

APPROVED
Sacramento Dharma Center Board Meeting Minutes
Via Zoom Meeting Platform
Wednesday, June 10, 2020, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Present: Kenny Bender, Barbara Colton, Joe Countryman, Bob Jenne, Jay Nair, Angela Scarlett, Larry Smith, Diane Wilde. Absent: Sue Taylor.

Hate Crimes Task Force

The Board discussed a proposal by Rollin Ives of Valley Streams Zen Sangha (VSZS) to represent Sacramento Dharma Center (SDC) on the U.S. Attorney's Hate Crimes Task Force. No decision was made. Either Larry or Barbara will talk with Rollin.

Minutes

VOTE: The Board approved the minutes of the May 13, 2020 SDC Board meeting.

Executive Committee

--The items discussed are treated as separate agenda items below.

Building Report

Please see below for the attached report.

--Repaving--Held off till the trees are done dropping litter.

--Dry Rot—Once the old roof is removed, the extent of damage will be known. In view of concerns expressed by the Board, Bob will get an updated estimate for the cost of dry rot repair from the roofer before work is begun.

Reports from Sanghas

Sacramento Buddhist Meditation Group (SBMG)

--Liliana Méndez-Soto will probably be SBMG's representative on the SDC COVID-19 reopening committee.

Valley Streams Zen Sangha (VSZS)

--VSZS wanted to know if the fluttering prayer flags that are attached to the fascia boards outside the Meditation Hall would be taken down for the re-roofing job and, if so, whether they could request that the flags not be put back up again (The flags don't need to be taken down). The

VSZS representative asked who VSZS should approach to make a request about the flags and was informed that it's the SDC Board that decides whether to place or remove decorative items on the building.

--VSZS is in the process of naming a representative to the Reopening Committee.

Sacramento Insight Meditation (SIM)

--SIM's representative on the Reopening Committee is Jon Sitteri.

Treasurer's Report

--At the end of May, Board-authorized operation reserves stood at \$39,216 and non-earmarked cash on hand was \$30,157.68. Earmarked funds held for a Susan Orr memorial were \$10,383; and \$40,376 were being held for reroofing and installing solar panels on the shingled roof.

--The Profit and Loss Report (accrual method) shows total monthly income for May was \$17,201.93 and total expenses were \$11.62 [low amount due to a property tax rebate]; net income was \$17,190.31 [Note: cash-basis accounting would show an additional regular expense of \$1,334.60 in April for payment of mortgage principal.]

VOTE: The Board approved the May 2020 financial reports.

Update on Proposal to Refinance SDC Mortgage with Five Star Bank and Plan to Borrow for Solar Panels

--The bank declined to consider SDC's application. In the current uncertain environment, the bank is making very few assumable rate conversion loans--and those they do make now require personal guarantors. In any case, Larry may check back with them in July.

-- Realtor Kari Bryski and Larry worked very hard on this project and deserve many thanks.

--SDC's current mortgage is due in 2026; the rates may be more favorable then.

Audio-Visual Committee (AV)

-- AV has an updated list of the hardware and software needed for one-way live-stream broadcasts and interactive communication (like Zoom). The equipment will be on a cart for the sanghas to share.

--Once the equipment is ready, volunteers will have to be recruited and trained in its use.

VOTE: The Board approved an expenditure of up to \$4,200 for the purchase of video equipment.

--SDC will seek partial reimbursement for the equipment from the sanghas, perhaps by way of a proportionate cost-sharing plan.

Reopening Plans

--An ad hoc committee is being formed to guide an eventual SDC reopening.

--No recommendation to reopen is expected by SDC's July Board meeting.

Diamond Light Sangha

--Diamond Light has withdrawn its request to explore joining SDC.

Resuming Monthly Workdays

--SDC will schedule a workday for June 28, 2020. Kenny and Jerry Simkins will coordinate it.

Newsletter

--One item could be about the new AV cart. Angela is interested in doing the write-up to keep donors in the loop and to request AV volunteers

Addendum

--Per the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the SDC Board meeting for July was cancelled.

--Two votes were requested on July 1, 2020: 1. To agree to voting by email (for the single item below) rather than during a meeting of the Board and, 2. To then approve the motion to resurface the parking lot/paved areas.

Barbara wrote that "the cost is within our budget. The resurfacing can be done before cars return to the parking lot, causing minimal disruption."

