



# Sacramento Insight Meditation

## Sacramento Insight Meditation

### Board Meeting Minutes October 14, 2024

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Sacramento Insight Meditation (SIM) Board of Directors was convened at 6:00 PM on Monday, October 14, 2024 via Zoom

#### Attendance

President	Amy Kovak
Vice-President	Vacant
Treasurer	Carmen Pereira
Secretary	Karen Tercho
Member-At-Large	Margaret Buss
Member-At-Large	Katie Stonebraker
Faculty Rep	Diane Wilde
Sacramento Dharma Center Rep	Diana Cassady
Young Persons Sangha Rep	Beth Hart
Recorder	Christine Bitonti

#### Beginnings

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

#### Minutes

The Board Minutes for September 9, 2024 were reviewed and approved unanimously.

#### 1.0. Fiscal

## 1.1 Financial Reports

### **Financial Summary as of September 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 September 30, 2024. Those reports are provided in the Meeting Materials.

SIM's finances stand as follows:

#### *Statement of Financial Position*

Total Liabilities and Equity through September 30, 2024: **\$89,881.23**  
(previous total \$90,044.30)

#### *Statement of Activity*

Net Revenue through September 30, 2024: **\$ (32,767.86)**  
(previous total \$-32,608.80)

## 1.2 September Monthly Giving Campaign

Amy reported that six new monthly donors and increased donations from three existing monthly donors amount to an additional \$515 per month or \$6,180 pledged per year.

## 1.3 Zeffy

Amy and Carmen led a discussion of SIM's expenses related to the use of donation platforms, Square and PayPal (which has cost SIM \$2,500 in fees). They have investigated an alternate platform, Zeffy, which is 100% free for not-for-profit organizations. This platform has been in existence since 2017 and has received very positive reviews. It is funded by tips that users may leave when making their donations. Sabitre also investigated Zeffy and informed Amy that it would be viable for SIM to utilize. The Board unanimously approved a proposal to switch from using Square and PayPal to the Zeffy platform.

An additional discussion occurred regarding SDC's investigation of "Give Butter," which does have transaction fees. Amy has yet to hear any more information about a potential shift by SDC to Give Butter.

## 1.4 St. John's

Amy led a discussion of SIM's commitment to St. John's to provide a monthly meal. For more than 20 years, SIM volunteers have been shopping for and preparing the meal, often at their own expense. Recent changes in volunteers for this activity require the Board to reconsider SIM's involvement. The monthly cost is \$270-300, adding approximately \$3600 to SIM's annual budget. Various methods to cover this expense were discussed, including using any overage from Christmas donations (for providing presents to a family in need) for the monthly dinner. Also, soliciting support from individual sangha members to cover the cost of a monthly meal was suggested. In addition to the funding issue, increasing the volunteer pool for SIM's involvement in this effort will be required. The Board unanimously approved continuing the project for six months with reevaluation at that time. It was noted that sufficient time should be provided to St. John's if SIM decides to discontinue its involvement.

## **2.0 Board-Faculty Communication**

### **2.1 Faculty Report**

Diane Wilde shared details of the upcoming mini-retreat (Friday and Saturday, November 15-16 from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm). The retreat will be in person only, and prospective participants will be given the opportunity to register for one or both days. Margaret will discuss with Susan the volunteer needs for this event to ensure ample coverage. Also, Karen will discuss with the operations manager what the audio/visual needs will be for the two-day event.

The full Faculty Report can be found in the Google Drive.

## **3.0. Community Outreach**

### **3.1 YPS Update**

Beth reported that YPS continues to meet every other Wednesday. Two teachers are scheduled over the next five meetings with peer leadership in between. She noted that there appears to be a good mix of new and returning participants with approximately 15 people attending each session. Idris and Beth are peer-leading and coordinating facility issues. They have already secured commitments from Walt and Vance to teach several times in the next year. Since few people seem to be using Zoom, YPS may decide to offer only in-person meetings (except for teachers who need a remote option).

Beth also noted that YPS has a Google group, allowing anyone to join who would like to learn about its activities and schedule.

### **3.2 Social Media**

Katie continues to monitor SIM's Instagram usage and to offer information about the organization's activities to followers and others who come across the site. There are currently 322 followers. Activities at Mountain Stream Meditation Center by SIM teachers have introduced people from Nevada City to the site. Katie's postings include various one-day retreats and other activities. She will advertise the November mini-retreat.

### 3.3 SIM Community Outreach Team

Katie reached out to Jennifer and Marc who are both very busy and requested that this activity be suspended for a while. She is uncertain whether Marc is continuing to track attendance at SIM. It was suggested that the Excel file for this project be converted to a Google file for easier access.

## 4.0 Operations Issues (7:15 - 8:00)

### 4.1 Operations Manager/ Professional Services

Amy reported that things are going well with the operations manager. There are some communication issues between faculty and staff that need to be resolved. It has been determined that faculty requests should be communicated to the OM first and then he can decide how to proceed. Amy is working with staff to ensure that the registration process is well-organized. Three-month reviews will be performed soon with staff.

