Nebraska Zen Center
Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting
July 12, 2026

Meeting Notification
Notice of meeting was provided at the last board meeting and via email.

Meeting Location
Nebraska Zen Center

Board Members Present
Benji Frith, President (ending 2028)
Pam Griffin, Secretary (ending 2027)
Jon Bakehouse, Director (ending 2029)
Diane Jorgensen, Director (ending 2029)
Matt Hawkins, Director (ending 2027) (via Zoom)
Yupin (aka Joyce) Chao, Treasurer (ending 2029)
Sarah Neppl, Vice President (ending 2028)

Board Members Absent
None

Sangha Members Present
Brian Shinkyu Cote, resident priest in training
George Patenode, Ino
Ileana Monarrez
Archie Sayre
Erin Mockler

Board Meeting
The board meeting was called to order by the President at 12:30 pm, and opened with a minute of silent reflection. Attendance was as indicated above; a quorum was present. A motion passed unanimously to approve the previous Board Meeting minutes.

Benji reviewed the action items from the last meeting:
- Certain board members were going to reach out to various contacts regarding treasury functions; this is ongoing.
- Paypal/Zeffy discussion was tabled until this meeting.
- We are adding a priest report by Shinkyu to the regular agenda

Priest Report
Shinkyu reported on practice matters. Attendance for daily morning practice is good, with an average of 3 people attending per day. Sunday attendance has been very good. After his shuso ceremony on July 19, Shinkyu will host a practice period that includes two more meditation periods a day, starting the 21st. Tuesday book group has shrunk, with 2-3 people; considering upcoming books for review. Wednesday night meditation generally attracts only 1 or 2

people, and the Thursday book group even less. It could be a summer lull. The Heart Sutra challenge on July 4 was attended and carried out by a core group of practitioners.

Shinkyu is planning to write up instructions for morning doans, to clarify changes in liturgy and ritual with a doshi present. Bristol Hospice visited here; they are interested in our practice, perhaps for patients and/or staff.

Shinkyu's shuso ceremony next Sunday includes a role for "temple administrators," and he asked if 2 or 3 board members could participate. Jon, Diane and Pam agreed.

Treasury Report

A treasury report for January through June 2026 was provided prior to the meeting. Joyce reported that, as of the end of June, the bank account balances are healthy, with total income year to date of $40,080 and expenses of $21,198, leaving a positive balance of $18,881. That includes $16,000 from the fundraiser, designated to the Building and Grounds fund. Aside from the fundraiser, regular income was $24,000, leaving a balance of $3,000 after expenses. The total balance from all bank accounts is $105,390. Joyce asked the board to approve moving $23,000 from the checking account to the money market account. On motion and second, the board voted to approve moving the funds.

On motion and second, the board voted to accept the Treasury report.

IT Committee

To follow up from the last meeting, Diane asked the board members about backup access to various apps and functions required for NZC's operations. It appears at this time we have adequate backup authority. She reported that the registration form for sesshins has been updated to be more user-friendly, following review by the priests and George. The membership application has also been updated.

In the recent sangha forum, a sangha member asked about establishing a community forum site like Discord. There is some interest in this, but a proposal would need to be written up and submitted to the board. The issue is tabled until then.

The board then discussed the pros and cons of moving NZC's payment functions from Paypal to Zeffy. Diane summarized a chart of pros and cons that was submitted to the board prior to the meeting; other board members added comments and information. There are some outstanding questions about integration of Zeffy with the MoneyMinder finance system. Joyce said that, despite actions taken to eliminate carding issues on Paypal, they are still showing up and costing NZC money. Diane requested the board to approve the IT committee going forward with further exploration of migrating payment functions, based on both prior and new information, until the next board meeting. A question of whether to pay extra fees to Paypal for increased security in the interim was raised and tabled. The communications committee would be able to support communications around changing platforms. Joyce will contact Paypal again about the carding issue. Diane's motion was seconded and approved.

