



Sacramento Insight Meditation

Sacramento Insight Meditation Board Meeting Minutes March 11, 2024

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Sacramento Insight Meditation (SIM)
Board of Directors was convened at 6:00 PM on Tuesday, March 11, 2024
via teleconferencing

Attendance

President	Amy Kovak	Member-At-Large	Carmen Pereira
Vice President	Vacant	Member-At-Large	Margaret Buss
Treasurer	Greg Gollihur	Faculty Rep	Rich Howard
Secretary	Karen Tercho	SDC Rep	Diana Cassady
Member-At-Large	Katie Stonebraker	YPS Rep	Sho Kawano
Member-At-Large	Jon Siiteri	Recorder	Christine Bitonti

Beginnings

The meeting began with a five-minute sitting, reading of the Board Participation Guidelines, and a personal check-in.

Meeting Minutes

The Board Minutes for February 12, 2024 were reviewed and approved unanimously.

1.0. Fiscal

1.1 Financial Reports

Financial Summary as of February 29, 2024

Monthly Report:

Prior to this meeting, the Treasurer briefly reviewed SIM's Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Activity Reports for January 1, 2024, through February 29, 2024. Those reports are provided in the Meeting Materials.

Statement of Financial Position:

Total Liabilities and Equity through February 29, 2024: \$104,442.5 (previous total \$102,892.08)

Statement of Activity:

Net Revenue through February 29, 2024: \$-13,833.14 (previous total \$16,566.47)

Notes: Total revenues for January 1- February 29th were \$6,000 greater than in a similar period last year. However, expenses – in particular Presenter and Professional Services – were far greater than this period last year. Large expenses for Legacy Teacher stipends, year-end teacher Dana distributions coupled with increasing professional services costs continue to result in net revenue losses. On a more affirmative note, increased revenues were due in part to increased levels of giving by regular monthly donors indicating positive results from SIM's fundraising efforts.

Carmen completed a review of monthly donations to SIM over the last three months (from December, 2023 through February, 2024) concluding that there has been a steady increase in both the number of donors and donation amounts—a nice trend that should help overall revenue throughout the year.

1.2 Final 2024 Budget

Greg created a quick reference guide for the 2024 SIM Budget which can be found in Meeting Materials. He stated that the total SIM Budget is \$144,000 for the calendar (also fiscal) year, 2024.

2.0 Board-Faculty Communication

2.1 Faculty Report (Rich)

The Faculty Report can be found in Meeting Materials. Rich briefly noted that Diane continues her sabbatical, but has started a new prison sangha and plans to work with

Seth Castleman on the Exodus Project (services for individuals coming out of prison). He reported an unusual—but very positive—circumstance in the Beginning Meditation class. Normally, there would be a considerable decrease in attendance as the course progressed. This time, all but two who registered showed up for the first meeting and have returned consistently throughout the course. Dennis has been working with the Renaissance Society, looking at options for the “mini-retreat,” discussing a potential program with Steve and Kamala, and holding conversations with Mountain Stream Sangha.

3.0. Community Outreach

3.1 YPS Update (Sho)

Sho displayed pictures of the Young Persons Sangha in action and reported that 15–20 people are attending regularly. He has noticed several who are also attending the Thursday night meditation session at SIM. He suggested that one or two Board members attend an in-person YPS event to see the group in action and introduce themselves so that YPS members would see familiar faces when they come on Thursday nights. YPS is trying to increase dana from members to move toward greater self-sustainability.

3.2 Social Media (Katie)

SIM’s Instagram account now has 284 subscribers. Katie showed Board members a beautiful graphic highlighting upcoming SIM activities that appears on the site. She also has developed an equally appealing flier to attract interest in SIM that includes a QR code and a list of ways to contact SIM.

3.3 SIM Community Outreach Team (Katie)

Katie reported that Jennifer and Marc have been very busy brainstorming ideas for outreach into the community. They sent an email to Katie which can be found in Meeting Materials highlighting all of their ideas to date. In particular, they need access to SIM’s email database of 800 people, which Katie will help them obtain when appropriate. Discussion occurred regarding participation at events in the Sacramento region (farmers’ markets, craft fairs, etc.). Sho suggested that placing fliers in local coffee shops and bookstores might be more effective and less time-consuming. Diana suggested an open house, which might be something the SDC could consider hosting. A suggestion was made to offer an email sign-up sheet on Thursday nights as people are greeted in the foyer.

3.4 Board Newsletter (Amy)

Amy reported hearing very positive feedback about the new Board Newsletter from sangha members who like knowing about Board accomplishments. Many Board members expressed their appreciation for the newsletter as well.

4.0 Operations Issues

4.1 Operations Manager

Amy noted that it is time for the three-month assessment of David's activities and performance in the role of Operations Manager. The meeting has not yet been scheduled, but will be conducted soon.

4.2 Teacher Liaison Crew Update (Karen)

Karen reported that there are still several dates in September which need to be filled. She will address these openings with Rich and Dennis.