### 4.2 Teacher Liaison Crew Update

Beginning Meditation for College Students at Sacramento City College, the four-week course being taught by Rich, began last week on October 8. On Week 1 there were 10 student attendees and one SCC faculty member. Rich's teaching was well-received, with a couple of students reporting that they were dealing with anxiety issues, which Rich will continue to address in his teaching over the next three weeks.

The 2025 schedule is looking robust, as the new SIM teachers plus senior faculty have chosen their teaching dates. Karen, David, and Rich are working on filling in the open dates (mostly throughout the summer months) with visiting teachers.

### 4.3 Fundraising Committee Report

This committee is composed of Rich, Dennis, Carmen, and Amy. The committee is focused heavily right now on the October 18 event for major SIM donors. Approximately 40 people were invited to the two-hour event. To date, 14 have registered. The focus of the session will be on SIM's five-year plan and next Spring's pledge campaign. The committee will be meeting on October 20 to discuss any feedback from the donor group. The year-end appeal letter will be coming out soon.

#### 4.4 Therapy Dog

The request of a sangha member to bring their therapy dog to SIM events has been addressed. Paperwork and insurance issues have been resolved and per the Board's previous discussions, the sangha member will not be asked to bring the therapy dog to SIM events. However, the YPS may decide on their own if they would like to have the dog present. It was recommended that advanced notice of the presence of the dog at meetings should be given to YPS participants.

#### 4.5 New Teacher Gifts

Amy reported that gifts for the three new SIM teachers, Diana, Walt and Vance (previously called "Legacy Teachers"), have been selected. They include a set of greeting cards made by Shutterfly (with photos from Rich's archive) and a recycled sari garland for each. Once the contracts have been signed, the gifts will be sent out to the teachers to welcome them to the Faculty and SIM.

#### 4.6 SIM News

The revamped SIM News template is available for Board members to review. It was created by Elizabeth Hahn, a sangha member who attends SIM remotely. The template is better organized and more colorful than it was previously.

#### 4.7 October 18 Donor Event

Please refer to Section 4.3 above for this report.

#### 4.8 October 31 Community Event

The format for this event (which coincides with Halloween night) involves a short sitting period, dharmette, and small and large group discussions followed by a period of socializing. The topic will focus on equanimity in these unsettling times. Sangha members will be encouraged to bring a sweet or savory snack to share with the group. Katie will provide a station for participants to craft equanimity bracelets. Karen will follow up with Rich to finalize the content and schedule for the evening.

#### 4.9 Holiday Potluck Committee

Volunteers have been identified to help with this event with Robin Primavera in a support role. Amy led a discussion on how to create opportunities for interactions among sangha members during the event. She shared various ideas: developing a music playlist (to have music playing in the background), activities involving members moving around the room to connect with one another, some sort of game with a prize (as competition can be motivating), expressions of gratitude for special SIM contributors, etc. She also suggested that the event might need to start one hour earlier than usual. The SDC calendar will be consulted to make sure that is possible. Margaret

will serve as the Board liaison to the decorating crew and will discuss the start time with Robin.

#### 4.10 Annual Retreat

Karen is the Board liaison to the Retreat Committee. A retreat manager and several committee members are needed. A regular SIM/YPS member was recommended for the manager position. Karen will approach this after gathering information from the manual created after last year's retreat and other sources regarding the duties of this position.

### **5.0 Volunteer Updates**

#### 5.1 Volunteers

No additional discussion concerning volunteers occurred at this time.

### **6.0 SIM Board**

#### 6.1 Board Recruitment

Amy noted that suggestions for potential Board members are still needed and requested that Board members let her know if they have any ideas.

### **7.0. SDC**

#### 7.1 SDC Updates

Diana apprised the Board concerning three issues that have been discussed at length at SDC Board meetings. First, SDC will be conducting a capital campaign to pay down the mortgage. They anticipate paying it off completely by 2026. Second, SDC is very short on volunteers to join its Board and various committees. She noted that sangha members should be encouraged to subscribe to the SDC newsletter so that they can be informed of developments and volunteer opportunities. Third, SDC has discussed the need for a new strategic plan that may be needed once the mortgage has been paid in full. Diana recommended that SIM have more members involved directly with the SDC Board when key issues and decisions are being discussed. It has been suggested that the building may have to be sold if revenues cannot be maintained in the future (e.g., one sangha is unable to afford the rent increase). Amy questioned why—if the mortgage is paid off—the rents would not cover the ongoing maintenance expenses. More information about this issue is needed, and Diana agreed to investigate further.

### **8.0 New Business**

### 8.1 Open Discussion

No issues were addressed at this time.

### **9.0 Next Board Meeting**

November 11, 2024, 6:00-8:30 PM

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**Respectfully submitted,**  
**Christine Bitonti**  
**Karen Tercho, Secretary**