**4/26/2020 Board Meeting Minutes**

Participants:

Rich Wolford

Maya Horio

Ken Nakamura

Andrea Chapman

Reverand Nariaki Hayashi

Michio Yamashita

Molly Kuramoto

Justin Kuramoto

Jay Lindenberg

**1) Consent Agenda**:

Plan to post minutes on website for transparency purposes. Want to review minutes before approving minutes, see how they read for a layperson (minutes for January, February, and March). After everyone has had a chance to review and comment, will make motion to approve minutes by email.

Debate: Should minutes be posted on website? Not sure if it’s necessary, or would be of benefit.

One benefit: members could have questions regarding where temple money is going, minutes could clarify that. Could provide people with information they want, before they decide becoming a member.

-Kalavenka already has a board report, has been in every volume last year.

PLAN: Add a short, one-paragraph summary at the end of meeting minutes, covering highlights of meeting. Meeting minutes from January, February, and March 2020 will now be approved. Meeting minutes written as is will be kept as official board documents.

*MOTION TO APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA*: Molly Kuramoto moves. (includes April Treasurer Report, and Board Minutes from January, February, and March 2020).

*Seconded* by Andrea Chapman.

*Unanimous approval*.

**2) Minister Report**

Will start educational class every Wednesday evening. Short session, focus is on history of Buddhism (lecture format.) Questions can be submitted by email.

Members have been asked to submit essay about how they’re feeling right now, and how Buddhism is helping them. Will be put on website

Title of this project: Everyday Buddhists: Living through crisis times.

Above noted projects will start in May.

**3) President’s Report**

Had virtual Eastern District Council (EDC) Meeting. Proposal was made to waive EDC dues. However, ultimate decision was for 50 percent dues for 2020, and later discussion in the fall regarding 2021 dues.

Eastern Buddhist League Conference was supposed to be in NYC in fall. Due to COVID-19, NYC will look to do a virtual conference, and host next year.

Federal policy regarding COVID-19 was discussed at the EDC meeting (CARES Act). Advised temples and boards to have discussion in applying for grants/loans as soon as portal opens, have short summary as to why money is needed (have a point person). Portal closes quickly, as the federal funds available tends to run out quickly.

Andrea and Maya have been trying to send out weekly updates to the board through e-mail. Will continue doing those.

Andrea and Jane Blechman have been meeting Thursdays through Zoom. Jane has been handling updates to website. Would like to include photo and first name to website for board members.

PLAN: use photo, first and last name, and title on the website. Idea is to make things more approachable to others at the temple.

**4) Temple Closure**

Still tracking DC, Maryland, and Virginia official guidelines. Very fluid, but even with phased reopening, the end of May is the earliest chance for reopening.

Problem: COVID will still be an issue even when Ekoji reopens. Need to take measures to protect members, particularly elderly/high risk members. Need plans for sanitation, social distancing, entry/exit, continued use of masks, HVAC system, frequency of cleaning, etc.

Possible solutions:

-Separate services (similar go what grocery stores do, seniors only)

-Outdoor services

-Continue offering virtual services, for those who don’t feel comfortable returning so soon.

PLAN: Discus specific measures in further detail at next meeting.

**5)** **Virtual Offerings**

-Virtual services have been going well

-Paypal has been showing donations from former members, and those new to temple. Virtual services have been a good outreach tool, in addition to being a beneficial tool for current members.

-Good participation from weekly senior check-ins

-Next book discussion scheduled for May 17

-Estate planning seminar is scheduled for 4/26/2020. First in planned quarterly series of Life Seminars.

-Other planned seminars (safety/awareness, nutrition, and mental health), schedule may have to be adjusted? Mental health seminar more useful now, and possibly move safety/awareness seminar to later in the year. Jay is point of contact for the mental health seminar.

-Religious Committee: had a planned onenju making seminar. Possible to do this virtually? Could avoid overbooking in the fall.

Reverand Hayashi says that the plan was to make onenju in the “official way,” which requires authentic materials from a store in California. It’s unclear if the store is currently open.

PLAN: hold on workshop and wait until Ekoji reopens, so we have the supplies we need. The workshop will also be recorded so that it can be broadcast virtually.

**6)** **Fundraising**

Brainstorm ideas to replace lost income due to the cancelling of Obon.

-Text-to-give program offered through Aplos accounting software

-Set up Zelle, Venmo, other payment services

-Communication to Sangha: send out carefully worded fundraising letter to members

Sangha member Cliff Long offers various walking tours in Baltimore. Once we reopen, he would offer a Sangha walking tour.

Fall Festivals? Should have checklists outlining volunteer signups, what’s needed, etc. so everything is ready to go with any festival opportunities.

Fundraising Dinner? Maybe have multiple events over a weekend, gives Sangha options (open house, Scotch tasting, onenju making workshop, religious seminars, etc. Many options for fundraising weekend, mix of religious and fun activities.)

Weekend Retreat? Possibly make it an Eastern District event?

Online auction?

Sangha Directory with ads?

Ads in the back of service program, once a month?

**7) BCA National Council Meeting**

Discussion regarding diversity/lack thereof, with BCA.

New Bishop: (Marvin Harada).

Slight increase in dues

Various fundraising ideas raised at National Council Meeting

**8) Facilities**

Archer Harmon has been working with the sign company, he is waiting to hear back from them regarding some minor design changes.

Plan is to not share a sign with Accotink (not enough space). Somebody will need to inform them. Maya will ask Frank and Jane for contact info, as they are the Sangha members who have been in contact with Accotink.

Kitchen: Feasibility study has been completed, approximate cost of $5,000.00. As expected, several mechanical and electrical upgrades are needed for a commercial kitchen. Total estimate for kitchen renovation is over $200,000, which is well above initial estimates. We need to receive clarification from the contractor regarding significant increase in prices. Maya will get more details, regarding what’s included in that price. Communication has not been good with current contractor (Masterworks Painting and Remodeling), will get second opinion from another contractor (It’s been a year and half since we paid the initial deposit).

\*Spring Board Retreat: will be held virtually, with emphasis on development of virtual programs.

Tentative date: May 16, 2020, 9:00 am to 12:00 pm.

*Motion to Adjurn*: Molly Kuramoto

*Second*: Justin Kuramoto

*Unanimous Approval*

**MEETING SUMMARY:**

A short summary of board meeting minutes (e.g., this paragraph), will be posted to Ekoji’s website for information purposes. Ekoji remains closed until further notice due to COVID-19, but various virtual services (including Sunday services, senior zoom meetings, and book discussions), have been well-received. Obon will not take place in July 2020 due to COVID-19, but the Board is looking into alternative options in the fall. Beginning in May, Reverend Hayashi will be conducting an education class on Wednesday evenings. The class will be virtual and in lecture format, with a focus on the history of Buddhism. The Board sent representatives during the first quarter to both the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) National Council Meeting, and the Eastern District Council (EDC) meetings. The Board continues to work towards the kitchen renovation and sign replacement. The kitchen renovation has been hampered by poor communication on the part of the contractor.