

**BOARD MEETING MINUTES
JIKOJI ZEN CENTER
DECEMBER 4, 2016**

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 2:10 PM. All six Board members were present: Cliff Isberg, President; Judy Cosgrove, Vice-President; Edith Bennett, Secretary; Andy Acker, Residents' Representative; Doug Jacobson, and Lance Hilt. Others present included Mike Newhall, Resident Teacher, Bryan Gaynor, Treasurer, Michael Petersen (Shika), Joe Hall (Tanto), Eric Remington, and Jana Drakka. It was agreed that Doug Jacobson would facilitate the meeting.

Agenda items included: Approval of the June and July 2016 Minutes; Reports from the Community, Board, and Committees; Summary of Financials; Proposed Action Items; Discussion Items and Other Business; and Next Meeting Date.

APPROVAL OF JUNE AND JULY 2016 MINUTES:

Copies of the June and July 2016 minutes were distributed at the meeting and were previously sent via email to board members and residents for review. Judy Cosgrove made a change to the publications section, which was noted on the copies distributed. During the board review of the minutes, two other corrections were added. Lance motioned to approve the corrected minutes and Cliff seconded the motion. The revised minutes for June and July 2016 will be uploaded to the website. Cliff reminded the Board to review the minutes when they are emailed.

REPORTS (Community, Board, Committees):

Shika's Report: (Michael Petersen): A number of changes have been made to the guest reservations process. Checkfront, an online booking system for reservations, is now being used. Michael reported revenues of roughly \$2000 to \$2500 per month for individual retreats, and in 2017, estimated that the amount should be closer to \$3000. Two-thirds of the guests stay in rooms #2 and #3; then #1 and #6; and the least revenue comes from #4 and #5. Michael suggested that rooms #2 and #3 be reserved for individual retreatants and special guests, and that guests with a compensated rate should use #4 and #5. Next year, two Triratna retreats and an Insight Mediation retreat are planned in addition to others, and there is still space and availability at this time. Michael noted that there is some crowding with day groups on Sundays or first Saturday Zazen days, and that one-day events do not produce a lot of revenue; alternative days should therefore be suggested when possible. Judy asked about the cost of renting the facility for a day without room reservations, and also asked if there is a fee schedule. Michael responded that the minimum day use facility fee is about \$350/day, and Cliff clarified that the fee schedule is on the website at [Rentals](http://www.fund.jikoji.org/RentalRates.php) in the Funds subdomain of Jikoji.org, i.e., <http://www.fund.jikoji.org/RentalRates.php>. Doug added that it's also possible to rent out the large zendo on the first Saturday.

Resident Teacher's Report (Mike Newhall): This year's sesshins were reported to have gone very well. For the Kobun Memorial Sesshin, Judy Cosgrove was acknowledged for her participation with the teachings. The Denko-E sesshin with Vanja Palmers was described as "great" and well attended, with about 42 participants. Mike noted that Vanja expressed interest in returning next fall to do it

again. Doug has been leading zazenkai one-day sittings that are becoming a regular event, which is a very positive addition to Jikoji programs. Sunday programs are still going well and have a positive turnout. Mike thanked the residents and Joe Hall for supporting the guests on Sundays. Eric Remington was ordained in the summer after Kobun's sesshin, and Andy Acker's ordination is planned for April. Mike has been engaged in outreach to other sanghas, such as Santa Cruz Zen Center and Zen Heart Sangha, which is going well.

Residents' Report (Andy Acker): Andy acknowledged the increased number of residents at Jikoji, thanks to Michael and Joe, and the presence of temporary residents, which is now allowed. Andy noted that the "new residents are a gift, who see things with fresh eyes and ask good questions." Overall, the residents' program "feels good," and "it has been a long and busy summer for residents." Mike suggested another category of residents for the temporary residents. Cliff will discuss this matter further at another time.

