



Sacramento Insight Meditation

Sacramento Insight Meditation Board Meeting Minutes June 10, 2024

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Sacramento Insight Meditation (SIM) Board of Directors was convened at 6:00 PM on Monday, June 10, 2024 via Zoom

Attendance

President	Amy Kovak
Vice-President	Vacant
Treasurer	Carmen Pereira
Secretary	Karen Tercho - Absent
Member-At-Large and Recorder	Margaret Buss
Member-At-Large	Jon Siiteri
Member-At-Large	Katie Stonebraker
Faculty Rep	Rich Howard
Sacramento Dharma Center Rep	Diana Cassady - Absent
Young Persons Sangha Rep	Absent

Beginnings

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

Meeting Minutes

Review and Approval of Board Minutes May 13, 2024 -

Language was added to the minutes to clarify that Dennis is supporting a young person for the Community Dharma Leader program who could be a possible new teacher.

1.0. Fiscal

1.1 Financial Reports (Carmen)

Monthly Report:

The Treasurer briefly reviewed SIM's Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Activity Reports for January 1, 2024, through May 31, 2024. Those reports are provided in the Meeting Materials.

SIM's finances stand as follows:

Statement of Financial Position

Total Liabilities and Equity through May 31, 2024: \$97,708.05 (previous total \$95,625.91)

Statement of Activity

Net Revenue through May 31, 2024: -\$23,503.96 (previous total -\$24,955.36)

Notes: Carmen noted that actual revenues at the end of April were \$4618.37 less than the projected \$40,000. She also noted that there was less of a deficit this month than the last, largely due to the revenue of \$2,854.67 from the Big Day Of Giving. Additionally, as in-kind donations are now being included in reported revenues, contributions from Sabitre Rodriguez and Rick Maddock added \$762 added to the YTD total.

She reported that the impact of raising base registration fees led to a total year-to-date increase of \$1,655 over last year: a \$525 increase for the Beginning Meditation Class (BMC) and a \$1,130 increase for the daylongs from February through May, with no apparent adverse effect on sign-ups for either activity. SIM currently has forty-four recurring donors with a monthly contribution of \$2503. If this revenue is sustained, at the end of the year we would have a \$7,440 increase over last year.

Amy noted that a large proportion of the non-recurring donations occur during end-of-year giving, and therefore having a revenue target of \$40,000 per quarter may not be realistic.

Carmen reiterated that, because of rising costs of insurance, fees and subscriptions, website and bookkeeping services, and rent, as well as the costs of the Legacy Project and Operations Manager, there is a potential year-end shortfall of \$24,790. Also, SIM does not have one year's operating expenses in reserve, as is recommended for organizations.

2.0 Board-Faculty Communication

2.1 Faculty Report (Rich)

Rich and Karen Tercho have scheduled an in-person Beginning Meditation Class (BMC) exclusively for Sacramento City College (SCC) students, Tuesdays, October 8th - 29th, in a conference room on the SCC campus. Rich is actively working on revising the BMC curriculum to adapt the normal six-week plus daylong class to four sessions, ninety minutes each, with no

daylong. He asked if SIM would like to charge a fee, given that the conference room is provided for free because of Karen's faculty status, and there will be no AV costs. SIM's preference is to charge some kind of fee, but based on Sacramento City College's Internal Campus Event Reservations policy, any fees charged would go to SCC, not SIM: see [Internal Campus Event Reservations | Sacramento City College](#). Furthermore, the majority of SCC students are lower-income and do not typically have access to this type of learning content. Karen's idea is to help bring meditation practice to disproportionately-impacted SCC students, free of charge.

Diane's report is in the Meeting Materials on the G-Drive. Highlights include the sad news that long-time sangha member Jim Lerner is in memory care and not doing well. Diane attended an IRC Zoom retreat conducted by Gil Fronsdal and Diana Clark. She found that, although it was on Zoom, the retreat structure facilitated a sense of community, and she took notes on ideas that SIM might utilize for its mini-retreats to foster the same feeling of intimacy. The Year To Live class continues to go well; the most recent session was on Grief and Joy.

Dennis is developing a new Zoom-only course for fall titled "Experiencing Insight." It will be seven weeks long, with ninety-minute sessions every other week. Currently no daylong is scheduled, although he is considering using our unscheduled Saturday slot on Thanksgiving weekend.

