**San Francisco Zen Center**

**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

**October 14, 2018**

**Tassajara**

**AGENDA**

**Bow in**

**Approval of Minutes of July 18, 2018**

**Abbots reports**

**Finance (Helen)**

**Retirement plan (Piper)**

**Governance Report (Joe)**

**Board Candidate Search**

**Sanctuary resolution (Linda Ruth)**

**Next Year’s Fall Board Retreat Location**

**Retreat Evaluation**

**Board Meeting Schedule**

**Exec. Session**

**Adjourn**

**Approval of Minutes of July 18, 2018**

Dennis moved that the minutes be approved. Helen seconded. The July minutes were approved as written.

**Abbots reports**

Central Abbess Eijun Linda Cutts reported on her participation in a ceremony at Grace Cathedral as part of the Climate Summit in San Francisco in September. This was a large interfaith event at which she spoke. She also spoke about SFZC’s participation in the Sanctuary movement. Green Gulch was asked to host a service at the detention center in the East Bay. Linda spoke at this event, and there was a ceremony which generated positive energy.

Linda reported on the situation with Ed Brown.

GGF Abiding Abbess Fu Schroeder reported on leading the fall practice period at Tassajara, including the pleasure of teaching in the valley and her experience of the medicine of the teaching. She also stated that she feels called to respond to the toxicity of male privilege.

City Center Abiding Abbot Ed Sattizahn reported on the start of the fall practice period at City Center, the upcoming transition of David Zimmerman to Abiding Abbot, and Mary Stares transition to Tanto. He gave an update on the Room, Board, and Tuition program-- now called “Dharma Bridge”— at City Center, including a slight increase in the number of these students.

He visited Kendall on his way to the SZBA conference. He was impressed with the conference, including its effort to engage with contemporary social issues, such as Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity.

At a recent meeting with Melvin McLeod at City Center, Ed highlighted the generational transition at San Francisco Zen Center, and Melvin reflected on SFZC’s status as the “premier” Zen Center in America. He may do a story for Lion’s Roar on generational change at SFZC.

**Finance Committee (Helen)**

Helen reported that George Kellar has agreed to be the chair of the finance committee as Helen becomes chair of the board. The committee is working on establishing financial goals for the organization and is reviewing the budget process for next year. The first quarter numbers from this year, based on the August P&L statement, look good.

In the aftermath of the fire at Greens, SFZC made a loan of $100K to Greens and then another loan of $250K. There is a question of whether they will need another loan (possibly ~$50K). The fire and the loans to Greens have altered some plans, including when SFZC may start to receive royalties again after they re-open.

The insurance will cover most of the cost of repairs, but their current position is they won’t pay for royalties while the restaurant was closed (even though this is part of the restaurant’s profit). There is also a question about whether the insurance will pay for the code upgrades that are necessary, and were triggered by the fire.

We are in negotiations with the Insurance Company to get them to cover some of the $350K loaned to Greens, which covered code upgrades and other repairs.

Greens is also engaged in a complex argument with the insurance company about coverage, so it’s possible that Greens may get some of it’s royalties paid during the four month we were closed.

Margie made a motion to authorize a loan up to $50K to Greens, if necessary, terms to be negotiated by Ed, Emily, and Helen. Julia seconded the motion. The board approved the motion unanimously.

The board encouraged all to put out the word that Greens is reopening and to encourage members to visit, as way to help Greens and SFZC.

**Retirement plan (Piper)**

Danielle led a review of the proposed changes to the retirement policy, including possibility for part-time work of those eligible for retirement, compensation for teaching when retired, coverage for spouses, coverage for medicare costs, and transition allowances, among others.

Leslie James joined the meeting for the presentation of the changes to the retirement document.

There was a question from the board about coverage for committed partners that are not legally formalized in marriage or as registered domestic partners. Danielle and Leslie will consider how and whether to make this part of the policy more inclusive.

There was a question from the board about means testing for financial coverage for Medicare costs, as there is no other means testing in the policy. It was explained that this was intended as an addition to basic benefits that SFZC agreed and intended to offer and was only for those who really needed it, which would likely only be a few and so means testing would not be widely used.

There were objections from the board about passing the policy as proposed for two primary reasons. The first reason was that in the policy the AEG is specified as a decision-making group, but heretofore has not functioned as a decision-making group. The second reason was that it was not clear that the board had approved no cap whatsoever to the years in service for which one receives a transition allowances (rather than simply approving the exploration of a cap greater than the previously existing 20 years) and that there did not seem to be appropriate financial vetting by the Finance Committee of this proposal.

Julia made a motion to table this topic. Brian seconded the motion. The board unanimously approved the motion to table this proposal for now.

**Governance Report (Joe)**

Joe made a report about the positive responses from the Tassajara community about the hard work of the board and especially its efforts in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity. He also reported on the search for board candidates for upcoming open seats on the board. Joe reported that there are six strong candidates to fill the anticipated four seats that will open in the New Year. A committee will be interviewing candidates in November.

**Sanctuary resolution (Linda Ruth)**

Linda made a presentation on a resolution for SFZC officially to become a sanctuary temple. The resolution is modeled after similar resolutions from other organizations. Linda reported on due diligence was done with an immigration attorney, Ron Wada, and with SF city officials, about the risks to SFZC, including its status as a school for international students, and the consensus was that risks to SFZC are minimal.

Minor word changes to the resolution were proposed in five or six places.

Questions were raised about the consequences to SFZC for becoming a sanctuary temple, especially regarding any operational impact. There was a question from the board about whether a senior administrative body, such as the O&D, had reviewed and approved the resolution. It was noted that the proposal had come to SIT, prior to any of the due diligence efforts or the drafting of a resolution, and that, while generally supportive, some SIT members raised concerns, and the group had been assured that the issue would be revisited once there had been work done to address these concerns. This had not yet happened, however, so neither SIT nor any other administrative group had approved the resolution.

Julia moved to table the resolution, which Fu seconded. The motion to table passed with three opposed to tabling and two abstentions.

**The board met in Executive Session and adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,

Jeremy Levie

Secretary