



MINUTES - TSEGYALGAR EAST COMMUNITY MEETING  
APRIL 11, 2021  
Via Zoom

Present: Gakyil- Al Daggett, Mark Alston-Follansbee, John LaFrance, Emily Luhrs, Geko- David Hayes, Administrative Manager-John Shannon, and approximately 35 community members from TE, Kundrolling, and Dondrubling

PRACTICE: Guru Yoga and Song of Vajra with Rinpoche's voice

ANNOUNCED THAT MEETING IS BEING RECORDED

BLUE REPORT:

A. New Courses being planned:

1. Beginners Yantra Yoga with Paula Barry will be a public course
2. Dream Yoga with Michael Katz, a public course with a fee of \$10

B. With Friends of Blue working on a survey of members regarding needs, desires for future programming.

C. Working on a broader Outreach Plan to members focussing on new members.

RED REPORT:

A. Kudos to the Geko, David Hayes for all his work and announced that he will be leaving in September to be married. The gakyil will begin search for new Geko

B. With major input from the Geko and Friends of Red a tentative list of priorities has been developed:

1. Resurfacing the Universal Mandala: cost \$13-15000
2. Repair and improve the Khandroling Bathhouse: cost \$4-5000
3. Complete landscaping on the stupa and possibly create a new park-like area around the stupa and bathhouse
4. Clearing threatening trees and debris on Khandroling
5. Developing a plan to beautify the schoolhouse gumpa
6. Update the dormitory, floors and beds
7. Repair the Sangkong

C. Already completed the replacement of the schoolhouse furnace at a cost of \$5500



Khandrolling land needs ongoing work of Karma Yoga. A list of projects was posted during the call.

Many of the projects listed above require dedicated fundraising as contrast to the ongoing annual maintenance budget of \$20,000.

#### YELLOW REPORT:

A: MEMBERSHIP: As of end of March, 185 members, including 40 since end of February. Categories include: 133 ordinary, 9 special circumstances, 13 Global Meritorious, 4 Meritorious.

Gakyil and outreach team is reaching out to members who haven't renewed. Right now, membership renewals are ahead of last year.

The importance of membership income was explained as critical to the annual budget.

B. FUNDRAISING: In order to meet costs of the special projects, a number of one-on-one calls have been made to donors and some limited publication of requests such as Norbunet for the Universal Mandala. To date the following funds have been raised: Mandala Resurfacing, \$7000; Schoolhouse Furnace, \$4000 with another \$1000 pledged; Schoolhouse Gompa Air Filtration System, \$2800; General Donations, \$4000. Total YTD donations from all sources including weekly and monthly practices and special events, \$28700.

C. 2021 PROPOSED BUDGET: Explained that the budget is a blueprint, a best guess of income and expenses. We have good data on ongoing expenses, but less certainty on income. Last year had a deficit of \$8000. The goal is to have a balanced budget this year.

Vote on Budget by Tseg্যালgar East and Kundrolling members: 27 Yes. Budget approved.

#### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

1. There was some confusion about whether or not the expenses for the Red building projects were covered in the budget. After some discussion it was explained that the \$30,000 in projected Restricted Donations is intended to cover those expenses. It was further suggested and agreed to that it would be desirable to have both Operating and Capital Budgets.



2. It was suggested that we focus on making the Khandroling retreat cabins more habitable with such things as composting toilets and kitchens as a way of insuring the future viability of Khandroling. Putting a composting toilet in Rinpoche's cabin was emphasized as a first priority.

After the meeting the following information was received about composting toilets:  
*There are Board of Health regulations in our Mass State Title 5 that call out where and how these units can be used. We do have one important feature already - an existing certified septic system. From there however there are guidelines which direct and limit their use. It seems that we can have the grey water go into a cesspool ie - a hole in the ground and the black water goes into a tank and from there can be dumped into our septic system. So you can see - we have two different systems that we have to contend with. Any proposed changes would need to be done in concert with the Buckland Board of Health. Additional research is required as we move forward.*

3. Regarding the repair/replacement of the schoolhouse roof, an issue was raised about the previous gakyil's not accepting a grant of \$80,000 for that purpose. A former member posted an explanation for the decision on the meeting chat.

*"the grant came with specific restrictions. It would declare the Schoolhouse a historical site, and this would give the city authority over future decisions. The community at that time decided that it was not appropriate for the city to have that kind of authority over our community.*

After the meeting the gakyil reviewed the following email from the previous Treasurer about this issue and agrees with the decision:  
*After the 2017 Town Meeting vote on the Dzogchen Community's CPA grant proposal to repair the Schoolhouse roof, the Dzogchen Community had a change of leadership in the form of a new board of directors. The current board of directors has decided not to proceed with obtaining the grant funds for repairing the Schoolhouse roof. The current Board has determined that the historical preservation restrictions that would have to be included in the grant agreement to protect the Town's financial investment in the project will be too problematic for us to proceed.*

*The decision was not made before now because, in the wake of the Massachusetts Supreme Court's decision in Caplan v. Town of Acton, it seemed like the process might be in a kind of legal limbo. But now that the process has resumed, it was decided that it would be better to make the decision now to not proceed, rather than have the Commission and the Town expend further time and energy on the process.*



COMMENTS SECTION OF MEETING:

1. Vajra Dance is crucial to the future of Tsegyalgar and Khandroling. We might consider forming a “Blue Group for Vajra Dance” to consider scheduling retreats and practices. We need to look forward to schedule an International Retreat perhaps calling it “The Birth of the Vajra Dance Celebration”.
2. Vajra Dancers have been negatively impacted by pandemic by not being able to be on mandalas together. Tsegyalgar should participate in International Dance Retreat from Merigar on July 16-22. Khandroling and the Universal Mandala are very important for the Vajra Dance. Gakyil needs to consider whether or not vaccinations will be required.
3. Kundroling has been active with the gar and wants to bring energy to support the gar after closing the NYC location. Many Kundroling members are willing to support the gar. Could use concerts for fundraising. We have a lot to offer to new members.
4. There has been concern about the ceiling of the Vajra Hall. There is no current concern about the structural integrity of the ceiling. A longer term project might address the aesthetics of the ceiling.
5. Suggestions for safety during the Summer Celebration. Consider making rapid testing available for retreatants. Concern about being together even if vaccinated.
6. Tsegyalgar is not the only important place for Vajra Dance.
7. Concern raised about puddles on the floor of Vajra Hall. *Follow-up information: The Vajra Hall, because of its size and location, can have its own weather conditions. There have actually been clouds inside the Vajra Hall. When it rains or is very humid condensation builds up on the steel beams and drips onto the mandala. This is not from leaking in the roof.*
8. The Vajra Hall is the “mother ship” for the Vajra Dance; multiple dance retreats should be considered, even ones in which the participants manage the events.
9. By the time the July retreat comes around most people will be vaccinated. Once we’re all vaccinated the probability of giving or getting the virus is greatly reduced. We can still use distancing, masks and hand washing. Perhaps we can be more relaxed about the virus concerns being outside, being socially distanced in the huge space. