



Sacramento Insight Meditation

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Board Meeting Minutes for August 11, 2025

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Sacramento Insight Meditation (SIM) Board of Directors was convened at 6:00 PM on Monday, August 11, 2025 via Zoom.

Attendance

President	Amy Kovak
Vice-President	Vacant
Treasurer	Carmen Pereira
Secretary	Absent
Member-At-Large	Margaret Buss
Member-At-Large	Katie Stonebraker
Faculty Rep(s)	Rich Howard and Walt Opie
Sacramento Dharma Center Rep	Diana Cassady
YPS Rep	Absent
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 July 14, 2025 were reviewed and approved unanimously.

1.0. Fiscal

1.1 Financial Reports

Financial Summary as of July 2025 Monthly Report: Prior to this meeting, the Treasurer briefly reviewed SIM's Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Activity by Class Reports for January 1, 2025, through July 31, 2025. Those reports are provided in the Meeting Materials. SIM's finances stand as follows: Statement of Financial Position Total Liabilities and Equity through July 31, 2025: \$100,712.71 (previous total \$100,059.62) Statement of Activity Net Revenue through July 31, 2025: \$18,994.77 (previous total \$16,286.68)

The Treasurer reviewed two key documents detailing SIM's current and projected financial status. Several projected budget shortfalls were noted, along with a few surplus items. Including pledge campaign donations, there is a projected surplus of \$26,621 for the year. Carmen cautioned that these figures could change depending on actual expenses and revenue over the final five months and recommended that the Board closely monitor the organization's finances going forward.

2.0 Board-Faculty Communication

Rich reported that an extensive, four-page written Faculty Report can be found in the Meeting Materials on the Google Drive detailing the many teaching and mentoring activities being conducted by the six teachers. He raised two action items for the Board. First, the five-year plan calls for an annual evaluation of teachers. Rich suggested that a two-way dialogue between the Faculty and Board be conducted to answer the straightforward question, "How is it working?" Faculty are proposing a Zoom call with all parties present. Amy suggested that the Board members come to next month's meeting with questions for this event and feedback from the community.

The second action item involved selecting a Saturday for the Beginning Meditation Course daylong. Rich asked the Board whether the only available date for the course (January 24, 2026) could be swapped with the daylong scheduled for January 31, 2026. This change would allow the course daylong to follow the previous structure and be better suited for the course. The Board discussed potential difficulties, primarily confusion among sangha members accustomed to daylongs on the last Saturday of the month. It was decided to accommodate the Beginning Meditation Course, with extra efforts to inform the sangha of the schedule change to minimize confusion.

3.0. Community Outreach

3.1 YPS Update

Amy received a brief email note from Beth. Everything is going well with YPS. They have consistent attendance at their meetings. At the last peer-led session there were 13 participants, including four new attendees.

3.2 Social Media

Katie reported 412 followers on Instagram. She has answered a few questions from people about what SIM is offering and whether events are in-person, virtual, or hybrid. She continues to develop posters for daylong events and courses.

4.0 Operations Issues

4.1 Operations Manager/ Professional Services

Amy met with David on July 22 to discuss various issues and processes in which he is involved. She reported that things are going well in this regard. The website and bookkeeping contracts have been within the contracted hours, which is helpful for budgeting.

4.2 Teacher Liaison Crew Update

Rich shared the 2026 schedule, showing teachers and dates that have already been confirmed. Diana and Vance still need to add a few dates. Once that has been accomplished, Dennis, Rich, and Diane will select their dates, leaving openings for guest teachers. The TLC is working on lodging arrangements for teachers during the mini-retreat in March 2026.

4.3 Kalyanamitta Groups

Amy reported that 19 people have signed up for the kalyanamitta groups with various day and time preferences. Registration will end on Friday. Each week, after the Thursday night dharma talk, groups will be provided with questions and topics to address in their groups.

4.4 Vance's 3-day weekend August 28–30

Amy stated that faculty members have received feedback that sangha members like the informal Friday "Tea" event during the special three-day weekends. It will be scheduled from 2–4 PM on August 15. Food will be provided by various sangha members. Accommodations have been arranged for Vance for the weekend.

4.5 Fundraising for Buddhists Summary

Margaret provided a summary of the recent virtual session provided by Thomas Bruner (of Bruner Strategies) regarding fundraising strategies for Buddhists. His suggestions included: identifying the donor pool, using various strategies for talking with these individuals, inviting people to give (emphasizing the opportunity to express their gratitude for the practice), and having a "closed" ending to prevent donor fatigue.

5.0 Volunteer Updates

5.1 Volunteers/Projects

Margaret has identified a volunteer to assist with the inventory of SIM's property at SDC. The volunteer has offered to photograph items of monetary value so they can be catalogued and archived for insurance purposes

6.0 SIM Board

6.1 Board Recruitment Process

Amy led an extensive discussion on approaches to recruiting new SIM Board members. The current method involves Board members nominating potential candidates and inviting them to serve. An alternative approach would be to advertise Board openings and invite sangha members to express interest. The group considered the advantages and disadvantages of this method, including the challenge of potentially having to decline an individual's request.

Several approaches were suggested: (1) inform sangha members in advance that a screening process would be in place with no guarantee of selection; (2) provide clear information about the responsibilities of Board service and the skills needed to serve effectively; and (3) encourage interested members to speak informally with current Board members to better understand the role. It was also suggested that 'demystifying' Board participation could be helpful, with current or past Board members sharing their experiences at Thursday night sits or special events, highlighting how service has supported their personal growth and the development of leadership skills. The Board agreed to hold a 'State of the Sangha' in February 2026, which will include a component on Board service.

7.0. SDC

7.1 SDC Updates

Diana presented a brief report, reminding Board members of the SDC "Donor Appreciation Brunch" on August 23, 2025. She also mentioned that preparation of the "Susan Orr Memorial Garden" is underway.

8.0 New Business

8.1 Open Discussion

Amy proposed a restructuring of SIM Board meetings in an effort to make them more efficient and reduce meeting length to two hours. Responses to this idea were positive. It was suggested that some items could be reassigned to a "consent" status (only added to a monthly agenda when needed) and others simply included quarterly instead of

monthly. Also, written reports could be provided for advanced review by members, saving time for issues requiring more extensive group discussion. Amy will restructure the agenda for next month to experiment with this format.

Action Items		
Who is responsible	Task/s to be performed	Completion Date
Amy	Revise meeting agenda	August 20, 2025
Amy	Put Vance's Tea event on SIM calendar	August 12, 2025
Amy	Write a proposed statement to community members to promote interest in Board and other volunteer service	September 8, 2025

9.0 Next Board Meeting

September 8, 2025, 6:00-8:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Bitonti, Recorder
Karen Tercho, Secretary