds go directly toward supporting the Abhayagiri community** and specifically, the lay community. The intention is to support those who have been long-time supporters of Abhayagiri and are now suffering major losses. Also, we would like to add a tab on the auction site allowing people to donate directly to this fund.

Result of Sept Meeting - Planning for 2018

Planning, Budgeting and Evaluating Organization

- ANNUAL PLANNING & BUDGETING (FALL)
- ANNUAL ORG. REVIEW
- Begin 3 to 5yr Planning
- 10 YEAR PLAN
- FIVE YEAR PLAN
- Community Growth Plan
- Develop Plan to Market Pfd
- Connect daily activities to Vision Statement by mapping a strategic plan for the next 5yr (knowing what the what year do at all times)

Ensuring Adequate Finances

- ANNUAL & MIDYEAR APPEALS
- AUCTION
- ANNUAL FUNDRAISING PLAN
- RENTAL COORDINATOR
- Raise Rent to Lessees
- Collaborate with a business - projects that support us
- MAJOR DONOR CAMPAIGN
- Fundraising Committee
- add Fundraising Co-ordinator
- MORE DIRECTED ASKS (SOLs)
- SATURDAY RENTAL COORD
- add cleaning fees to rentals
- Develop outreach program w/ FCCU (Community Support Unit)

Supporting the Spiritual Director

- ANNUAL COMPENSATION REVIEW
- ADMIN ASSISTANT
- ANNUAL SD REVIEW
- Make SD review confidential
- SCHEDULED PERSONAL RETREATS
- Support For Further Training
- COMMUNICATIONS ASST
- COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR
- SUPPORT SUSTAINABILITY OF SD JOB (ie: succession plan)
- PAY INCREASE

Developing Operational Systems

- Designated greeters + contact person for questions
- Software
- Donor Database
- Get a few librarians/baker
- VOLUNTEER entry orientations
- Social Media Planning/Calendar
- Volunteer Appreciation program
- FIND A HEAD OF OPERATIONS
- Develop Volunteer Structure
- Make note about practice days

Developing Board Capacity

- Celebrate Completion of 1yr planning goal
- ANNUAL BOARD ELECTIONS
- SYSTEM TO ENSURE FOLLOW-THRU
- INCREASE SIZE OF BOARD
- BOARD WELCOME PACKET
- Board Succession Plan
- Develop Continuity Plan
- Board Retreat weekend/work
- Board Retreat weekends/EVW
- Board Trainings
- Board - Bi-annual - facilitator/consultant
- Meeting treat Coordinator
- Develop best practice - Sharing relationships with other Synops
- FILTER SOME BOARD JOBS INTO SUB COMMITTEES
- Develop Committee Structure

Building Maintenance and Improvement

- HAVE A BUILDING COMMITTEE
- Plan for big bldg issue
- Designated maintenance person
- PLAN FOR HEAT PUMP
- HEAT PUMP
- Reserve the kitchen
- Test for lead in water
- Test for mold
- Test for radon
- Reserve/redecorate the lower-level common room
- have joint event with other operators to build cooperation

Engaging the Community in Governance

- ANNUAL COMMUNITY MEETING
- INVITE PEOPLE TO FALL PLANNING/BUDGETING
- Develop consistent PERIODIC FINANCIAL REPORTING TO SHARE (TRANSPARENCY)
- Have tea-time
- Develop broader mechanism for COMMUNITY feedback

OFFICER & Misc. Responsibilities

- HAVE A BOOKKEEPING TEAM
- REVIEW FINANCES
- FILING WITH STATE
- DRAFT Bookkeeping Policies & Procedures
- yearly Benefit for Org Beyond PFD
- Community Outreach
- Ways to Serve