On motion and second, the board voted to accept the committee report.

Fundraising Committee

Pam referred to the report she provided prior to the meeting, and gave a summary. The current fundraiser ends tomorrow. Numbers are not final yet, but $18,394 is the total reflected on the Zeffy platform. Half of that represents matching funds applied. Peer-to-peer fundraising, including the Heart Sutra team effort, represents approximately $1,815 of that, although some general donations may be re-designated as peer-to-peer. Aside from our match donors, we have approximately 34 donors to date, eight of which are "large donors" (over $500). Our intention is to add all the matching funds into the final total. The fundraiser will be followed by thank-you notes and other forms of appreciation for donors. Also, the committee will assess whether to have another fundraising event this year, and Erin may explore grant opportunities to contribute toward the building and grounds goal.

The board discussed collaboration between the fundraising and sangha committees for the ongoing appreciation and cultivation of donors.

On motion and second, the board accepted the fundraising report.

Building & Grounds Committee

Jon provided a written report prior to the meeting., detailing the status of items requested by NZC's insurer, Church Mutual, following their inspection.

Jon thanked all the people who helped contact various contractors. Based on reviews from contractors, no significant foundation issues were found, but we may need some additional support beams. In addition, the exterior brick is falling off. Most of the committee's attention recently was focused on the list of recommendations by Church Mutual. For that, we obtained estimates from three contractors for tree work. Only one gave an estimate for removing the catalpa tree, for $15,000. Hughes Tree Services could trim all the trees, including trimming dead wood from the catalpa, for less than $2,000. Jon recommended the board accept the bid from Hughes. His motion was seconded and approved by the board. Board members suggested asking if the estimate is reduced if the work is performed in winter.

An electrical inspection, as recommended by Church Mutual, has been conducted. A number of other items on the Church Mutual list can probably be performed by volunteers. We have until December to complete the tasks. The board made suggestions regarding a railing for the front steps, but left the decision to the committee. The committee is authorized to spend up to $500 for materials and services on any project without board approval. Funds for the tree work can come from the Building and Grounds fund.

On motion and second, the report was accepted.

Sangha Committee

A written report was provided prior to the meeting. Benji reported that the committee would like to schedule a member event this fall. In addition, the committee wants to make a stronger effort to ask sangha members about membership, and would like to provide membership opportunities for active members who can't afford membership fees. After discussion of the issue by the board, Benji moved for board approval of a member event on Saturday, September 26 with a tentative budget of $350, and authorization for the sangha committee to offer non-fee membership at the committee's discretion. The motion was seconded and approved.

On motion and second, the board accepted the committee report.

Communications Committee

A written report was submitted to the board prior to the meeting.

Ethics Committee

A written report was submitted to the board prior to the meeting, indicating that all people who were requested to agree to the confidentiality obligations of Section C2C of the revised Ethics Policy have done so. There have been no ethics complaints brought to the committee.

On motion and second, the board accepted the committee report.

New Business

Pam asked the board to consider the question of who owns responsibility for the NZC Store (website sales of t-shirts, Nonin books and calligraphy), including maintaining inventory and fulfilling orders.

Sangha Questions and Comments

Archie would like to see more engagement with the local community by NZC. Archie will contact Keep Omaha Beautiful about performing clean-up in the neighborhood. Shinkyu is connecting with the Walnut Hill Neighborhood Association, and will attend a meeting soon. Matt suggested connecting with people and organizations at Walnut Hill Commons. Ileana informed the board she withdrew from the sangha committee.

The next meeting is scheduled for Sunday, August 9, after Sunday Open Zen. Shinkyu offered a dedication, and the meeting was adjourned at 2:08 pm.

Attachments for the Record
Agenda
Committee Reports: Treasury, Fundraising, Communications, IT, Ethics, and Building and Grounds

Secretary, Nebraska Zen Center Board of Directors
7/13/26