

Phoenix Shambhala Council Meeting
July 16, 2018

Present: Amy, Del, Andre, Lucia, Michelle, Lynn and by Zoom Call, Stuart and LaDawn

Agenda: The Current Situation, Closed v Open Council Meetings, Supporting the Community (Kasung)

Amy:

- Writing an email to the Deputy Minister about possibility of stepping back from her position as Center Director (in one way or another, perhaps temporarily).
 - Personal time needed for work and self-care
 - Business as Usual will not work, given the Current Situation
 - Not knowing how to be the link between this community and the Center of the Mandala
- Discussion about How to Move Forward
 - Programming
 - Asking sangha on the course path of Shambhala if they want to continue with IELs and Levels
 - Consider open space, salons, Shambhala Art, body awareness (QiGong), inclusivity, Mahayana programs, etc.
 - As we consider changing programming then please consider how to not hide from the current situation and still live with and express the vision of Enlightened Society
 - Possibility of our practices holding the container
 - Tonglen, shamatha, Shambhala Sadhana, Mahayana practice
 - Simplify – get back to the basics

Council Meeting Format:

- Discussion about closed v open formats
- Recognition of the deeper core dynamics of relationships in the sangha
- Amy: Said that conversation about mediation with some sangha members has started
- Closed Meeting is not a secret meeting – there are ways to communicate from the council through pillars, for example
- Participatory governance and voice is very important for the well being of community. Deep concern about inclusion and voice and the way that it feels to be excluded – creates an ambiance of exclusion.
- Look for alternatives, e.g. one month open and one month closed or one hour closed and second hour open, etc.
- Post minutes publically if meetings will be closed
- Meetings are times to work and coordinate our efforts
- Contemplative council meetings – practicing together – suggestion by Acharya Lobel
- Is an open council meeting the way to provide more openness and inclusion

Current Updates and Next Steps:

- August 27 is the Open Community Council Meeting 6:30 P.M. at the Center
- Send structure suggestions and topics to Lynn
- Michelle:
 - Thanks to LaDawn to do the cross check between Mail Chimp data base and Shambhala data base
 - All members subscribed to the newsletter" - except one whose email address is missing; we will try to contact him to update his profile.
 - July 14 Salon – 6 attended altogether
 - Two visitors came to do the Heart Sutra
 - Led by Michelle
 - Letter of the Black Ashe
 - No Zoom Call
 - August 11 Salon: Amy, Lucia and Lynn
 - Send to Michelle the topics this week
 - LaDawn and Noah to lead September 8 Salon
 - August/September Newsletter will be mailed soon
- Lucia:
 - Feeling that Kasung presence is needed in the sangha to listen and support
- Lynn
 - Please consider the possibility of a Desung position in the sangha
- Andre
 - Working on financial analysis to be done before the next meeting
 - Will work on the August blog post
 - Amy: Question about membership cancelations
 - Stuart: No cancellations. Looks like membership contributions went up in June.
- Del:
 - Email from Office of Practice and Education: the Rupa Acharya who oversees ritual and shrine room protocols.
 - Offered options for Centers regarding shrine pictures
 - To cover or move the pictures -- not to express shame but to protect from triggering people in the community.
 - Del knows of at least one person who will not come back to the Center because of the pictures
 - Del's proposal: Move the pictures from the small shrine room and create it as a practice shrine
 - Del will move the pictures and communicate the reason for the move
 - Also a question of the pictures of the teachers from a prominent place in the community room and moving them to a less prominent place

- This decision was postponed
 - Talk about this and ask for feedback at the community meeting
 - Del will include the invitation for input about the community room pictures
- Diversity and Inclusivity Training coming to our Center possibly late August
- Community Meeting on August 27 Topics: Salon, Practice and Education Update, Conversation with Community about Deleks and Caretaking of each other (meeting with Dekyongs ahead of time). Lynn will collect ideas about the Community Meeting.