

Sacramento Insight Meditation, Inc.
Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 20, 2015
Sacramento Friends Meeting House
890 57th Street
Sacramento, CA 95819

The Board of Directors of Sacramento Insight Meditation, Inc. (SIM) held its scheduled in-person Board meeting on Tuesday, January 20, 2015, at the Sacramento Friends Meeting House, 890 57th Street, Sacramento, California. Board members in attendance were Rich Howard (President), Laura Rosenthal (Vice President), Lynelle McNiel (Secretary, by telephone), Brian McKinsey, and Barbara Colton (by telephone). Board Members Georgianne Turner (Treasurer) and Sandra Sigrist were absent. The meeting began at approximately 7:00 pm.

Board President Rich Howard, who presided at the meeting, distributed an agenda. A record of the important actions taken during the meeting follows. The numbering system in these Minutes follows that of the Board Agenda, as modified at the meeting.

Discussion Items:

1. Approval of November and December 2014 Minutes; production of September minutes:

Action taken: Approved December minutes as amended and sent to Board members via email by Lynelle McNiel; deferred November minutes pending incorporation of suggested changes.

The board will request that Sandra Sigrist finalize the November minutes and produce hard copy of the previously-approved September minutes for the Secretary and the website.

2. SDC Representative Report/Q&A

Joette Sebastiani, one of SIM's three representatives on the Sacramento Dharma Center (SDC) Board, was in attendance. The board requested that, when possible, all three SIM representatives attend the SIM Board meetings. Joette will communicate this to SIM's other two SDC representatives.

Joette reported that she is very pleased the SDC board is re-energized. The three new SDC Board members (Joette Sebastiani and John Phelps for SIM and Julia Mullen for SBMG) have reviewed old SDC documentation and are working on the strategic plan. At its last meeting, the SDC board assigned members to four newly-configured committees, which are a mix of day-to-day and strategic activities. Joette has asked each committee to assign dates to strategic tasks. Jerry Simkins, SIM's other representative, is staying on the SDC Board, as is Susan Orr (SBMG).

SIM's representatives have communicated to SDC that the SIM board wants to discuss whether there will be at-large members or whether all SDC board members will continue to represent a founding sangha. The SIM board reiterated that, whether or not it will be appropriate to include at-large representatives in the SDC in the long run, SIM currently requests that all three positions continue to represent SIM.

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The SIM board expressed that, in advance of March 1, SIM needs to know whether SIM continues to have three representatives. This cannot be left ambiguous. In the interim, SIM wants to keep the SDC Board structure as it is. All five SIM Board members present in person or by telephone confirmed this message. The idea of at-large representatives on the SDC Board anticipated something that has not come to pass, i.e., the common space for which SDC was created. SDC is not far enough in its activities and evolution to change the structure of its Board membership because the primary task of securing and occupying space has not been accomplished.

The SIM Board also requested that the question of at-large members for the SDC Board be discussed at an ad hoc meeting of the three founding sanghas and SDC. Once SDC is at this stage, the sanghas still need to discuss what it will mean to make the change. For example, would at-large members come from sanghas that were not founding sanghas?

The SIM board formally requested that Jerry Simkins be re-elected to the SDC board as a SIM representative. The SIM Board also reiterated its request that SDC share the final draft of the strategic plan with SIM and the other two founding sanghas in order to get their input before adopting the strategic plan. Joette indicated that this would happen.

The SIM Board agreed to put its formal requests (continuation of three sangha representatives and input into the strategic plan) in writing, in the form of an email message to the SDC representatives.

Concerning other SDC matters, Joette indicated that SDC board is working very hard to establish clear communication and that work and energy are going into ensuring that the SDC Board gels as a team. She also explained that SDC wants to include, on its committees, members of sanghas and other individuals who are not on the SDC Board. They are trying to bring in expertise of various types. The SDC executive committee no longer automatically includes representation from each sangha; it just includes the chair of each committee. Joette also indicated that the current thinking of SDC board is that SDC will either purchase property or will or "lease-to-buy." The straight lease option has been taken off the table. SDC also understands that they need much more money and will continue to raise funds.

3. Replacement for Dalit Program: Deferred. The Board discussed briefly that the Board will need to take prompt action on the short-term decision about where to donate the funds already collected for Dalit. Rich will communicate with Sandra. It would be desirable to have action next month since Rich and Sandra are going off the board. In addition, the Dalit Project Facebook page should already be down and Rich will communicate to make sure that happens. The Board also acknowledged that a decision about the about longer term (i.e., a project to which SIM may want to commit) may arise from greater sangha. However, the Board wants to take action by the February meeting about the Dalit-designated money that SIM already has.

4. Steve Armstrong Retreat

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Lynelle has spoken with Mary Howard, the day-long manager, about the logistics. Registration is proceeding, and Mary has things well in hand. Rich indicated that Mary is getting multiple requests from individuals who want to be in SIM's beginning meditation class. Is there only one registration email for Armstrong, the beginning class, and the residential retreat? Brian confirmed that this is currently the case; the Board agreed that this would be addressed for the future, so that the different registrations would be directed to the correct registrar. Since the Armstrong flyer already has the registrar@sactoinsight.org email address, the flyer will stay as it is and there will be a new email for the beginning class registration: classreg@sactoinsight.org. In addition, there was a glitch as a result of which only a piece of the Armstrong flyer is seen on the website and this will be corrected.

