

D R A F T (may have some changes on 9/17)

Albuquerque Insight Meditation Center

Agenda for Annual Membership Meeting

Sunday, September 17, 2017

Call to Order at 3:00 p.m.

Meditation (5)

Reading of Aspirations and Values, Introduction of current 2016-2017 BOD and Officers who are present, Welcome to attending membership by President (6)

Summary of this BOD year's activity - Tiska (5)

Reports from each Committee Chair (25/5 minutes or less per presentation by Committee Chairs = Home of Our Own (HOO), Communications, Care, Retreat & Residency (R&R), Dharma Leadership Council (DLC), Volunteer Coordinator). The report will include intro of volunteers on their committee by standing if in attendance. With the R&R report, Anne will discuss an update to Erin Treat's visits in 2018 (See **** below.) and will be reporting last allowing for more lengthy discussion that might occur. Also, other Membership questions about reports, along with other issues raised may be asked.

Presentation of slate of BOD applicants, reading of statements by applicants or their representative, questions for them before the vote?

(20/4 each):

Debbie Benton (Alison will read for Debbie)

Daniel Collett

Jen Tucker

Mel Schneider (Sarah Schwartz will read for Mel)

Alison Owens - if elected, Alison will begin a 2nd 2-year term

Note: Copy of applicants' statements attached below. The by-laws state the BOD may have as many as 9 members and as few as 5. Currently 4 BOD members will continue into their second year of a 2-year term, 4 are leaving the BOD and 1 may be re-elected and start another two-year term. Therefore, 4 new members may be elected to two year terms.

Vote by ballot - passed out to all members, only members may vote, in attendance and prepared by Anne Arkin, Secretary. (10 minutes)

Count votes as potluck begins at 4:40 (Tiska & Anne)

New BOD announced by President when all seated and before potluck

breaks up -

Announce by 5:30 p.m. - cheers!

**** Planning for Erin Treat 2018

During 2016, the Retreat and Residency committee began to consider the idea of having a single teacher come more often to the sangha--in this way members could develop a practice relationship with the teacher as well as deepen their own practices. This arrangement wouldn't limit us only to that teacher coming, but planning other visiting teachers would happen around the primary teacher.

Bringing this idea to the Board of Directors (BOD), we proposed Erin Treat as her home is relatively close, and she had time and interest. When Erin came in Nov.2016 for a week-long residency, she met with several groups in the sangha and everyone seemed pleased with the possibilities for a long-term relationship.

This is the origin of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Erin, to be a guiding teacher for 2017-18. Since her schedule for 2017 was already quite full, we carved out a few times in that year that she would be able to come, mostly to do development work which the BOD and DLC very much needed as the main leadership groups for the sangha, and also offer some teachings and practice discussions for the community, as time allowed. We also agreed when we signed the first year MOU in Feb 2017 that in 2018 she would come for 4 week-long residencies, and those visits would be more devoted to practice with the community.

As 2017 has progressed, the time and energy required to work with the BOD and DLC was more than had been expected on either side, and as good progress has been made in strengthening the leadership, it is evident to her that her best work with us is not in offering teachings, but in offering targeted support to all interested members in order to develop more leadership from within our community. The goal is helping to secure overall sustainability for our sangha.

I am hoping you will come to the annual meeting to be among the first to hear the preliminary details of the plan for 2018. Here is your opportunity to contribute your thoughts before the details are finalized.

For those members who can't come to the meeting, I will be sending out an email with a summary of the plan thus far, and an invitation to continue to be part of the process in a future open meeting, or via emails, depending on what is the prevailing preference.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Arkin
coordinator, Retreat and Residency committee

(continue for candidate statements)

BOD Candidate Statements:

Alison Owens

I have been involved with AIMC for seven years and have found that i get so much more out of it when i am actively engaged. I am just completing a two-year term on the board of directors and want to continue serving in this capacity. Sangha leadership has changed dramatically in the past few years and I feel that my continued presence will lend some consistency and stability as we move forward. Since the end of 2013, when i helped us find our present building, much of my effort for the sangha has been focused on the Home of Our Own Committee, which i now chair. HOO continues to make improvements in the furnishings and decor of our facility, creates policies and procedures for building usage, and maintains a bridge of positive communication with the building owners.

I want to continue to help grow our sangha community into a vital force which enriches our lives while making the dharma available to all.

Daniel Collett

There are 7 kinds of offerings that can be practiced even by those who are not wealthy, (according to the Buddha)

1. Physical offering, service by labor
2. Spiritual offering, Offer compassionate heart to others
3. Offer eyes, a warm glance to others which will give them tranquility
4. Countenance, a soft face with smile to others
5. Oral, offer warm and kind words
6. Seat, offer one's seat for another
7. Shelter, offer to let others spend the night at one's home.

When asked to serve on the board, these offerings came to mind and I thought, immediately, I can offer my service. When asked why I would like to serve, well, it comes down to simply wanting to help in the community I have aligned myself with. The Dharma was brought to me by my professors and then I sought it out through my own personal suffering. Since putting it into practice I have witnessed my life improve tremendously. Important, then, to reciprocate by rising to this opportunity.

