BOARD MEETING

7/25/2020

Attendees: Maya Horio; Mr. Yamashita; Ken Nakamura; Justin Kuramoto; Molly Kuramoto; Jay Lindenberg; Andrea Chapman; Rich Wolford; Rev. Hayashi

1) Consent Agenda

MOTION to pass consent agenda: -made by Andrea

-Seconded by Justin

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

2) Minister Report

-First virtual memorial service will be performed next week (Zoom). Otherwise, nothing significant to report.

3) President’s Report

Andrea has been going to the office on Wednesdays, doing the necessary things to upkeep the temple. Andrea is also taking the lead on virtual programing. Building has had a couple of new faucets installed.

Follow-up BCA webinar on reopening is scheduled for next week, will be attended by Andrea and Eric Ishii

4) Reopening

-8/2/2020 is next scheduled service. However, COVID-19 trends have been rising in the area. Even though Northern Virginia has been stable, we have attendees from Maryland, DC, etc. where cases have been rising. Maya recommends cancelling the next in person service

Board Debate: Everyone is in favor of canceling. E-mail will be sent to Sangha. Should explain why we’re canceling, (rising rates in the area, for example, Prince George’s County is pretty bad now) and determine when the next service will be. September? TBD?

MOTION: To cancel the service scheduled for 8/2/2020

Made by Andrea

Seconded by Molly

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Debate:

Maya: makes sense to keep with the plan of having services on 1st Sunday of the month. But, keep the option of cancelling if necessary, based on COVID-19 trends/conditions.

Jay: should have a brief meeting in the middle of August, with sole purpose of determining whether in-person service for September will go forward.

PLAN: Have a Board Meeting scheduled for 8/16/2020, 10:00 am, in order to determine if September service will go forward.

5) Virtual Offerings

-Continue to have virtual services. Andrea has been in charge of uploading to the website, and organizing videos of services, dharma talks, chanting, etc.

-Educational opportunities:

-Ken Nakamura has a series planned (3-part series on creating your own butsudon)

-Seminars by Sensei (e.g.: gratitude in Shin Buddhism; Buddhism for you and Me discussion group). Sensei wants to do 2 seminars a month beginning in September, focused on specific topics. Also wants to do a course geared towards new Virtual members.

-Podcast: Andrea and Molly have been discussing setting up a monthly podcast. Would like to use virtual programing funds to purchase microphones.

-“Grumpy Old Buddhists,” starring Jay and Ken (produced by Molly)

-“Buddhist, Not Buddha”, starring Andrea and Molly.

Idea is to have 2 podcasts, geared towards both genders. Having two a month would allow for releases of podcasts biweekly, while not being too demanding on people’s schedules. Main goal of podcasts is to showcase our experiences as Buddhists and regular people, focused on individual experiences. No other temple has podcasts, would allow Ekoji to be a trailblazer, while at the same time documenting an oral history of Ekoji and providing exposure to the temple. Podcast could also have guest stars.

-Ken is unsure, he’s not sure what a podcast is. Would like to hear some examples before deciding. Molly will provide some examples.

-Jay is willing to give it a try.

-Dharma School: will likely be virtual in the fall. Maya would like to restrict access to certain Dharma School recordings, in order to protect privacy for children and families. Per Andrea, there are ways to do this on the website (e.g. webpage with password). Curriculum will be adjusted in order to adapt with new normal (e.g. one class for all ages)

Debate: regarding virtual content in general, should we restrict any virtual offerings to virtual members only? We don’t really do this with any in-person stuff. On the other hand, restrictions would allow for some incentives to joining as virtual member. But, restrictions go counter to the point of the temple, spreading the Dharma. Depends on focus, spreading the Dharma? Or increasing membership? Likely, most people become members, of any category, to support the temple in their own way.

\*Consensus: No need to restrict virtual content, except for Dharma school stuff, which will be restricted due to minor/privacy reasons.

6) Virtual Membership:

Programming is all set up (Wild Apricot). Need a way for them to sign up and pay online before roll out. Should have a soft launch (asking current members to sign up with platform, make sure that it works), and then do a big roll-out with virtual members at the virtual fundraiser. Membership committee does not appear comfortable dealing with tracking virtual members. Plan is to vote on the membership platform at the August Board meeting.

7) Garden:

-The original architect of the garden visited recently, and he began to sob, because his vision of the garden has disappeared (to be able to see the “3 treasures”). Gabrielle is in charge of the garden committee, but she needs labor and financial help to maintain (overgrown, etc.). Trellis for the wisteria is collapsing. We need professional gardening tools. Gabrielle has a lot of plants that she wants to take out for various reasons, one being that the garden is losing its Japanese garden character.

Ideas:

-create an education series on the garden, teaching volunteers how to take care of the garden.

-make a video with either Gabrielle or the architect of the garden, educating about the garden.

-videos of walking/guided meditations added to virtual programing

-fundraising: adopting out portions of the garden. Plant sale of plants which don’t actually belong in the garden. Ask for donations at the end of educational videos.

-contact Shimizu Landscaping for maintenance and consultation. We’ve used them in the past, but not for a couple of years. BDK might pay for this. The last time they care out, Shimizu did a lot of work themselves, along with teaching garden committee members.

-ISSUE: should we stick with native plants but with Japanese design? This would be better for the ecosystem. Should reduce number of species of plants.

PLAN: bring Shimizu Landscaping out, along with the original designer of the garden, have them meet with Gabrielle and a member of the Board (Molly, Andrea, and/or Maya). Plan is to maintain Japanese character, but reducing species in order to make maintenance easier and to maximize indigenous plants. Shimizu can provide expert opinion on this.

8) Virtual Fundraiser:

Tentative dates: tie in with Eitaikyo: Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, October 15-17. Need speakers and events. Would help to have one or two big names (Rev. Umezu?). Have themes for the three days, past/present/future.

Next Board meeting dates:

-8/16/2020, 10:00 am

-8/30/2020: 10:00 am

Fall retreat date:

9/19/2020

MOTION TO ADJURN:

Made by Molly

Seconded by Andrea

Passed unanimously