

Cedar Rapids Zen Center – Jikyouji
MINUTES of the Annual Meeting of the CRZC Sangha and Board of Directors
April 29, 2018

SANGHA MEETING

Present: President Douglas Gustafson, Vice President Eric Higgins-Freese, Treasurer Myoho Kendall, Secretary Kelly Kruse, Resident Teacher Zuiko Redding, Clergy Representative Daishin McCabe, Jenn Day, Amy Eble, Henry Higgins- Freese, Reuben Higgins-Freese, Christopher Lui, John Rathbun, Julie Shaw

Meeting called to order by President Douglas Gustafson at 10:50 AM.

COUNCIL was held.

MINUTES of March 26 – Motion to approve by Reuben – Second by Jenn – Carries

ELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS

- Explanation of board responsibilities
- 7-member board, 2 terms expiring
- Motion to re-elect Kelly to board by Kelly – Second by Eric – Carries
- Motion to re-elect Gus to board by Daishin – Second by Chris – Carries

Meeting adjourned at 11:10 AM

Motion to adjourn by Zuiko – Second by Reuben - Carries

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Present: President Douglas Gustafson, Vice President Eric Higgins-Freese, Treasurer Myoho Kendall, Secretary Kelly Kruse, Resident Teacher Zuiko Redding, Clergy Representative Daishin McCabe, Jenn Day, Amy Eble, Henry Higgins- Freese, Reuben Higgins-Freese, Christopher Lui, John Rathbun, Julie Shaw

Meeting called to order by President Douglas Gustafson at 11:10 AM.

ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES of April 23, 2017 were approved during the year and are posted on the website.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

- Motion to re-elect Gus President by John – Second by Julie – Carries
- Motion to re-elect Eric Vice-President by Kelly – Second by Zuiko – Carries
- Motion to re-elect Myoho Treasurer by Gus – Second by Daishin – Carries
- Motion to re-elect Kelly Secretary by Zuiko – Second by Eric – Carries

PRACTICE REPORT – Zuiko Redding

Our mission to promote Soto Zen practice by providing a welcoming place for zazen, spiritual practice, religious study, and community fellowship. It is also to support each other in living lives guided by zazen and help each other manifest the Buddha's teaching of generosity and wisdom in daily life.

We are fulfilling that mission well. We are a welcoming sangha, with members who take care of zazen, administration, grounds, and other work as part of their practice. We can congratulate ourselves on what we have become – a place where people can learn, experience, and practice the dharma with the support of others. We are a haven where people come and sit noon and evening, do baika, study dharma, and teach their children the Buddha's practice. We are helping in our community. Our presence makes a difference.

We are not a large organization, but we are a grounded one. People are strong in their practice and serious about being awake in daily life. We work quietly in our community. I would like to see more people at sesshins and all-day sittings and perhaps that will happen in the future.

Local Practice

There's not been much change in our daily and weekly activities. Attendance has remained steady. Work days have been well-attended. We now have many regulars mixed with others who attend occasionally and with newcomers. People connect and practice through zazen, study group, sewing, baika, and work.

We usually have fine participation and attendance at things like Buddha's Birthday - with 25 people this year - and at New Year's. We had five for New Year's Eve sitting and 20 for the open house.

Most newcomers hear about us on the web and a few from Facebook. The four-session course is small but it does help people.

At least three people have taken on the practice of being doan and jisha. Having Reuben Higgins-Freese do these things is a definite treat. Kelly teaches the introductory evening. Taking on these things helps us deepen our practice and take ownership of the sangha's affairs.

The big event of the year was Myoho's novice ordination on July 9. She is now taking over more responsibilities as well as learning lots of new stuff. Many people helped with preparations and hosted visiting teachers. We are grateful as well to the teachers who helped with the ceremony and supported Myoho in taking her vows – Dai-En Bennage, Shoryu Bradley, Daishin McCabe, Tonon O'Connor, and Jisho Siebert. It was truly a shining day.

We've also had a number of visiting teachers this year. Daishin McCabe and Shoryu Bradley led sesshins. Reirin Gumble from Milwaukee Zen Center gave a dharma talk in August and she was accompanied by Tonon O'Connor.

Other practice is also doing well. Monday evening dharma study is steady. Some members are unable to come on Sunday, so this is their "service" each week. The discussion is thoughtful and insightful. In May, Ashok Chawla of the Hindu community taught and led discussion of the history of the relationship between the Hindu and Buddhist faiths.

The baika group has three members and meets on the second and fourth Thursdays each month. In May, Reverend Shumyo Kojima from Zenshuji in Los Angeles will come for a workshop.

Rakusu sewing now has four people sewing their rakusus and usually three or four more helping. We will likely continue this after the July ceremony. We will be sewing rakusus for men in the prisons who receive the precepts. One has already received the precepts this past year and three more will do so this year. And the potluck before rakusu sewing has become a staple of the schedule.

We are still working on getting our name out. We sponsored Lauren's paper marbling workshop and hope to do more of that. This consisted of supplying refreshments and putting out brochures. Myoho and Zuiko also participated in the workshop. We are also exploring the idea of doing sitting perhaps at New Bo. Perhaps we might have an occasional booth at the farmer's market where we teach zazen and tell people about the Center. We might even sell our tote bags there.

Community practice

Our practice has also been visible in the community. Myoho is our representative to the Inter-Religious Council. Zuiko and Tim Macejak gave talks at schools, universities, and churches around the area. Lauren gave the reading at the interfaith Thanksgiving service and Kelly did the reading for the Holocaust memorial.

