

Community Meeting October 7, 2019

In attendance: Noah, Chris, LaDawn, Michelle, Muffie, Lynn, Pavel, Andre, Barbara

Financial Update

- Andre gave an overview of how he prepares the Center's finances and some of the terminology he uses. Finance is figuring out how to manage resources: are we losing money, gaining, or breaking even? Losing means we're mismanaging our resources, but as a non-profit we shouldn't be gaining too much, which would mean we could be doing more to achieve our mission.
 - Net operating income (NOI) is the amount that we've changed over a given timeframe. We should look at larger periods of time rather than monthly, since we don't have major programs every month. A quarter is a better timeframe to analyze. "Net" = net of expenses.
 - $NOI = \text{revenue} - \text{expenses}$. Operating income does not include expenses/income that are outside regular operations, like paying taxes. (Although we are tax-exempt.)
 - Revenue/expenses can be broken down into discretionary, variable, fixed, and recurring. We make decisions about discretionary and variable income/expenses (like programs), while fixed and recurring expenses are more stable (like membership dues and rent).
- Center revenue (total income or "top line"):
 - Dues
 - gift shop (books, text covers)
 - programs
 - shared space (Kunzang Choling, Dharma Punx)
- Expenses:
 - Advertising (Meetup)
 - banking fees (including PayPal)
 - facilities (rent, utilities)
 - gift shop
 - supplies (for shrine)
 - office supplies (includes internet)

- programs (teacher travel, etc.)
- Unified Giving transfer (\$200/month)
- There has been a dropoff in revenue, partly due to a reduced program schedule. This dropoff started in 2018: Q1 - \$12,900; Q3 - \$7000.
 - Program income in 2019: Q1 - \$6,000. Q2 - \$7,000. But compare 2017: Q1 - \$7,000; Q2 - \$11,000; Q3 - \$8,000; Q4 - \$15,000. The highest earning quarters have had large events.
 - Membership dues have dropped: 2018Q1 - \$5000, compared to 2019Q2 - \$3600. This lower figure has leveled off for the last few quarters.
 - NOI has dropped an average of \$1500 - \$2300 every quarter since 2018Q2. We have been making up the difference with money in checking.
 - In 2019Q2 we had about \$7,000 in checking and \$13,000 in savings. Savings has been held to pay for capital improvements/remodeling or other cushions.
- What are our revenue goals?
 - The biggest question seems to be what we should be looking at in terms of programming. Kim Kelso is not available to do a winter weekthun but may be able to do a different program. Mahayana programs seem to be bringing in more than Way of Shambhala programs. We do have Level 2 scheduled for December (Muffie will teach) and Kim has offered to do Level 3 if enough students are interested. Programming team will need to meet.
 - Should we focus more on the bookstore, especially to support program reading lists? (Keep in mind how much we can afford to spend on books. Include materials fee to cover relevant books?) LaDawn has offered to help with this.
- Expenses: The biggest is rent, which we can't control unless we move.
 - Next are program expenses, especially teacher honorarium and travel; this expense is the same no matter how many people attend. More attendees = more income relative to expenses. Volunteer teachers and food-on-your-own and/or donated snacks reduce expenses.
 - Electric costs can be a concern, but they seem to be better controlled now. Barbara has done well communicating with people how to use the A/C, not changing the programmed schedule and only using temporary holds when necessary. Barbara is also replacing the air filters every month.
- What is the big picture? Are we losing too much money or are we okay? The numbers seem to say something in between.

Other building issues

- Guarantors. Amy has dropped out. Current guarantors are Del, Barbara, Muffie, and LaDawn. Barbara will work on a new lease addendum to update this.
- The sign on the street is dark and hard to see, as is the Enter Only driveway sign. Barbara will talk to Richard about this.

Membership team

- Pavel will be away at Gampo Abbey and may or may not be in contact with us while he's away. The remaining team includes Michelle and Chris. Pavel has been talking to Mike G about the possibility of joining the team and promoting membership.
- Michelle will take over the guest book.
- We want to make membership information easily available, although we won't approach people directly right away. The previous guideline was not to approach people about becoming members until after Level 3.

Space and Operations team

- Barbara would like to step down as team lead, but stay on the team. She will also continue to be our contact with Richard. Barbara is currently working with Diane on a to-do list for the team and will ask others on her team for help.
- We do not yet have a process for changing team leaders. The leads should work on a process, then present it at a community meeting for approval.
- Additionally about teams: Are teams communicating? Are leads reaching out to their teams? Leads will be trying to set up meetings with their teams, since they have had trouble communicating over the summer.

Kindness Circles and Saturday Salons

- Monday night circle will probably dissolve. Restart Saturday Salons? Is this a better time or will attendance still stay low? Effort seems high compared to the potential payoff. We will reevaluate after the new year.

Chants and Year of Deepening Compassion

- Season 3 is focusing on the Heart Sutra. Muffie suggests adding it to the Sunday morning chants.
- Do we need to update our chant book in general? This will be a project for the programming team to work on.

Next Meeting

- Sunday, November 17 at 12:30 (note time to accommodate book group)
- P&E Report on upcoming programs
- Process for changing team leads
- Discuss how we feel about lineage photos in the shrine room