The SIM faculty met with each of the Legacy teachers independently between May 20th and June 6th to assess their feelings about the program. Rich reported that the conversations went very well. They each are grateful for the opportunity to teach and for the support of the SIM faculty and community. All are committed to creating their own classes for SIM, as well as jointly teaching the retreat. It had been hoped that they would be able to attend SIM faculty planning meetings, but so far they have not been able to. They were asked to come in person if at all possible. Also under consideration is exploring scheduling the Legacy teachers to teach at the Young Persons' Sangha (YPS) on a Wednesday and at SIM the following night.

Amy pointed out that there is a trade-off between the value of in-person appearances and the costs to SIM for travel expenses. Their contracts provide for compensation for travel costs, including mileage and accommodations, but so far none of them have billed for expenses. The Jennes' cottage may be available to them free of charge, depending on dates. Costs of the Legacy Teacher program will be discussed in more detail at the faculty/board joint meeting this Saturday, June 15th.

Rich also noted that should the Legacy program continue, new teachers may be available in the future. Spirit Rock and IMS will have a new teacher training program for twenty students starting in 2025.

3.0. Community Outreach

3.1 YPS Update

No report available: Sho was unable to attend due to illness. Carmen will relay budget information to them.

3.2 Social Media (Katie)

Our Instagram account currently has 306 followers. Katie has also been able to cross-promote events and content with Sacramento BIPOC Sangha, YPS, and others. Katie plans to further develop content including a monthly calendar post after she returns from her retreat during her summer break.

3.3 SIM Community Outreach Team (SCOT) (Katie)

Katie shared Marc's attendance update through May. Attendance is down very slightly in the past few weeks but is consistently around forty to forty-five people total. SCOT plans to meet later this month to discuss updating the attendance spreadsheet and further action steps. Rich suggested adding a data field for whether the teacher is in-person or remote.

4.0 Operations Issues

4.1 Operations Manager and other professional services (Amy)

Amy and Carmen met with the web manager / bookkeeper about her contract and request for a raise. Negotiations followed the Board's email discussion. To keep the raise within budget, the web manager / bookkeeper's hours will be kept to the contracted amount. Carmen will help with any bookkeeping tasks that would otherwise require the bookkeeper to work over the contracted hours. We will also look elsewhere for possible support on web management as necessary. The web manager / bookkeeper offered a small discount for her services in the first two months of the contract. The web manager / bookkeeper is reviewing the contract.

The web manager / bookkeeper is open to giving up the bookkeeping tasks if SIM finds someone else who is qualified and less expensive. Amy or Carmen may ask Donna, SIM's accountant at Tate & Associates, for suggestions. SDC's bookkeeper may also be contacted.

Amy and Carmen will contact the operations manager to follow up on his concerns about his pay rate discussed at his three-month review.

All Board members are asked to be mindful that requests to either contractor may result in adding to more hours of work. Working as a team with clear communication on both parts is necessary to ensure that the requested tasks are necessary and that we do not go over budget.

4.2 Teacher Liaison Crew Updates (Karen and Rich)

Rich reported that he has been working with teachers to fill gaps in the teaching schedule. Rich contacted Greg Scharf, who had withdrawn from teaching a daylong on July 27th, to see if he is willing to teach on Thursday, July 25th. Greg is currently on retreat and not able to respond. If Greg is not available, Rich will try to find another teacher.

Rich noted that this year's schedule will include new (to us) teachers Adam Stonebraker of Mountain Streams and Sensei Mike Oliver of Zen Martial Arts.

Walt Opie's daylong on June 29th: Sho, on behalf of TLC, is working with Walt to find out more about the topic. Sho notified Walt that SIM does not have a paid A/V tech available that day and asked Walt if he is open to having the event be in-person only. Walt indicated that he is fine with an in-person only daylong with no hybrid option, so this element is being integrated into SIM News and the website event. Walt indicated he would like to stay in Sacramento on Friday night and asked for hotel recommendations. Sho suggested that he consider staying at the Jennes' cottage.

4.4 Fundraising Committee Report (Amy)

Carmen contacted the Taproot Foundation, which connects nonprofits and social change organizations with skilled volunteers through pro bono service. Carmen got an initial referral for someone to help with fundraising ideas, but the volunteer designated to help did not respond to her inquiries.

Amy will contact members of the fundraising committee to regroup and focus on fundraising for next year. Board announcers will continue to encourage sangha members to sign up for recurring donations.