5. Ad Hoc Risk Assessment Committee Update: Deferred.

6. Funds to Repair Thangkas that are in need of repair:

Parts of thangkas are missing, e.g., the place where the silk connects to top rod, and in addition there are missing knobs. Is there a procedure to repair a thangka? Brian has spoken with a few people and they did not know. Rich indicated that the Nepal Shop in Davis does not do this. Lynelle will consult another individual who practices in the Tibetan tradition. There is a thangka shop in Berkeley but they teach how to make thangkas and not necessarily how to fix them. Brian's asked the Board whether we want to investigate the costs of repair. The Board asked Brian to investigate costs and what is possible and to report back to Board with a proposal. The paintings on the thangkas fade but the cover is cosmetic and should look good.

7. Sangha Picnic Pot Luck at East Portal Park on March 21st

Brian indicated that SIM secured East Portal Park for March 21. One community participant wants to be part of the event but not the primary leader. Brian will work with her and with another individual. SIM's reservation at the park is from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Each spot would hold 50 people. The park does not permit alcohol, smoking or amplified speakers. This is on M St. The Board decided that the event will run from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm. This will be primarily a social and community-building event. SIM will fire up the barbecue but will not provide the food. The potluck committee will decide whether to assign dishes by last name or let the event be truly potluck.

SIM's set-up coordinator has let the Board know that SIM has a large store of paper products in the closet at the Sacramento Friends Meetinghouse. Is the Board going to use these for the picnic? The Board also discussed where these items would be stored. There will be further communication with the set-up coordinator.

8. SIM Tote Bags

Laura obtained a catalog from the organization that assisted a sister organization with tote bags. The Board discussed whether SIM tote bags must be able to fit a zafu (meditation cushion) and concluded that this was not necessarily a requirement. However, the Board determined that the totes should have an external space for a water bottle. The Board asked Laura to get a sample

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of a specific bag described in the catalog for the next Board meeting. Does the Board want to order 30 bags at \$14.99 per bag plus set-up and printing costs discussed in the handout Laura provided? The Board will start asking community members on Thursdays whether they want SIM tote bags. If relatively few want the bags, then 30 is a reasonable order; if many people want bags, then the Board will consider a larger order. Laura will bring sample to the next meeting. Lynelle will be quality control on the art work. There will be three colors total but the printing will be only in two colors.

9. Support for Ajahn Brahm visit

Ajahn Bram is coming the week before Steve Armstrong. SIM volunteers are committed to the Armstrong event. SIM would like to support the Ajahn Bram event and can do so in a few ways: (1) SIM can provide a couple of volunteers to help the Sacramento Buddhist Meditation Group (SBMG) set up and take down the Thursday evening event at Congregation B'nai Israel (SBMG's venue). SBMG has most of the set-up and work covered. (2) SBMG is talking about having a tea with Ajahn Bram and the nuns from Dhammadarini. SBMG has asked whether SIM volunteers can help prepare and serve the tea at B'nai Israel. SBMG would do the heavy lifting. (3) Members of the three supporting groups (SBMG, SIM and the ABS monastery) will be asked to the tea. Rich has asked for 4 spots for the tea. The Board discussed which individuals from SIM would attend the tea and would help with set-up after the tea.

What about recording and hearing devices? Rich will speak with SBMG about both.

10. Additional item: The Board agreed to rent the Sacramento Friends Meetinghouse on all Mondays now that they are available. Set-up will be easier for beginning classes, and the Meetinghouse is so much cheaper that it is cost-effective to take all Mondays throughout the year. Rich will communicate to the venue coordinator.

11. Board Nomination Period and Other Matters [Executive Session] The Board held an executive session.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:30 pm.

Next meeting February 17, 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynelle W. McNiel
Secretary

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Action Items:

- Brian to research thangka repair
- Correction of Armstrong flyer on website [done]
- Separate email addresses for different event registrars [done for Armstrong and class]
- Lynelle to reformat Steve Armstrong Daylong flyer for posting to website
- Laura to communicate with Vic de Vlaming re disposition of paper products in closet [done]
- Laura to do final write-up of tote bag proposal and obtain a sample for Feb. meeting
- Board to discuss tote bags with community members
- Rich to talk with Michael Paddy about Dalit project funds disposition
- Rich to communicate with SBMG about SIM assistance and tea attendance for Ajahn Bram and re. recording and hearing assistive devices
- Rich will develop waiver forms for one-on-one mentoring and the beginning class and will review the one currently in use for the residential retreat.
- Laura will review the waiver forms before forwarding them to attorney Mark Alcorn for his legal review.
- Georg will prepare the answers to the list of hypotheticals posed by attorney Mark Alcorn at the Board/Mentor meeting. [Note from Laura: I don't think this needs to happen.]
- Rich to spearhead development of a paper on what it means for SIM to "sponsor" an activity; i.e., the criteria the Board wishes to adopt, etc.

Future Agenda Items: (ANY TO ADD?)

- SDC Board Members – SIM representatives?
- Where to distribute the Dalit Project funds
- For purposes of future fundraising and activity within SIM, should the SIM board find another project similar to the Dalit project or wait for grass-roots development?
- Ad Hoc Risk Assessment Committee: Members and reports to board
- 12-step affinity group continuance
- Use of Friends Meeting House on available days other than Thursdays; more specifically continuance of chanting/kirtan.
- Tote Bags
- Announcement template/protocol
- Should future SIM residential retreats have two managers?
- Dana policy–continued discussion – after 2014 financials come out.
- Development or adoption of a conflict-of-interest policy.
- Development of a security protocol
- Review and discussion of the answers to hypotheticals posed at Board/Mentor meeting by attorney Mark Alcorn.
- Should there be a "tune-up" session with the attorney each year?
- Skillful handling of disruption and physical security at SIM.
- SDC Sharing and Rental Agreements (ongoing)
- Publicity for SIM events