A lengthy discussion followed regarding the proposed mini-retreat in August. An offer by Kamala Masters to teach at SIM remotely has opened up some possibilities which were reviewed. A new proposal to hold a non-residential mini-retreat in November when Kamala is available was discussed. This retreat would start with SIM's regular Thursday night session (no registration needed) on November 14 and would continue on Friday night, November 15 (when Kamala would teach) and through a daylong event on Saturday with Dennis and Diane teaching (registration required for the latter two events). A possible theme might be the Brahmaviharas.. The Board approved moving the mini-retreat to November unanimously.

4.3 Fundraising Committee Report

Carmen and Amy had a productive meeting with local fundraising professional, Ken Cross, who provided helpful information and feedback regarding SIM's current and future fundraising approaches.

Rich reported that SIM is registered for the local "Big Day of Giving" (May 2, 2024) and showed how SIM's donation page will appear on the website. Board members were impressed by the page and hopeful that it will draw attention (and donations) to the organization. Donations may be given prior to May 2, but that is the date on which a major community appeal will focus.

4.4 Board Minutes Editing Procedures

Karen demonstrated to Board members through screen-sharing how to edit the minutes in the Google drive upon review. She emphasized that Board members should use "suggesting mode" rather than "editing mode" (with assigned colors) to facilitate the process of finalizing the document.

4.5 CHIRP Fundraiser

This item was tabled due to lack of time for adequate discussion.

Break

5.0. Residential Retreat

5.1 Retreat Committee (Amy)

Amy reported that Cathy Vigran has continued reaching out to sangha members to identify prospective volunteers for a variety of functions, including the Residential Retreat Committee. She has found several people, including one with IT skills, who may be interested in serving. A Board member is also needed for this committee. It was noted that it is not too early to identify teachers for 2025 and 2026 as many are already booking dates that far out. Kamala is a possibility; also J.D. Doyle was mentioned. The deposit for the Mercy Center (2025 retreat) will be coming due soon.

6.0. Volunteer Updates

6.1 Volunteer Update (Amy)

Susan reported to Amy that things are going fine with recruiting and managing volunteers at SIM. There is one new set-up volunteer and another sangha member is helping out occasionally when needed. Cathy has been scheduling people to talk about their skills and abilities; her efforts are paying off. A replacement for Mary at St. John's monthly dinner has been found and one possible retreat manager has been identified.

6.2 Volunteer Appreciation Event (Amy)

Dennis and Rich have developed the schedule for the Saturday event: a 30-minute sitting, two dharmettes, breakout groups to discuss some questions for the volunteers (how they can be supported, etc.), and a luncheon. Catering by Chipotle seemed the most efficient option for food. Amy has found two people willing to assist with food pick-up and setting up the hall.

7.0. SDC

7.1 Update from Diana

Diana reported that despite the ending of SDC's fundraising campaign in December, additional donations were made in January. A total of \$90,000 was raised to pay down

the SDC mortgage by 78%. A pickleball event for the three sanghas is being planned. Procedures for the Family Sangha (pertaining to governmental requirements for adults working with children) are being developed.

7.2 Approve SDC Room Reservations and Scheduling Policy

The final document regarding reservations and scheduling for SDC can be found in Meeting Materials. The policy was approved unanimously by the Board.

7.3 Approve Library Configuration

After some discussion, the Board determined that YPS needs more time to consider how adding bookshelves on one wall of the room might reduce the group's meeting space and if moving existing furniture could compensate for any changes. Diana will communicate this decision to the SDC Board with a promise to provide a decision shortly.

7.4 SDC Security Issues

Two major issues related to security at SDC were addressed and followed by considerable discussion. First, training regarding the alarm system needs to be conducted for everyone at SIM who possesses a key to the building. Margaret Buss may be able to assist in this regard. Second, the list of those who possess keys to the building needs to be updated. Kenny will send out the current master list of key holders so that changes can be made.

The SDC Board is also asking each sangha to report any security incidents they observe—thefts, people camping out on the grounds or attempting to break into the building, etc. Reports of such incidents by SIM members should be given to David for coordination with SDC.

7.5 Barbara Colton Thank You

Amy noted that next Wednesday is Barbara Colton's last SDC meeting. Several SIM sangha members (including members of the Board) will be in attendance to thank her for representing SIM.

7.6 Website Update

Amy reported that work is being done on the description of SIM's mission and activities that will appear on SDC's website. Several edits have been made and the document needs to be finalized soon and sent to the SDC Board.

7.6 SDC Board Member from SIM as Director-at-Large

Amy reminded the Board that a volunteer to serve as a Director-At-Large on the SDC Board is still needed. No one has been identified for this position. Diana will convey this information to the SDC Board.

7.7 Jizu Box

A proposal from Valley Streams sangha to construct a “Jizu Box” by the Jizu garden was discussed and approved unanimously by the Board.

7.8 Summary for the SDC

Diana was asked to notify the SDC Board of all the matters discussed at this Board meeting relating to its policies and procedures as well as to inform them that SIM will be participating in the “Big Day of Giving.”

8.0 New Business

8.1 Open Discussion

It was noted that Dennis will attend the April and May Board meetings representing the Faculty.

9.0. Next Board Meeting

April 8, 2024 6:00-8:30

**Respectfully submitted,
Karen Tercho, Secretary
Christine Bionti, Recorder**