Maintenance and Construction (Doug Jacobson; Bryan Gaynor): Various projects and upgrades have been in process. There are plans to work on the men's bathroom in the community building, and Gerow has worked on landscaping. Franchise for Humanity has also done some work on site. Eric has been maintaining the gutters on the road, and run-off hasn't been a problem. Bryan reported that a pump was changed out, that we're no longer hearing the pump, and that three items were replaced that were part of the antifreeze fluid system. A double-fister was changed out and work was done on an expansion tank. The boiler and heat exchanger on the roof now provides hot water to the community building.

Plans are in process for several projects in 2017, which include work on the power lines, upgrading the resident's rooms, and excavation under the residents' building. From the end of January to early February, the main power lines will be replaced and will extend from the water shed to the buildings. As a result, there will be no power for the residents for a day or so. During this period, some trenching between the small zendo and large zendo is also planned. With regard to the residents' rooms, planned upgrades include some room renovation, electrical repair, and sheetrock work. Every room will have a skylight that can be opened and will have double-pane or triple-pane glass. Ceilings will be insulated and "quiet rock" sheetrock will minimize the noise transfer between rooms. Several rooms have been finished and others are in process. Belongings in the rooms will need to be vacated while the work is in process, which might take up to a week or ten days.

Bryan reported that, before April 2017, a larger crew would excavate beneath the residents' building so that everything is prepped for a footing and a slab. The timing may vary according to the weather, and work will also be coordinated around sesshins. At the end of the April project, there should be a slab, finished floor, and ceiling, and this area will be the alternate zendo. Bryan suggested a system of cots or fold-up mattresses that can be kept in the closet so that the area could serve as a multipurpose room for varied functions. Michael asked whether the small zendo could be turned into an accommodation with a private bath, and stated that more rooms with baths could serve more retreatants.

Bryan raised a larger issue about usable space at Jikoji and the overall direction in which Jikoji is headed. A question to think about going forward is: Do we want a larger resident community or to rent more rooms out? Further brainstorming will occur, and it was noted that there are various options with more rooms. Judy asked about the impact of more bathrooms on the septic system. Currently the septic tank is being pumped twice a year. If more bathrooms were added, pumping

would need to be done more frequently. Bryan said that toilets could also be added in the large zendo building. Andy requested a meeting with Michael Peterson, Bryan, and others regarding the impact of the upcoming renovations on the residents.

Publications/Communications/Website (Judy Cosgrove; Joe Hall): Judy reported that she is nearly finished with the book of Kobun's teachings on the Platform Sutra. Her son is assisting with typesetting. Judy also reported that she was reimbursed in 2016 for the printing expenses of 100 copies of Kobun's talks on the Heart Sutra. There are no new paper copies of the sesshin book due to the e-book, which has been finished, and she will be reviewing it very soon. Judy stated that keeping track of books sold or given away has "proven impossible." She suggested that we estimate a percentage that has been sold and send a check to the heirs, and that Michael Petersen may be able to assist with this formula. Michael proposed making the assumption that 100% of the copies are sold, as it is difficult to track cash transactions.

This year, a paper copy of Kobun's Master's thesis was acquired, thanks to Sachiko Reece. Taido Chino was very helpful in sending a letter to the library at Kyoto University to get the copy. Saeko Ginestet has one copy and will devote time to translate it. Gerow also has a copy and may be able to find some assistance with translation in Japan. Judy and Saeko are proposing that Mike Newhall facilitate a study group on successive Sundays on the thesis, as there are many Sanskrit terms in the text. Mike agreed that Sunday afternoon might be the best day for a study group. In response to questions about the thesis topic, Judy said that it has to do with the transformation of phenomenal perceptions and merging them into awareness, which is considered the enlightenment experience. Judy is willing to email out information on the Sanskrit terms. Mike suggested that the study group could be called Abhidharma Studies. Doug thanked Judy for what she has accomplished.

Joe reported that the e-book is complete and is undergoing a final review. The book is from Judy's original sesshin talks, with photos and an introduction about Kobun for those who aren't familiar with him. It should be available in the next few weeks and will be announced on the website or by email. The e-book should be available at Amazon and elsewhere for a charge. Joe suggested the possibility of a store system and cabinet at Jikoji, which would help the tracking and logging of items sold via computer. Not all board members are sure that such a system would work; therefore, more discussion may take place. Joe reported that the major change on the website is that rooms can now be booked online, which has been a success. Some guests who have booked online are practicing and bonding with the community.

