

Board of Directors **ANNUAL SANDPOINT SANGHA Meeting Minutes : 11-17-18** (11am to 3:00pm)

Board Members Present: Valerie Milliron, Louella Schaeffer, Carol Ballard, Sally Smith, & Peter Gilmore which indicates necessary quorum. & absent: Sharon McCahon. Elder Present: Janet Sturdevant. Also present: Ginna Maus. President Valerie presided over the meeting.

Each year, the ANNUAL meeting of the members of the Board of Directors is a much longer meeting to be able to put energy into reflection regarding the history, current status, and the potential future options and direction of Sangha activity.

1. Peter initiated an experience of grounding in the preliminaries, and a 10 minute silence, followed by our felt sense and sharing of this sense of connection, and commitment to the Sangha community.

2. Minutes of the 11-6-18 Board meeting were approved via consensus.

3. Financial report: Treasurer, Carol, reported a current balance of \$ 6114, with upcoming regular expenses by the end of the year to be approximately \$ 2000. Through this Sangha account we pay for fixed operating expenses such as the weekly meditation/sitting facility (Heartwood Center cost is \$ 50 every Tuesday), ongoing supplies and equipment, annual P.O. Box rental, website hosting and annual maintenance, and we send Dana quarterly to our guiding teacher, Frank. For about the past ten years, in addition to the weekly sitting, our Sangha has offered one-day, 3-day, and week-long retreats each year. Registration funds are collected for each retreat in accordance with anticipated costs. Generally, these meet the expenses of the retreat, or may give us some overage to add to the general account (especially when participants pay at the top of sliding scale or offer additional donations). But also at times, registration funds collected for the retreat are insufficient to meet expenses, as they were in the recent Cottonwood retreat, thus creating a loss which is covered through the Sanga account.

4. Janet offered the current status of **March Retreat** planning. Location: N-Sid-Sen - with intention of increase to 4 nights; dates- **Friday 3-8-19, to Tues 3-12-19**; Retreat Manager - Kathleen Eldred with Janet assisting; Teachers - Terry Iddins and Linda Ries are working on a focus of “deepening our practice”, and would like participants to reflect on informational handouts prior to the retreat. Expenses are currently being explored with plan to determine Registration Fee Scale in December, prepare the flyer, and initiate contacts via our local email list. As some concern about sound system issues at N-Sid-Sen facility was expressed, this also needs attention prior to the March retreat. Of utmost importance during the retreat is that we all **honor the Sacred Silence**, focus on our own practice, and refrain from disturbing the practice of others by talking or distracting others in any way.

5. Other Retreats: Plans for the one-day in May with Frank are not yet initiated. Valerie will be emailing him in December, with questions and potential options. Dates as well as format, content, and leadership for Cottonwood retreats of 2019 & 2020 are also undecided at this time, though we do have a space assured at St Gertrude’s Monastery through payment of a small (\$ 50) holding fee. Terry and Linda will no longer be able to assist as teachers at Cottonwood Retreats, but both remain committed to leading the shorter retreats at N-Sid-Sen.

6. Taking stock of where we are, and envisioning future Sangha activities: We have had and continue to have transition of local Sangha participants, leadership, content and ideas. Things happen and we have worked toward accepting changes gracefully. Sensing the meditative field every Tuesday night continually grows stronger for many. We are grateful for the Dharma Talks and Sacred Space. The monthly Wisdom Circle and Book Study Tuesday nights are now regular events, often highly inspiring. We have talked about expanding related events on the fifth Tuesday of the month, and Linda Ries was asked and has recently agreed to Zoom with us. There has been some initial thought about researching whether we might be ready for a “mature retreat” (some sort of group retreat with less teaching & more independent practice). More social connection has been requested and options being explored.

7. Via consensus, the Board approved an Intensive Workshop/Retreat with Linda presenting in Sandpoint, in January. We consulted with Linda from 12:20 to 12:50, via Zoom, to begin preliminary planning and potential logistics to put in place. Her intended focus on ‘meeting, greeting, welcoming and engaging difficult mind and emotional states, is designed to provide a background for the initiation of Tuesday Zoom sessions. Potential dates and times for the retreat/workshop: Friday evening, Jan. 18th, 5:30 to 8pm, required, to attend the Saturday January 19th full day workshop: 9:30 to 12:30 in the morning, bring your own sack lunch 12:30 to 1, and continue through the afternoon 1 to 5pm. Immediate Action Items include: arranging for use of Heartwood Center as the location (Carol), rough draft of flyer (Ginna), research expenses and registration fees (local team); send flyer to Linda for approval (local team), etc.

8. We thoroughly enjoyed a lunch break and the opportunity to connect with each other. Janet provided a delicious salad, and Valerie donated an entire Thai meal for everyone, along with snacks, tea, and the invitation to her very comfortable home. Thank you, Janet & Valerie.

9. Friday Book Study: The study group has much appreciation for Sally’s gracious manner of keeping participants informed, prepared, and involved. Marina takes a lead each week to initiate silence and sacred space in starting and ending the study. Sally reported a slow-down in summer, but an increase in attendance and enthusiasm that appears to be consistent with the start of this new book, The Diamond in Your Pocket. She noted three themes of the books selected, described by Terry as books related to awakening, to practice, or to engaged Buddhism.

10. To enhance social connections, we plan to explore having a Sangha related activity one time monthly, most likely on the 2nd Sunday of the month at 3pm. This would assure that we do not interfere with Book Study or Tuesday Sangha. Listening to a recorded talk by Frank, Terry, or Linda from a prior retreat would be an appropriate option. Announcement at Tuesday night Sangha would serve as an open invitation to those present, or a notice on the bulletin board may be used.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:15 pm with a closing reflection and a few moments of silence. The next ANNUAL MEETING will take place near the end of 2019. The next regular meeting of the Board of Directors will be held on first Friday of December, 12-7-18, 4:40 pm, at the 2nd floor Community Conference room on Oak and 3rd.

Respectfully submitted, Louella Schaeffer, Secretary, 11-20-18