

Albuquerque Vipassana Sangha

Minutes of Membership Meeting -- 3 December 2000

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The meeting began about 4:15 p.m. at Joan Granger's house. Approximately 14 members of the sangha were present, including board members Suzanne Kryder, Stanley (Sandy) Lee, Wynette Richards, Mel Schneider and Paula Stern. Board members Paul Tashjian and Mary Roy were absent. The meeting was facilitated by sangha member Tam Saimons.

Treasurer's report

Treasurer Wynette Richards reported that the sangha currently has about \$3900 in total assets, including the checking and savings accounts and cash. She is currently verifying the sources of the sangha's funds, and reported the following approximate and preliminary results:

\$1205	surplus from sandwich retreat - August 2000
121	surplus rent donations
189	dana contributions
965	contribution from dissolution of Southwest Dharma Association
777	donations earmarked for scholarships
11	interest on savings account

Report on Santa Fe sangha meeting

Several members of our sangha attended the Santa Fe sangha's monthly meeting on November 12 to participate in a discussion concerning the teacher selection process and candidate Shaila Tromovitch in particular. Tam, Mel and Will Arthur gave brief descriptions of their impressions of the meeting and emphasized the need to maintain open lines of communication with Santa Fe regarding the teacher selection process. Tam also encouraged all the members of our sangha to attend the Santa Fe meetings, both as participants and also to observe the manner in which the meetings are conducted, and to learn from their extensive experience in holding facilitated meetings. The next Santa Fe meeting will be held in January (*we think? -- not sure of the dates*).

Retreat committee report

Bonnie Kelly gave a short report on the status of the retreat committee. The committee currently plans to hold three retreats in 2001: the New Year's retreat, a sandwich retreat with Eric Kolvig in December and a camping retreat, also with Eric. Bonnie handed out a questionnaire which the retreat committee is circulating to get input from the sangha about the members' interests in terms of future retreats. She also reported that several people have volunteered to serve on the committee, and that it is now adequately staffed.

There was some discussion about whether or not the surplus funds from this year's sandwich retreat should be earmarked for use in future retreats. Several members of the retreat committee gave their recollections of a committee meeting where this issue was discussed; however, no one was exactly sure as to what the final decision, if any, of the committee had been. This led to a related discussion on the broader topic of whether, and how, the sangha should earmark funds for particular purposes. Currently the sangha does not have a general policy on earmarking funds, and several people suggested that we should develop one. This topic was left open for further discussion at future meetings.

Fund-raising committee proposal

Sandy Lee presented a proposal from the fund-raising committee. The committee currently consists of Vicki Gottlieb, Will Arthur, Paul Tashjian and Sandy. The complete text of the proposal is listed below; its main points are (1) that the sangha hold a fund-raising event in the early spring to raise our share of the teacher-search expenses (which is expected to be no more than \$1200 to \$1400), and (2) that after the new resident teacher has been selected, we have a fund-raising mailing for the specific purpose of raising our share of the teacher stipend expenses (currently estimated, very approximately, as \$3600 per year).

During a discussion of the proposal, it was pointed out that it is intended to be a general, high level proposal which does not yet address many of the details which must be worked out. The consensus of the membership was to adopt the proposal, with the following additions: (1) for both the spring fund-raiser for the teacher-search expenses and the mailing for the teacher stipend, if either activity does not raise sufficient money for its intended purpose, the sangha will carry out additional fund-raising activities to make up the difference (that is, we will not simply "raid the sangha's surplus" if the initial efforts fall short of their goal), and (2) any extra money generated by the teacher-search fund-raiser be earmarked for the teacher stipend fund.

The committee was also directed to obtain more information regarding when the Santa Fe sangha would require our part of the teacher stipend to be paid (e.g., in one lump sum vs. throughout the year), and to begin discussing with Santa Fe the potentially sensitive issue of handling overlaps between the Santa Fe's fund-raising mailing list and our own Albuquerque membership, now that we will be committing ourselves to raising significant funds for our share of the teacher's stipend.