Animals at Jikoji (Edith Bennett): In a review of 2016, Edith reported that two young cats were brought to Jikoji by Mike Newhall in February from a rescue organization. Jana reported that one of them is missing. Mu-I also disappeared in July and may have been attacked, as his health was good and his vet checks were current.

Task Force Committee Update (Doug Jacobson): The most recent meeting of the "Everything is Workable" committee was attended by Andy, Joe, and Doug. While the first meeting explored a broad range of issues, the committee has decided to limit its focus to conflict resolution.

Other Committees-Discussion: Discussion took place about other committees, and it was noted that Mike Newhall also has the authority to appoint a committee. Mike proposed that an Archive Committee be established, and that he work with Michael Petersen on this. Kobun taught at other centers also, and he believes that an archival library of all his teachings should be maintained. An

Archive Committee can do outreach at centers where Kobun has taught, and videos may also be available. Creating an archive library would primarily be a matter of making contacts. (See also the [Archives](http://www.archive.jikoji.org/) subdomain of Jikoji.org, i.e., <http://www.archive.jikoji.org/>). The possibility of a Personnel Committee was also raised, and Judy asked for clarification. It was suggested that such a committee would be about “residents’ matters and clarifying process.” Bryan said that this kind of committee would need to have a diverse group of participants and include junior and senior residents. Andy said that “there is a need to have something.” Judy asked, “How much should the board be involved in residents’ issues?” It was agreed that the subject of personnel matters is a “big topic” and that more discussion will take place.

SUMMARY OF FINANCIALS (Bryan Gaynor):

Bryan summarized information on the financials as of the end of October. A year ago, the teacher and general fund held \$54,000. At the end of October this year, we have cash on hand of about \$50,000, and two reserve accounts of \$10,000 each. We therefore have about \$70,000 as opposed to \$50,000 a year ago. Bryan reported that we are doing well and have funds on hand. The net result is that, at the end of the second quarter of 2016, we are way ahead of where we were in November 2015. We are “in the black solidly and not losing money.” Bryan also noted that the bookkeeper is doing a good job.

On another financial issue, Andy suggested that we explore a system to track income from the Sunday program. Doug responded that the Sunday income is counted, and that the two of them will talk about this further as needed.

PROPOSED ACTION ITEMS:

Cliff asked that the Board approve the modified resident and guest Policies, including the fee schedule, and also the slightly modified Rental Rates, as distributed by emails to all in the last few months. Cliff asked that the Board approve the changes as a group. Doug motioned that we approve the Policies, Fees, and Rental Rates as an ongoing group of policies that have flexibility. Judy seconded the motion. The fee schedule is therefore approved as a bundle and as a working model that the Board supports. All are in favor and the Policies, Rates, and Fees are hereby approved.

DISCUSSION ITEMS AND OTHER BUSINESS:

Andy believes that it would be helpful for residents and guests to have information on Board members and suggested a list on the website. Cliff said that a list of board members is not presently posted. Bryan stated that Officers should be posted, but Board members do not have to be. Andy sees this information available at other sanghas and thinks it will promote communication. Cliff said that the site, admin.org, is a place where Officers’ names can be posted. A paper list of board members can also be posted in the office, and as in the Minutes.

It was noted that Jana and Cliff have been writing notes of appreciation for donations received.

The Board will consider the vacancies and possible need for Board Member elections in June 2017 to replace Edith, who has submitted her resignation, and Cliff, who is finishing his term. (Yingzhao Liu has subsequently been re-elected to the Board by emails, to be confirmed by vote at the next Board meeting).

ADJOURNMENT/NEXT MEETING:

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 PM. The next meeting is scheduled for the first Sunday in June on June 4th 2017 at 2PM. Doug made a motion to adjourn, and Cliff seconded the motion.