We make regular contributions to the neighborhood Boys and Girls Club. We also participate in neighborhood cleanups. Zuiko hopes we can work with the local community garden this summer.

Prison practice is deepening. There are small, steady groups at Anamosa, Clarinda, Ft. Dodge, Ft. Madison, and Newton. Zuiko, Barton Reese, Daishin McCabe, Myoho Kendall, Tim Macejak and Tim Yukl sit with the men in the various institutions. We also supplied books and other items to the inmates and the groups. Zuiko continues to serve as the state prison chaplains' resource on Buddhism.

Stefen Robinson received the precepts in Bloomington-Normal in May. Zuiko and Gina visited the group in October and this April. They are growing into a solid group of about ten members and are beginning to think about incorporating and finding a bit of space to rent.

Eric's care of the web page and Lauren's care of the Facebook page and the monthly newsletter have really helped make us visible in the community. Hopefully, Lauren can provide us with a communications report next year, since she is now reporting each month. Gus also helps with this by supplying quotes for the web page. The responses to these, both in terms of attendance and comments and financial support indicates that they are helping the dharma.

Zuiko's Activities

This is Zuiko's last year as secretary and board member of Sotoshu, and she is happy about that. She attended two Sotoshu meetings and workshops this year. She continues to edit English translations for their web site. Her dharma writings appear regularly in *Ancient Way*. She performed memorial services for three families this year and gave talks at churches, universities, schools, and senior centers.

She is working on spending more time writing for *Ancient Way* and our newsletters, and is hoping to publish some of her articles more widely. The Dogen Institute, the publishing branch of Sanshinji, will be publishing her commentary on Dogen's "Eight Awakenings of Great People."

In Closing

We are realizing our mission because of all of us. There is no Cedar Rapids Zen Center without sangha members with hearts of practice, willing to show up for zazen, talks, work, sesshin and other things. We have all worked shoulder-to-shoulder to build this practice. Let's be grateful to each other for making this a place to find stability in our lives, with a practice that welcomes and sustains everyone who comes. This center grows from our collected hearts and our effort together. It is actually us.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Douglas Gustafson

- We're lucky to have such a vibrant community.
- Thanks to everyone for your hard work!

WORK LEADER'S REPORT – Zuiko Redding

Search for Work Leader: We still need someone who can pay attention to the place and share coordination with Zuiko and others about pending tasks and projects. Myoho has taken charge of assigning work for Sundays and work days.

We are now having a regular work day most months. We usually do maintenance, cleaning, and organization. The building and gardens are looking very orderly and welcoming.

In general, things are in good condition. The front is appealing, though we could always improve it. The back is beginning to be welcoming and interesting. The house's structure is in good condition, but we should attend to the foundation. There are maintenance items that need to happen to keep it in good condition.

We also need to begin thinking about how we can make room for expansion as our sangha grows and we need more space for the zendo, study, fellowship, and other activities.

Here's what we've done this year:

Projects COMPLETED: No major projects this year, just small ones

Building

- * Installed new Buddha on the porch – June, 2017
- * Placed a radon test kit in the basement – August, 2017
- * Installed outlet on the wall behind the kitchen chopping block - August, 2017
- * Installed new thermostat – October, 2017
- * Replaced front porch light and rear spotlight – December, 2017
- * Put new mat in entry way – February, 2018

Grounds

- * Tidied up the gardens and defined borders for the rear ones
- * Extended the hostas on the front slope

Projects PENDING

Porch: Paint deck

Walkway railing: Replace oak top board

Upstairs bath: Repair and paint ceiling

Downstairs: Paint inside of cabinet in bath, caulk discussion room ceiling

Basement sealing: Water seeps in around the floor and limestone walls are flaking. It would be good to allot some money to this. Estimate we'll spend \$3,000 - \$4,000 but it will keep both the basement and the foundation safe.

Painting: Woodwork and walls in office, Zuiko's room, parts of the library, stairway walls. Need to touch up the garage outside.

Projects for the LONG-TERM

Roof: Should be replaced in four to five years

Floors: Many need refinishing – upstairs hall, zendo, entry, discussion room, sun porch

TREASURER'S REPORT – Myoho Kendall

- 2018 Financial Report in separate file
- Motion to accept report as presented by Gus – Second by Daishin – Carries
- CD maturing 16 Jul, UICCU has a 45-month one at 3%
- Motion to put NTF in that one now by Zuiko – Second by Gus – Carries
- Other possibilities including one with rate bump
- Motion to empower Myoho to choose highest rate when time comes by Zuiko – Second by Kelly – Carries
- Myoho needs someone to balance checkbook and hand off to Zuiko
- Add to work period list or do after meeting

OLD BUSINESS

- Next work day conflict with Newton; Myoho will handle
- Daishin – Because of Jisho's upcoming trips to Haiti and Honduras, he may have to cancel some things
- Great precepts ceremony at UU church in Ames; 6 preceptors!
- Eric demonstrated new phone-optimized website
- Motion to take this version of the site live by Gus – Second by Kelly – Carries
- Put notice of new website on Facebook

NEXT ANNUAL BOARD MEETING: April 28, 2019

Meeting adjourned at 1:03 PM

Motion to adjourn by Myoho – Second by Daishin – Carries

Respectfully submitted by Kelly Kruse