Visioning committee proposal

Suzanne Kryder presented a proposal from the visioning committee, consisting of Betsy VanLeit, Bonnie Kelly, Judith Kidd, Mel Schneider and Suzanne. The committee has planned a "guiding vision party" to be held on Sunday, February 4, 2001 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The tentative location will be Suzanne's house in Placitas, and the purpose of the party is for the sangha to decide where we are heading, what we want to have happen, and where to put our energies. The party/meeting will be facilitated by Michelle Goodman from the Santa Fe sangha. The proposal was enthusiastically approved by the sangha, including a payment of \$150 for Michelle's services to be paid out of the sangha's rent surplus. Sangha members who participate will also have the opportunity to offer dana to Michelle at the end of the party, as her charging us only \$25 per hour for her services represents an act of generosity on her part.

Adelante key duty

Sandy raised the issue of the need for additional people to share in the rotation of responsibility for unlocking and closing up at Adelante before and after Thursday night meetings. Although this "key duty" used to be rotated among three or four people, Sandy has been the main person to do it for the past several months. Several people said they might be willing to join the rotation, including Will, Hilary Heyl, David Donelson, Joan and Tam. It was suggested that it would be easier for people to split up key duty by having one person responsible for opening and another person handling locking up, and that if we had two keys for Adelante rather than just one, this division of responsibility could take place without having to swap the key every week between the opening and closing persons. Sandy agreed to ask Mike Kivitz of Adelante if he would be willing to allow us the use of a second key.

Discussion of new location

On the topic of a new site for Thursday nights, several people voiced the concern that once we have a new teacher, our current location will be too small for the expected number of people. One possibility for a new location is Nahalat Shalom (*spelling?*), a Jewish renewal center located in the North Valley. The center has a large room with lots of chairs, but no carpet. Another possible site is the new Adelante center on Carlisle, just south of Indian School. This also has lots of space, but has a potential problem with traffic noise from Carlisle.

It was decided that we should have a discussion about location issues at the next membership meeting in February, including an attempt to identify and prioritize the features that are important to us in a meeting site.

Beginner's class

Suzanne Kryder announced that the sangha will be offering three sets of beginning meditation classes over the next few months. Each class will consist of three, 45 minute meetings on consecutive Thursday nights, held concurrently with the Thursday night sitting. The classes are scheduled for February, June and October of 2001. They will be taught by Suzanne, Joan and Fred McEnroe, and will include some basic teaching about the dharma as well as meditation instruction.

Due to a lack of time, a discussion of issues related to the format of Thursday night meetings, such as maintaining silence prior to the sitting and dealing with late entrants, was postponed to the next membership meeting. The meeting adjourned at about 6:05 p.m., and was followed by a very successful potluck dinner. Thanks as usual to Joan for her marvelous hospitality in hosting the meeting.

* * * * * Stanley Lee, secretary * * * * *

Fund-Raising Committee Report and Proposal for consideration at December 3, 2000 membership meeting

Teacher search expenses

Our sangha's share of the teacher search expenses for bringing Shaila Tromovitch and Mark Coleman to New Mexico are currently estimated to be at most \$600 to \$700. (These amounts are based on our sangha contributing 20% of the total expense.) If we guesstimate a similar amount for the two remaining candidates (Daeja Napier and Wes Nisker), our total share would be around \$1200 to \$1400. We propose:

1. These funds be paid to the Santa Fe sangha once the exact amounts have been determined, using the funds currently available in the sangha checking account.
2. A fund-raising event be held in the early spring to restore the money used for the teacher search expenses. One obvious possibility would be to hold another sangha yard sale. Now that the sangha has its 501(c)(3) status, we could solicit donations from businesses of merchandise for the yard sale, in addition to contributions of merchandise from sangha members.

Teacher stipend expenses

The Santa Fe sangha has informed us that they expect the stipend for the new teacher will probably be somewhat more than the amount that was paid to Eric, largely because of increased housing costs. We are currently estimating our share of the stipend at \$3600 per year (based on 20% of \$1500 per month; Eric's stipend and health insurance benefit was about \$1200 per month). *This figure is only an estimate at this time!* We propose:

1. We plan on raising this money primarily through sending out a fund-raising mailing. The mailing would be sent both to members of the sangha, and other interested people based on additional mailing lists (such as the sangha's general mailing list and, perhaps, the mailing list of the former Southwest Dharma Association).

2. This fund-raising mailing would be used solely for raising money to help support the resident teacher, and this would be made clear in the letters sent out.
3. The mailing would take place *after* the selection of the teacher, so that people would know whom they would be supporting with their contribution.