Bob wrote, "The Dharma Center's cost to resurface the parking lot will be \$5125. This price includes cleaning the surface, prefilling the large cracks in the asphalt with hot tar, applying one coat of asphalt slurry seal, and repainting the parking space lines after they are done.

"Jim Hare has generously offered to contribute an additional \$2460 to apply a second coat of asphalt slurry seal, which the contractor has recommended because it has been such a long time since our lot has been resurfaced. As a result, there are a lot of cracks and other asphalt imperfections, and a second coat will fix them better than just one coat."

VOTE: The Board approved voting by email on the topic of resurfacing.

VOTE: The Board approved spending \$5,125 to resurface the SDC parking lot.

Both votes in favor were unanimous.

Copies of the email votes are attached below, after the Building Report.

Minutes written by Kenny Bender, SDC Secretary

Building Report: June 2020

New roof update

Our roofing contractor (Ken Matson from KLM Roofing) will start our roofing job on Thursday, June 11. All of the dry rot under our eaves will also be fixed as part of the job.

Two new dimmers in the Meditation Hall

I installed two new dimmers in the Meditation hall. The first new dimmer operates the spotlight that illuminates the altar. The old dimmer was on the floor amidst a tangle of extension cords. The new dimmer is a standard dimmer switch recessed into the wall. All the extension cords have been removed.

The second new dimmer controls 6 of the 12 large rectangular light fixtures in the low ceiling above the altar. Previously, six of the 12 light fixtures could be dimmed but the other six could not because the old ballasts in them did not work with dimmers. I replaced the 6 old ballasts and installed a dimmer, so now all 12 of the light fixtures can be dimmed.

New wood bench

In the West Lobby you may have noticed three attractive wood benches, all of which were generously made by Terry Wenner. One of the benches is for the front of the Dharma Center. This bench is about 3 feet long and has been sitting next to the glass doors at the west end of the Lobby for the past few months.

Soon the bench will be moved outside and bolted to the concrete. It will be placed to the right of the glass doors as you face the building, about six inches from the glass. In this location it will be under the roof overhang and mostly protected from the rain. Terry made the bench out of black locust because this type of wood weathers well when placed outside. The bench will be useful for people who are waiting outside for rides (such as Paratransit) or waiting to be let into the building if they have arrived early for a meeting. The Design Committee is OK with the design and placement of the bench.

Streaming dharma talks and meetings

As you know, all three the sanghas have been using Zoom to stream their evening programs. All the sanghas want to continue streaming video from the Dharma Center after we reopen. The Audio Committee has been investigating the best way to do this. In this endeavor we are benefiting greatly from the knowledge provided by Brett Gardali, a video expert who sits with Valley Streams. (For a very amusing video created by Brett, see <https://youtu.be/kTUW2MPa2Eg>)

To successfully stream video from our building we need: (1) faster internet speeds and (2) additional equipment.

(1) Faster Internet speeds. Larry Smith shopped around with different internet providers and determined that our most cost-effective option was to upgrade our existing AT&T service to a faster plan. On May 29 an AT&T technician came to our building and hooked up a new internet service that is much faster than the one we had. We now have enough speed to successfully stream video from the Meditation Hall to remote viewers. We confirmed this last week, when Brett came to our building and conducted a test using his own equipment. He was able to

Also, the Wi-Fi signal in our building is vastly improved. Previously it was difficult to connect to our Wi-Fi in the Meditation Hall, primarily because our modem/router was located in the SDC Office at the other end of the building. The new modem/router is centrally located in the small storage room (i.e. Bob's office) between the Board Room and the Break Room. Now we have a strong Wi-Fi signal throughout the building, as well as faster internet speeds. The faster internet service doesn't cost much; we are now paying \$70/month instead of the \$50/month that we were paying.

We also have the option of connecting to the internet by using a wired connection instead of Wi-Fi. Every room in our building is connected by Cat-5 cable to a central switchboard located next to our new modem/router in the small storage room. We can create a hardwired connection to any room simply by connecting a short ethernet cable from the modem/router to the central switchboard. We will probably use a wired connection to stream video from the Meditation Hall, because a wired connection is generally faster and more reliable than a Wi-Fi connection.

(2) Additional Equipment. We need additional equipment to stream video (a video camera, laptop, microphones, etc.) Brett has made a detailed list of what we will need and the estimated cost will probably be between \$3500 to \$4000. The equipment would be placed on a mobile cart that can be wheeled to anywhere in the building. The cart would mostly be used in the Meditation Hall but it could also be used in the West Lobby and the Board Room for things like streaming sangha board meetings where not everyone can attend in person. The equipment will be able to stream video using Zoom, and it will also work for other streaming programs. Other programs may work better for streaming large gatherings with many participants.