4.5 July Daylong/Community Event (Amy)

With Greg Scharf's withdrawal from teaching a daylong on July 27, the Board decided to use the date as a SIM Sangha Practice and Community Day. Time frame and schedule will need to be determined: a rough time frame of 10:00 am to 2:00 or 3:00 pm is proposed, and, per Board discussion, our usual registration fee will be charged. Dennis and Rich are discussing developing a dharma session in the morning. Karen has offered to lead a mindful movement exercise. The question of whether or not there will be a program after lunch is to be determined.

After some discussion, the Board decided to go forward with a potluck, charging the regular daylong fee, with the possibility of billing the event as a fund-raiser for SIM. In order not to incur additional expenses for SIM, SIM would not pay for drinks or dessert; those could be included in possible potluck items. Dana for the teacher(s) would still be requested.

Katie offered to take the lead in organizing the potluck and has reserved the West Hall, in case it is needed. Amy, Margaret, and Karen will help with planning. Members of the community may also help with planning, set-up, and clean-up. Remaining issues include whether extra tables are needed for seating in the West Hall. Amy can borrow tables, but a truck will be needed to transport them. Chairs from the Dharma Hall can be used.

Karen proposes that the OM be copied on the planning process in order to coordinate and support it, integrate information with SIM News, and share information with the web master for the website and registration set-up.

5.0. Volunteer Updates

5.1 Volunteer Update (Amy)

Proposed projects for which volunteers would be needed:

- “Tagging”/indexing the Audio Dharma talks by subject/topic as well as by teacher: Dennis will contact an individual he knows who may have interest in doing this ; Amy will also look for someone. While Sabitre may need to assist because of the web interface, it is preferable to use a volunteer in order to keep costs down.
- Creating a “welcome video” for the web page: Amy will follow through with a volunteer who has had experience with YouTube
- Retreat Committee: Jon contacted former Retreat Committee members to regroup and start planning for next year’s residential retreat. Only Tony Pruitt responded. A retreat manager still needs to be identified. Amy asked to have email correspondence on retreat planning copied to her.
- Amy asked Board members to consider any other projects or tasks that we might ask volunteers to do.

Amy will reconnect with Cathy Vigran to see if she is in a position to help solicit volunteers as she has before.

6.0 SIM Board

6.1 New Board Member Suggestions (Amy)

Jon’s retirement from the Board leaves a vacancy that needs to be filled as soon as possible. In addition, it would be desirable to add at least one other member, if not more, to spread the workload.

Nominees must have been involved with SIM for at least two years, to have a daily practice, to have completed the BMC or equivalent course, and to have been on a week-long retreat.

The Board discussed several potential candidates. Some have been approached in the past but declined. Some, although they might be considered in the future, do not currently meet the criteria. Amy encouraged Board members to talk to members during breaks with an eye out for

identifying potential candidates. Other possible sources are the list of recurring donors or graduates from the BMC or other courses.

7.0. SDC

7.1 SDC Website Updates (Amy)

Amy reported that the SIM page on the SDC website has been updated with a new logo. It now includes the Instagram and Facebook information.

7.2 SDC Key Cards (Amy)

David inventoried the current keys and key cards, and Amy sent the information to SDC. SDC proposed to use cards only. However, the card reader has malfunctioned in the past, so keys are a good backup. No final decision has been made.

7.3 Rental Negotiations (Amy)

SDC asked that the three sanghas meet with the SDC negotiating committee. SDC will take into account each sangha's financial needs. Carmen volunteered to be SIM's representative, since she is most familiar with our financial situation. Amy thanked her for stepping up.

7.4 Summary for the SDC (Amy)

The next report to SDC will include the need for a new Board member, SIM's financial situation, the status of the Legacy Project and Operations Manager, and the key card inventory. The Board still needs to appoint a second liaison to the SDC Board, as does SBMG.

8.0 New Business

8.1 Open Discussion

In a future meeting, we will discuss the refund policy.

9.0. Jon Appreciation

9.1 Acknowledgement of Jon's Board Service

All Board members expressed their deep appreciation for Jon's five years of service to the Board, including his work on the COVID policy and his three years as President. Amy had presented SIM's gift to him, a subscription to the digital form of Tricycle; the gift will be used to extend his existing subscription.

10.0 Next Board Meeting

July 8, 2024 6:00-8:30 PM

**Respectfully submitted,
Margaret Buss, Recorder
Karen Tercho, Secretary**