

SnowFlower Steering Council Minutes

4/2/18

X	David Sparer (President)	X	Steven Spiro
X	Amy Krohn (Vice President)	X	Barbara Namenwirth
X	Zach Smith (Secretary)	X	Margot Kennard
X	Gloria Green (Treasurer)	X	Finn Enke
X	Walt Keough	X	
Members absent: Tod Highsmith. Also in attendance: Micha Namenwirth, Catherine Acton			

Greetings and Short Sit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Short sit
Treasurer's Report
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gloria reported on the current finances. Items of note were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the Potluck donations just barely exceeded expenses ○ the March Day of Mindfulness donations just barely exceeded expenses ○ \$650 was collected toward purchasing zafus and zabutons for the Oshkosh sangha. Steven noted that the practitioners were overjoyed and so delighted with the cushions. ○ noted that no dana was collected for the Thursday night Buddhist education courses, but that total rent was only \$70, which would be paid out of the special events budget
Decision Items
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Officially had an in person motion to approve the email vote for approving up to \$1,200 for the monastics visit in June for the Day of Mindfulness. Unanimously approved. See other minutes for specific details of the Day of Mindfulness email vote.
Discussion Items
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Committees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The discussion started with focusing on Newcomer activities, a small listserv group and the education group, but morphed into a broader discussion involving the rest of the meeting's main topic of the current governance model. The three groups we discussed (see below) might eventually morph into broader committees that would be more overtly open to all sangha members with the ability to have people drop in to assist and provide thoughts. This discussion will continue. ● Newcomer Committee - Social Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Briefly discussed this non-existent committee at the moment. The Tuesday Tea Times prior to sangha and Susan Pearsall's informal teas are going well and the overall thought was to have a more concrete group that is focused as a "Social Committee." This could potentially include tea times, potlucks, days of mindfulness and retreats as well as other external events outside of the normal T, W, F, Su gatherings. More to be discussed later. ● Listserv Committee - Communications Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Due to the many current issues with the listserv, Gloria and Zach (who currently comprise the website team) proposed looking into the listserv. The discussion focused on addressing IT problems, but then moved toward looking at our entire communications more holistically. Instead of having a focused group on the listserv, it might make more sense to move to a Communications Committee, which would include: listserv (or alternative), website, newsletter, "member" list and email policies.

- b. This current group, Gloria and Zach, would recruit a few others to look at how to best combine various roles/committees into a communications team and also look at inclusive ways of deeply listening to SnowFlowers and their desires on this topic. This group will follow up with a plan at the next meeting.
- Education Committee
 - a. Overall, the feedback has been very positive and it seems like there is a core group of 7-8 people for each Thursday education event. It appears that this is filling a need and the sentiment was echoed that we should continue with educational events in the fall. Steven noted that the Thursday night timing was really determined by the availability of the Friends.
- Monastic Visit
 - a. Karuna, Amy and Zach shared that there are currently 75 people signed up, the core being SnowFlowers. The monastics will lead Friday night (29th), a full Sat Day of Mindfulness very similar to those at TNH monasteries, then also have a sit and Q&A session on Sunday.
- Governance
 - a. This was the core of the discussion, and was intended to reflect on how the STC is doing in this fairly new style of governance - the hub and spoke. We specifically discussed 1) Delegation and Decision-making, 2) Transparency and Democracy, and 3) Leadership and Vision.
 - b. The general sentiment was that the model is working well, but that we could adjust it a bit to bring some of our spokes together and open them up to more sangha involvement on an organic, ad-hoc basis.
 - c. It was noted that most initiatives have been brought about by individuals, and/or small groups, that were passionate about an issue and the current committees might actually inhibit more organic growth. The conversation turned to how to create more space and support the sangha without being bureaucratic (how to be helpful as opposed to hinder through bureaucracy).
 - d. The need for greater deep listening to the sangha was also discussed, specifically in ways that are more consistent and inclusive. Whether that is through listening sessions, questionnaires, or something else is to be discussed and tried out.
 - e. We also discussed the need for the STC members to be more visible in the sangha and make it known that they are STC members and are available to listen to thoughts, help mentor and work on facilitating ways for SnowFlowers' ideas to manifest.
 - f. In these senses, the STC would be less of a group of people steering the sangha toward a specific vision, but rather assist the sangha in growing organically with the current talents and desires that are there within the framework of the TNH tradition.
 - g. No decision items were proposed, but

New Items

- Gloria and Zach to report back on potential communication committee roles as well as potential tools for listening to the sangha to ensure their desires and needs for communication are being met.
- Continue the spokes discussion
- Discuss scheduler's thoughts on whether or not to purchase a set of zafus and zabutons for the Friends Meetinghouse Tues/Fri gatherings

Meeting Date/Time and Location for next time

- Wed August 29, 2018 at Walt Keough and Gloria Green's home from 7-9pm