

Nebraska Zen Center

Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting November 3 2024

Meeting Notification

Notice of meeting made via Nebraska Zen Center (NZC) website, newsletter and email.

Meeting Location

Nebraska Zen Center

Board Members Present

Pam Griffin	President (ending 2027)
George Patenode	Vice-President (ending 2025)
Vicki Grunwald	Treasurer (ending 2025)
Mike Pray	Secretary (ending 2026)
Fergus Hoban	(ending 2027)
Karalee Picard	(ending 2026)
Daishin McCabe	(non-voting member)
Scott Rosen	(ending 2025)

Board Members Absent:

None

Sangha Members Present

Summer Wind
Shinkyu Cote (Resident Priest-in-Training)

Board of Directors Meeting

Meeting was called to order by Pam Griffin, President, at 12:00 noon. Attendance was taken and a quorum was present.

The previous meeting minutes were approved. Approval of special meeting minutes from September was deferred.

Treasurer's Report (12:02)

Vicki Grunwald, Treasurer discussed an increase in the deficit. Tech committee will need to increase its budget since Matt Heuttner was paying for hosting and domain name on his personal card, which has since expired and we have moved those fees to NZC

Communications Committee Report (12:05)

Pam Griffin, Board President gave a brief report about the activities of the communications committee. Most website content and calendar management was handled by the outgoing AD, and additional help is needed pending hiring a new AD. Jenny and Pam will meet with Terra for instruction on administrative access to the website in the meantime.

Daishin and Shinkyu have been creating short form videos, but we don't have anyone managing the Instagram account currently (this job was performed by the outgoing AD). Fergus set up a WhatsApp group chat for storage of videos available for short-form Instagram reels.

Need to start fundraising messages for Giving Tuesday. The President asked for matching funds from the Board. Summer volunteered to serve on a future Fundraising Committee.

Technology Committee Report (12:17)

Mike Pray, Committee chair of the Technology Committee, gave a report discussing the activities of the technology committee. Current committee members: Mike Pray, Board member and committee chair; volunteers Corson Androski and Roger Schmeits are intermittent). Business as usual.

Building and Grounds Committee Report (12:20)

Mike Pray, Committee chair of the Building & Grounds Committee, gave a report discussing the activities of the building and grounds committee (current chair is Mike Pray, with volunteer member Jason Gaines).

Last work day was in September. There is a Friday morning weekly work period where one or two people show up. Next work period is November 16 1pm - 3pm.

The roof was inspected by an adjuster, which passed except for the ridge vents and valleys which the board decided to defer since it does not meet the insurance deductible.

Tree service was requested from Hughes Tree Service earlier in the year, but was deferred for various reasons. Mike agreed to get a new estimate including trimming the oak tree, locust tree, and removing the diseased crabapple, either from Hughes or other provider.

A motion was passed to get a free energy audit.

The board held discussion regarding looking into geothermal as a heat source, and that after brief consideration it was determined not to pursue it at this time due to the prohibitive costs.

Ethics Committee (12:32)

Daishin, as chair of the Ethics committee (including Fergus and Diane as members), has collected Conflict of Interest statement signatures from board members, but they are missing some information. The Conflict of Interest statements should be reviewed yearly.

Report on services and practice (12:37)

Jenny is starting as a morning Doan. The board discussed how to ensure that doans who are not able to cover their 'shift' should look for a replacement. Summer asked about splitting the doan position into two separate positions, but George indicated there are not enough volunteers to cover.

The board briefly discussed commitment level, receiving the precepts, and service roles.

Pam, George and Shinkyu have formed an ad-hoc Sesshin/Retreat committee. Daishin mentioned that our current spring/fall sesshin schedule is a good balance.

The board discussed three primary roles (Doan, Altar-person, and Tenzo) and how to request commitment for service jobs. Daishin suggested this could be associated with an ango, or practice period, in the Spring. George, Pam, Vicki and Daishin will discuss outside of the meeting.

Regarding attendance, Shinkyu mentioned that one or two people come every morning, with one to four people on Wednesday nights, and Sunday mornings are full. In general, attendance is good and steady, but not growing.

AD Hiring Search (12:55)

Mike set up an Indeed posting for free, which received 21 applications over a month. Karalee created a rubric and scoresheet, and Pam and Karalee scored the applicants. Pam and Karalee will begin interviews with five or six interviewees. We discussed having one to three rounds of interviews with acceptance conditional on passing a background check. We discussed maintaining the hours at 20 hours a week. Pam will circulate the current AD job description to the board members for review.

Outreach (1:03pm)

Shinkyu is doing a book club with the Tri-Faith Center. Shinkyu will give a talk with MOI (Mindfulness Outreach Initiative), and will contact Sister Tri from Lotus Monastery about a visit. Summer suggested reaching out to the Buddhist Peace Fellowship. The traveling Tibetan monks will be coming through Omaha again next week.

Residency (1:06)

Daishin and Pam have been reaching out to other Zen Centers and teachers, including the SZBA with NZC's resident-priest-in-training program. Daishin indicated a potential availability in March 2025.

Volunteering (1:12)

A Kanban volunteer board is being set up in the entryway, and will be introduced with a newsletter entry.

Miscellaneous (1:14)

Next year is NZC's 50th Anniversary. Pam solicited ideas for how to celebrate. Because of an entry in the Minnesota Zen Center archives, it appears that Katagiri established NZC in 1975 as abbot, with incorporation in 1977. One idea discussed was a 50 hour sit as a fundraising event.

The Sherwood Foundation grant has been filed with a decision date forthcoming.

Next meeting is February 16th 2025, which includes the annual member meeting. Pam solicited names for new board members.

Shinkyu has a contact with the Tricycle magazine and indicated that he might write an article about running a Zen temple.

Pam adjourned the meeting at 1:21 pm.

Attachments for the Record

Agenda

Treasurer's Report

Mike Pray

Secretary, Nebraska Zen Center Board of Directors

November 3 2024