Mel Schneider

I've been an active member of our Sangha since 2001. The first vipassana retreat I sat was here in NM at the Lama Foundation in 1982. I sat close to 50 retreats of a week or longer in length before 2000 – including four 3-month retreats at IMS between 1994 & 1999. Practice has been an integral part of my life for the past 35 yrs.

I care deeply about our sangha and think I may have a *historical perspective* to bring to the Board that could be valuable. There were three major decisions made over this past year that troubled me, two of them made by the Board, and one that even a Board member I spoke to didn't know by whom or how it was made. (The three decisions were (1) to contract with Erin to be a consultant to the Board and to the Community Dharma Leader [CDL] group, (2) changing the name of AVS to AIMC, and - most importantly because of its break with a long-held and what some might call a sacred tradition, (3) charging for fees for Sangha events. Prior to this past year when such major decisions were to be decided, as I remember it, there were special membership meetings held that any member who cared to could attend participate in the decision-making process. (In fact, for the first several years I was a sangha member the decisions that were made at these meetings had to be made by a *full consensus* of those present.

I'm *not* suggesting that practice be re-instituted.) I was rather vocal about my dislike for *how* the three decisions were made. With the exception of the decision made *without the participation of the Board*, I want to stress that *it was not the decisions per se that I had a problem with*, rather it was with *how they were made*.

If I had had a vote in the decisions, I may well have voted in favor of the decisions made. Had I been on the Board I think I would have voiced my concern about the non-Board membership not being included in decision making process. Also, we may not have charged an *administrative fee* for a **Beginners Class**. (Even if it was necessary to charge for some Sangha events, in my opinion, the last place to do that would be a Beginners Class where we might possibly be depriving someone(s) of being introduced to Buddha-Dhamma.) And lastly, the **C** of the AIMC might stand for **Community** rather than **Center**, a much warmer and inviting choice in my opinion.

I was aware there was contentiousness and emotional stress within the Board and within the CDL group but I was in the dark as to what the disagreements were about. I doubt that I could have helped even had I known what was going on, but I don't know for certain I couldn't have.

I can't begin to tell you the difference practicing Buddha-Dhamma has made to my life or the extent that my life has been enriched by our AVS/AIMC. I like to give back when I can.

Jennifer Tucker

Each morning, I close my formal sitting practice by taking the refuges. I'm running for the AIMC board because I know the truth of the Dharma, and believe in the power of the Sangha to support personal and collective liberation. Through board service, I hope to be of use to our growing community of practitioners.

I've been a student of mindfulness since 2001, and a committed Vipassana practitioner since 2011. Since then, I've sat about 50 nights of retreat and completed two 18-month programs (Commit to Dharma at the East Bay Meditation Center and the Mindful Yoga & Meditation Training at Spirit Rock). In addition to my commitment to practice, I would bring leadership experience to the Board. Before my job as an Assistant Professor of Community & Regional Planning at UNM, I worked as a community organizer and development practitioner in the US, Paraguay and Peru on issues of environmental, economic and racial justice. I've served as the elected Chair of the Berkeley Graduate Student Union (UAW 2865) and a Board Member at Planned Parenthood Shasta Diablo (in California), and I have considerable experience in facilitation and organizational development. With Kathryn Turnipseed, I've developed a popular class at AIMC, "Waking up to Whiteness: Unlearning Racism through Mindfulness," which is drawing new people to AIMC and has received media attention from Santa Fe public radio (KSFR). I've also been invited by the Board to join a new ad hoc committee on diversity and inclusion.

Thanks to the dedication of many, AIMC is a strong community. I believe that the AIMC board can help our sangha grow and diversify to include more young people and people of color. AIMC can be a refuge for many, an incubator for compassionate hearts, and a space where we can together cultivate our capacity to respond skillfully in the face of suffering and harm.

My name is Debbie Benton and I am submitting my name for consideration for placement on the board of the Albuquerque Insight Meditation Center. First, please accept my apologies for not being here in person today. Unfortunately, I had a previous out of state commitment that prevented my attendance from this meeting.

I have been a part of AIMC for the past 2 1/2 years. During that time I have come to treasure the warmth and beauty of this community. AIMC has provided a spiritual home for me that has helped me to appreciate, better understand and live the Dharma. Through the support of this sangha, I have grown in many ways and would like to have the opportunity to give back to the community through service on the board.

I have been a volunteer at the sangha for about two years, bringing flowers, opening and closing the facility, and acting as a greeter. Volunteering in these capacities has allowed me to interact with many of AIMC's members, increasing my appreciation for the people who make up our community.

Outside of AIMC, I am a teacher at a local elementary school. Additionally, I have been a private school administrator who interacted regularly with the school's board of trustees. I believe that I bring a basic understanding of the commitments needed to be an effective board member. If elected, I am committed to upholding the AIMC stated mission and the aspirations and values, both as a board member and in my public life. I am willing to work to the best of my ability to fulfill my duties and assist our community to continue to grow in positive ways.

I have the highest regard for this community and very much appreciate your consideration in allowing me to be a part of the AIMC board.

Sincerely,

Debbie Benton