

## Zen Community of Oregon Annual Director Meeting & Annual Member Meeting

Heart of Wisdom Zen Temple & Online

3:30-5:30 PM

May 7, 2023

Minutes prepared by Brad Biddle

Approved by Board vote August 21, 2023

### ZCO Director and Officer attendance

- Nancy Kodo Conover (President & Director)
- Chozen Bays, Roshi (Director)
- Harrison Shokan Martin (Director)
- Brent Gyokan Carmer (Director)
- Kassie Ko'un Fisk (Director)
- Nancy Kyoko Whitaker-Emrich (outgoing Director)
- Maureen Myosho Milton (incoming Director)
- Adam Eisan Herr (incoming Director)
- Darah Shonin Ashton (Treasurer)
- Patrick Bansho Green (Administrator)
- Brad Biddle (Secretary)

### Sangha attendance

- About 50 members, in person & online.
- Sign-in sheet appears to have been misplaced by Secretary (apologies!)

### 1. Opening

- Kodo opened the meeting with a meditation, welcome message, and reading, and noted that a quorum was present for the purposes of conducting Board meeting and Member meeting business.

### 2. Board introductions; explanation of Board role; Board business; Director appointments/elections; 2024 Elections Committee

- The current Directors and Officers introduced themselves; Kodo explained Jim's absence.
- Kodo explained the role of the Board, reading relevant sections of the ZCO Bylaws.
- The Directors deferred approval of the 09-APR-2023 minutes pending a discussion of how much financial detail to include in the minutes (a concern was expressed about whether public posting of financial details could increase the risk of third party hacking or fraud).
- Kodo noted some of the major transitions occurring since the last Annual Member Meeting (Sirnio property, the beginning of leadership transitions at GVM at HoW, Kisei and Kennyo's move, Gensho and Shonin taking over Thursday nights...).
- Kodo and others expressed appreciation to Nan Kyoko, whose second 3-year term as a Director expired, and to Jim Shikaku, who resigned as a Director effective as of the date of this meeting.
- Director appointments and elections:
  - Chozen, in her role as Spiritual Leader as defined in the ZCO Bylaws, re-appointed Kodo as a Director.
  - Brad reported that the 2023 Election Committee (which consisted of Enryu, Fred Yusan, Myoyu, Brad, Gyokan and Shokan) decided to put forward Maureen Myosho Milton as its recommended candidate for the Director position being vacated by Nan. The Members present voted on this proposal and Myosho was elected to the role by acclamation.
  - Kodo conveyed that the Election Committee suggested Adam Eisan Herr to the Directors as a potential candidate for election by the Directors to fill the remainder of the term being

vacated by Jim (noting that this is a Board decision and that the Election Committee plays no formal role). The Directors present voted and unanimously elected Eisan to this position.

- 2024 Election Committee
  - Hogen explained the key role played by the Election Committee and kicked off nomination discussions.
  - The Board selected Gyokan, Shokan and Myosho to serve in the three Board-elected roles on the 2024 Election Committee.
  - The Members selected Gina Ortola, Bob Davis and Olivia K., with Ana LaDou as an alternate, to serve in the three Member-elected roles on the 2024 Election Committee.

### 3. Treasurer and Administrator report

- Shonin and Bansho provided reports about ZCO finances and various key metrics of ZCO's financial health and growth potential, and explained the processes ZCO uses to manage financial matters, using a detailed slide set that can be requested from them. Key points included:
  - ZCO is financially healthy as measured by a list of key criteria that apply to non-profit organizations, including revenue reliability, maintenance of a prudent financial reserve, and appropriate liquidity.
  - Membership growth is robust.
  - In-person retreat attendance has dramatically increased; online sesshin attendance appears to be waning.
  - Substantial, measurable progress has been made on key items identified in the ZCO Strategic Plan (including, e.g., paying off the monastery mortgage and establishing a leadership transition plan).
  - We are well-positioned to execute on the Sirnio property plan.
- Member questions and observations included:
  - What is the financial status of Trillium House? (A: it's not formally part of ZCO.)
  - Consider in-town, non-residential sesshins (with lots of support expressed for this idea)
  - Consider extended sitting sessions at HoW during Ango

### 4. Member introductions, and entertainment (Round 1)

- Kodo facilitated introductions by all members present.
- Myosho performed a dramatic reading about monks and gangsters. Yes.

### 5. Engaged Buddhism Committee report

- Gina Ortola and Kosho provided a detailed report about the many activities of the Engaged Buddhism Committee and the various subgroups that nest under the EBC umbrella. A more complete account can be requested from them. Key points included:
  - The EBC is an umbrella organization; the EBC members are Gina, Kosho, Nan, Jomon and Seicho; proposals for new activities are always welcome.
  - Key EBC activities include the LGBTQIA+ Dharma group, an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) group (which is developing tools to assist teachers with framing teaching through an equity lens), the Awakening to the Delusion of Whiteness workshop, various book studies on relevant social matters, the Oceans of Compassion retreat and clean-up

efforts, food security work (including the backpack program), the Ecosattva group, work on accessibility matters, and efforts focused on the Port Westward refinery proposal.

- Chozen noted that the EBC is and must remain mindful of not engaging in the political realm in any manner that would violate tax exemption rules related to ZCO's status as a tax exempt entity under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

## 6. **Great Vow Monastery report**

- Shokan provided a report about GVM activities, using a slide set with lots of pictures (a copy can be requested from Shokan). Key points included:
  - A description of the Mountain Seat ceremony.
  - A description of the Daijukai ceremony.
  - An update about the Sirnio property.
  - An update about various GVM resident transitions.
  - A mention of the new pagoda.
  - A note that there is not one perspective on GVM activities; every resident and visitor has their own experience.

## 7. **Entertainment, round 2**

- Austin performed yo-yo tricks.

## 8. **Heart of Wisdom report**

- Kodo and Jomon provided reports about activities at Heart of Wisdom, using a slide set that can be requested from them. Key points included:
  - A description of the Buddha's birthday activities
  - An update about the BLM shrine
  - An update about the new outdoor stairs
  - A description of the HoW community's support of the Mt. Seat Ceremony, including the sewing of Chozen's kesa
  - A description of various guest speaker events
  - An update about several Zazenkai events
  - A description of various ceremonies held at HoW
  - An update about various maintenance activities

## 9. **Chozen and Hogen comments**

- Kodo invited comments from Chozen and Hogen, who spoke for a few minutes about the community of dharma holders and transmitted teachers, the current transition plan, the importance of continuously assessing whether the activities we're engaged in are still useful to help people relieve their own suffering, and the importance of being open, inclusive and welcoming to all.

## 10. **Adjournment of Member Meeting**

- Kosho led the group in a chant and Kodo adjourned the meeting at 5:30pm.

## 11. Additional Board business

- The Directors met briefly after the close of the member meeting and appointed the following officer roles for the next year:
  - Kodo – President
  - Shonin – Treasurer
  - Brad – Secretary