Board Meeting, 5/31/2020

Attendees: Rev. Nariyaki Hayashi; Justin Kuramoto; Molly Kuramoto; Maya Horio; Andrea Chapman; Mr. Yamashita; Jay Lindenberg; Archer Harmon; Ken Nakamura

**MOTION**: to approve consent agenda (April meeting minutes; May treasurer reports):

-motion made by Archer Harmon

-seconded by Jay Lindenberg

(unanimous approval)

1) Minister Report:

-BCA is doing a survey regarding COVID-19 infections in member temples. Voluntary survey.

Problem: intrusive, HIPPA violation. Not sure of intention of survey.

Ekoji Plan: respond saying that we have no way to track the requested information.

-Meta Padma (see info from Molly, add to this)

2) President’s Report:

-Jane and Andrea have finished draft updates for website. They will begin to work on design elements with Molly.

-Bylaws are now on the website.

3) PROPOSED BYLAW CHANGES: addition of virtual membership.

-Need for balance. Virtual membership must be beneficial, but distinct enough from other types of membership to keep physical members from switching over to virtual.

-Bylaws do not contain specific monetary amounts for different memberships (these are always subject to change). Suggested donation amount does not place someone in a specific category per se (example, some people are full members, but donate less than the suggested amount. No repercussions for this, and they still have voting privileges. On the other hand, an associate member can donate as much as a full member, but that would not get then voting privileges)

-Virtual membership placed under associate member category (similar in character)

-Virtual membership could be useful in attracting younger members (millennials). Important to find age range of members through membership survey.

-Bylaws make it clear that only full members have voting privileges.

PROPOSED CHANGE IN TEXT OF PROPOSED BYLAW AMENDMENT (see attachment): change “leverage” to “access” in the first sentence.

**MOTION** to approve the creation of a virtual associate membership category: made by Archer Harmon, seconded by Andrea Chapman

-Unanimous approval

**MOTION** to approve the amended draft bylaw addition (amended to say “access” instead of “leverage” in opening sentence of the proposed text), made by Jay Lindenberg, seconded by Archer Harmon

-Unanimous approval

-20 day notice required for Sangha meeting to discuss proposed bylaw changes. Anticipate questions regarding differences between membership levels, and availability of virtual services to full members and in-person associate members. Presidents will prepare proposal, and anticipate discussion from Sangha.

-Meeting Date: June 21, 10:00 am

-Need to keep track of meeting attendance, and make sure that only full members vote (Secretary’s responsibility).

4) Membership management platform options:

Andrea’s favorite platform: Wild Apricot. This platform offers lots of features, including online store, mobile app for members, online management for admins, tailored for use by phones. The app can be a replacement for Constant Contact.

-Unclear of exact cost, but group level is $50 per month.

-30 day free trial available

-Wild Apricot is the option Ekoji plans to explore further.

Other option: joinit.org. Cheaper, but less features.

Unsure of exact features as we do not have it yet, but it seems that Wild Apricot can be integrated with Ekoji’s accounting system to track where payments come from. Can also create “friends of Ekoji” category to separate members and those on Ekoji constant contact list who are not members.

Focus should remain on Membership Management Platform (need in time for virtual membership implementation). Any changes in the temple’s accounting system can be discussed later.

-Archer is continuing work on membership survey.

-Three members do not want public acknowledgement of membership, due to personal reasons. Ekoji must be mindful of this when publishing the Kalavenka, etc.

5) Temple closure updates

-Northern Virginia is currently in Phase 1.

-No specific timeframe for Phase 2, depends on COVID-19 trend. Ekoji’s reopening does not have to be tied to a specific phase, but doing so makes it easier to track. Social distancing and face masks still required with Phase 2.

-Issue with face masks: if we require them, it could create problems with those who refuse to wear masks. Andrea has received text(s) from member(s) who say they will refuse to wear them. There is concern that some member(s) may violate social distance requirements.

-The Board meeting contained a lengthy conversation regarding problematic behavior from certain members, what we do about it, balance between security and comfort of Sangha at large and being welcoming to everyone, etc. Specific issues can be addressed further at a separate meeting (such as the next Board Retreat).

-Possible Solution regarding services: outdoor service in the parking lot. Maybe have Hondo open for oshoko, or have it outside as well. Have one bathroom open (library bathroom). Lots of other churches have been doing outdoor services.

-need an RSVP system (every other parking spot would be blocked off)

-How many services? 2 per Sunday? Maybe start with one, to see the demand.

-Sensai Hayashi has concern with outdoor services, he believes it is too risky to reopen due to COVID-19, concern over second wave. Thinks continuation of virtual is best at this time. On the other hand, Coronavirus is not going away, and the temple will have to be reopened at some point.

-Consensus is that there is still too much discomfort for many, including board members, with COVID at this point for any in-person service at this time. Too much uncertainty with case trends, phase 2 reopening impact of society at large, etc.

TENTATIVE PLAN: Possibly target Obon service as a date for resumption of in-person services. However, this is contingent on the trend of COVID-19, and everything regarding reopening remains tentative. Outdoor services are not feasibly due to heat.

MOTION to adjourn meeting: made by Molly Kuramoto, seconded by Jay Lindenberg. Unanimous approval.

SUMMARY OF MINUTES:

Ekoji remains closed due to COVID-19. No definitive plans for reopening, but target date is the Obon service in July. Everything depends on trend of COVID-19 in society at large, and once Ekoji does reopen, face masks and social distancing will be required. An all-Sangha meeting has been scheduled to discuss a proposed bylaw change, allowing for the creating of a new category for membership (virtual member). The virtual membership will fall under the associate member category. The all-Sangha meeting will be held virtually, and notice regarding the format and time of the meeting will be sent out by the Presidents.