**Nebraska Zen Center**

Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting

November 13, 2022

**Meeting Notification:** Notice of meeting made via email to all Directors

**Meeting Location:** Nebraska Zen Center and via Zoom video conference

**Board Members Present:**

Pam Griffin (2022) President

Fergus Hoban (2022) Vice President

Vicki Grunwald (2022) Treasurer

George Patenode (2022) Secretary

Scott Rosen (2022)

Michael Pray (2022)

The meeting was called to order by Pam Griffin, President, at 11:43 am. Attendance was taken and a quorum was present.

**Agenda**

The Board reviewed and approved the Minutes of the NZC Board of Directors Meeting of September 11, 2022.

Scott Rosen notified the board that neither George Patenode nor Michael Pray are named in any filing documents with the Nebraska Secretary of State office for Nebraska Zen Center (NZC). After discussion it was decided to wait until after the annual Sangha meeting in February 2023 when board members are elected to amend the filing with the Nebraska Secretary of State.

Communication Committee

Pam provided details of a previous Communication Committee meeting. The Committee decided the NZC emailed newsletter previously issued weekly will now move to monthly to create free time for other projects and to help make the NZC website the principal source of event information. The Committee also decided to add social media links to the NZC website. Michael Pray suggested that the Tech Committee could create the ability for Communication Committee members to post the newsletter directly on the NZC site so that emailed notices that redirect to the NZC site would replace the newsletter. Pam and others decided this idea was worthwhile and Michael stated that he would include this topic in the next Tech Committee meeting.

Pam also stated that NZC recently hired a professional photographer to take photos of Sangha members, etc. for the social media campaign. The photo shoot took place on November 12th at NZC and the Committee will select 200 photos for use. An additional photo shoot will take place late May or early June when the NZC garden is in bloom and Daishin McCabe is able to be in attendance.

The current fund raising campaign continues and Pam stated that the Committee has discussed using Share Omaha for fundraising during spring/summer of 2023. There was also discussion in the Committee of having an open house at NZC during the start or end of the Share Omaha fundraising event that could possibly include catered food and a live band. The Committee will continue to discuss this possibility.

Technology Committee

Mike Pray, as the Tech Committee chair, stated that the Committee recently resolved various Zoom access issues such as the expiration of the recurring meeting for Sunday morning services. The Committee is also working towards allowing certain Board members to have Zoom login access under the member’s personal email address so that multiple people can have the ability to move, edit and post Sunday morning services from the Zoom cloud to YouTube.

Building and Grounds Committee

Mike Pray, as the Building and Grounds Committee chair, notified members of a list he created for use by the Sangha for needed supplies, of which Pam mentioned that the white board in the kitchen is available. Mike also stated that he is reviewing bids for professional snow removal this winter, contingent upon whether a certain Sangha member is still available to do so. Mike will report back to the board next meeting concerning snow removal. Otherwise, no other clean-up or repair projects are planned for the rest of the year.

Social Media Branding

The Board is now contractually engaged with Filament Essential Services as the marketing company used for NZC brand development. The intended deliverables are a new logo and slogan for NZC. The branding exercise has just started the eight-week process with no new developments reported to the board for the meeting.

Treasurer Report

Vicki Grunwald, Treasurer, provided Treasury reports to the board and gave an overall assessment that the level of donations and savings account balances for NZC are very healthy for the current period. The Treasury accounts are balanced with $910.76 in transit from PayPal. The balances include the large donor match from previous fund raising. The fundraising for the funeral ceremony for recently departed Rev. Nonin Chowaney have not met the paid expenses with approximately $435.00 still needed. Vicki reported that there are two outstanding exception log items involving a Buddha statute purchased for $100 and deck staining of the handicap ramp for $400. No receipts were made available to Vicki but were reasonable expenses and paid regardless. Vicki stated that she will also organize the financial reports by each Committee’s approved budget amounts.

Membership Committe

Prior to the meeting, Daishin McCabe proposed via email various ideas in how to make Zen practice more engaging for visitors, and how to offer a more structured course of Zen practice for on-boarding new members. Pam continued the discussion during the meeting. The Communication Committee is planning a membership drive in January or February 2023 and discussions are occurring on the committee level in how to incorporate Daishin’s ideas in the campaign. Such ideas are concerning the frequency and consistency of the Intro to Zen Practice offered by NZC, and whether the offerings can coordinated with the monthly visits by Daishin. Potential yoga courses by a select yoga teacher for visitors was briefly discussed. The offering of regularly scheduled children’s program and the recent survey of interest made by a current NZC member were also discussed. Pam and Fergus Hoban discussed his proposed steps in onboarding new members and when such steps could become available for discussing by the Board.

Priest Search

Two prospective candidates for NZC Guiding Teacher were discussed, and the next steps for Board and Sangha evaluation, which would include inviting each prospective teacher for a weekend at NZC to teach and possibly lead a session. After each proposed weekend the Board would engage the Sangha for each member’s consideration of the candidate. The members found this approach appropriate and Pam will engage each candidate for an opportunity for a weekend visit. Otherwise, no other Guiding Teacher candidates have come forwarded in response to the previous letter mailing to various Zen centers.

The purpose and use in the creation of an endowment at NZC as it relates to a Guiding Teacher were also generally discussed with no decision made for or against the creation of an endowment at this time.

New Administrative Position

Pam, and Sangha member Terra Hall as the new paid administrative contractor, will together discuss Terra’s roles and responsibilities soon after the Board meeting. Pam, in her capacity as Board President, will be her direct supervisor. The new position is for a three-month trial beginning in November 2022 and ending in time for the annual Sangha meeting in February 2023. The stated purpose of this new paid position is to help alleviate Pam’s current obligations so that she can concentrate more on her duties as President. Board governance structures and accountability for the position were also generally explored.

Terra will work 10 hours per week at an hourly rate of $30.00 per hour. If additional work hours are needed for Terra then Pam will advise. Pam mentioned that Terra intends to continue to volunteer additional time to NZC as before.

The purchase of a new laptop computer and printer for NZC was discussed. Mike Pray stated that the new laptop would be labeled as NZC property and Terra would have an Apple account that included administrative rights by the Tech Committee. Whether Terra used the laptop at her home or at NZC would be determined during the 90-day period, but that home use by Terra

would be permitted. After discussion, all members voted in favor to purchase a new laptop and printer as previously proposed via email by the Tech Committee.

Miscellaneous

A new interment marker was discussed for Rev. Chowaney with Pam suggesting prices, marker sizes and potential statuary. The marker is intended for the cremation interment site located in the backyard of NZC. Fergus motioned to both grant authority to Pam and Terra to provide suitable marker and statuary options to the Board when they are ready and a $1,000 budget. All Board members voted in favor of both the authority and budget and the motion carried.

Vicki stated that Sunday morning attendance has been stable for the recent time from mid-July to present. Vicki will provide an attendance graph at a later date. Pam notified Vicki that social media tracking recently started and metrics could also be provided to her.

George and Pam briefly discussed December’s Rohatsu sesshin and that it would prevent having the Full Moon ceremony during Daishin’s attendance. The potential of a New Year’s Eve ceremony and pot luck dinner was also discussed.

Next Board meeting scheduled in February and will include the annual Sangha meeting. Pam will send out dates for Board meetings in 2023. Board decided that meetings will occur quarterly.

The meeting ended at 1:04 pm.

George Patenode, Secretary

Nebraska Zen Center Board of Directors, November 13, 2022