

RED CLAY SANGHA
ANNUAL MEMBERS MEETING
MARCH 16 2014

OPENING

Wade Jones, President of the Board, welcomed all of the sangha members and stated the agenda for the meeting.

BUDGET

Cherry Zimmer, Treasurer, handed out copies of the financial statements for 2013. The membership reviewed the budget and it was approved unanimously by the Board

BOARD DIRECTORS

Wade Jones and Drew Newman announced they were stepping down from the board. Gareth Young and Sally Landrum were nominated to fill the vacant positions. The membership voted and both were unanimously voted to be added to the board.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Dharma Talks

Cherry Zimmer began by suggesting the membership consider the issue of dharma talks. Previously, a formal talk was presented by a member following the meditation and chanting. For a variety of reasons, the talks were suspended. Cherry suggested we might want to resume them. Through the discussion that followed, the sangha agreed they wanted a shortened talk led by a different sangha member each service. The talks or discussions would be less formal and could cover a broad scope of topics. The discussion leader could read a sutra, a koan or a passage from a book. We agreed that we were interested in what all members had to say and interested in everyone's responses.

- Everyone was in agreement that they would like to have different members present a topic and lead discussion on the Sundays not reserved for Precepts Renewal or Time Keeper Training.
- It was suggested and approved that a small group or committee be formed that would be responsible for figuring out the logistics.
- We also agreed that the newsletter will announce in advance the subject of upcoming Dharma Talks/Discussions.
- We also discussed and agreed upon the need to respect the talk leader by not interrupting them.
- We also decided to respect each other, extending the same courtesy to each others' comments and giving space between comments to allow everyone to have a voice.

Chanting

Beth Lilly suggested the group review our current chant service and make some decisions. Although it was never officially decided, the Sangha currently sings the Tisaranna and Refuge. Then a discussion began about how the Sangha has been struggling to find a harmonious key. The same is true of the chanting in general – sometimes the sound is quite beautiful and others times, not so much. Everyone pretty much agreed that they really enjoyed the chanting regardless of whether the pitch was perfect or off. The experience of

the chanting was more important than the sound. We are finding that over time, we are beginning to improve as a group and that we just need to kind of standardize the key.

- The sangha voted to continue singing the Tissarana and Refuge verses.
- The group decided to work on our chanting during the upcoming Time Keeper practice. During these sessions, the sangha can come to a consensus on the key, pitch and notes for the chants.
- We also decided that the Time Keeper would also serve as chant leader. With a strong voice leading the chanting, it is much easier for everyone to follow in unison.
- It was suggested that, in fact, it would be nice to have mantra chanting instead of the Dharma Talk every once in a while. This suggestion was unanimously supported.
- The Sangha also asked that we change our chanting of the Heart Sutra to repeat “Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha” three times immediately effective. Cherry agreed to update the chant cards to reflect that right away.
- The group noted that we never actually use the Evening Service Chant and so it was decided that we would recite the “Evening Bell Gatha” and the “Mantra for Shattering Hell” on Wednesday Book Group instead of the Tissarana.

Volunteer Scheduling

Beth stressed the importance of Red Clay Sangha opening it's doors with the space properly prepared on time. She asked that volunteers be more proactive about signing up to handle those duties on VolunteerSpot.

Community Service

Richard Skoonberg voiced his support for future service projects. Everyone agreed that it was important to the Sangha's mission.

We were reminded that we need to very quickly settle on a date for the Sangha to visit the Insight group who visited Red Clay several weeks ago.

Membership

Richard voiced support for the mindful expansion of membership. Discussion began about how the Red Clay Sangha website ranks low in Google searches and the group unanimously felt a need to look into SEO for the website.

At 12 noon, members felt that their issues had been addressed and the meeting was adjourned.