Refinancing

As you know, Larry Smith has done a lot of work to investigate options to refinance our mortgage. He identified a very favorable refinancing package through Five Star Bank in Roseville and has been working hard to make this happen. Unfortunately, the bank is being very selective in offering loans and decided not to offer us one at this time. The bank representative said that they may reconsider their decision in July, when the bank may be loosening its loan criteria.

We have other refinancing options but so far we haven't found one that is better than our current mortgage. Further investigation will continue.

Solar panel update

We still hope to install solar panels before the end of the year. We have already raised \$10,000, but we need to raise an additional \$35,000 to make this happen. Any contributions would be welcome.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Bob Jenne

Copies of Email Votes

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Diane Wilde <dianegwilde@gmail.com>

To: Barbara Colton

Cc: Angela Scarlett, Jay Nair, Joe Countryman, Smith Larry, Kenny Bender

Wed, Jul 1 at 3:21 PM

Thanks for the report. I vote yes for both items 1 and 2. Diane

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"Compassion, in which all ethics must take root, can only attain its full breadth and depth if it embraces all living creatures and does not limit itself to mankind."

- Albert Schweitzer

Founder, Buddhist Pathways Prison Project.

www.buddhistpathways.org

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Angela <angela.scarlett@gmail.com>

To: Diane Wilde

Cc: Barbara Colton, Jay Nair, Joe Countryman, Smith Larry, Kenny Bender

Wed, Jul 1 at 3:28 PM

Yes to both items. Angela

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joseph@jdcpe.net

To: Barbara Colton

Cc: Angela Scarlett, Jay Nair, Smith Larry, Kenny Bender, Diane Wilde

Wed, Jul 1 at 4:20 PM

I vote yes on both items!

Joe

Sent from my iPhone

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Jay Nair <nairjay@gmail.com>

To: Joseph Countryman

Cc: Barbara Colton, Angela Scarlett, Smith Larry, Kenny Bender, Diane Wilde

Wed, Jul 1 at 4:40 PM

Yes to both. Thank you

Thanks

Jay Nair

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Lawrence Smith <smithlaw@sbcglobal.net>

To: Barbara Colton

Cc: Angela Scarlett, Jay Nair, Joe Countryman, Kenny Bender, Diane Wilde

Wed, Jul 1 at 6:02 PM

Hi Barbara:

Thank you for the detailed summary of the Exec Committee's June 29 meeting to pass on to the rest of the board.

I vote yes to both items (1 - I agree to a vote by email regarding resurfacing the parking lot; and 2 - I vote to approve the motion to resurface the parking lot).

Safe travels to Denver!



Larry

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Robert Jenne <bjenne@sbcglobal.net>

To: Barbara Colton, Lawrence Smith

Cc: Angela Scarlett, Jay Nair, Joe Countryman, Kenny Bender, Diane Wilde

Wed, Jul 1 at 7:57 PM

I also vote yes on both items.

Bob

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Kenneth Bender <benderkenny@att.net>

To:Robert Jenne

Cc:Barbara Colton,Lawrence Smith,Angela Scarlett,Jay Nair,Joe Countryman

Wed, Jul 1 at 8:41 PM

I vote “yes” to email voting and to resurfacing the SDC lot. Thanks for the detailed and thorough report, Barbara.

Kenny

Sent from my iPhone

Barbara Colton <bcolton45@sbcglobal.net>

To:Robert Jenne,Kenneth Bender

Cc:Lawrence Smith,Angela Scarlett,Jay Nair,Joe Countryman,Diane Wilde

Wed, Jul 1 at 9:25 PM

Kenny, you are 7/8.

I vote yes for both questions, becoming 8/8.

Is there anything else needed for the official record of the vote?

Barbara

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Lawrence Smith <smithlaw@sbcglobal.net>

To:Barbara Colton,Robert Jenne,Kenneth Bender

Cc:Angela Scarlett,Jay Nair,Joe Countryman,Diane Wilde,Taylor Susan A

Wed, Jul 1 at 10:37 PM

Barbara, Kenny:

Barbara:

Well done. Nothing further to do except as follows:

For a vote by mail, as authorized by the procedure we adhered to, Kenny should attach all eight votes to the Minutes of the next board meeting, and reflect in the Minutes that the action was taken by email with the unanimous written consent of the board.



Larry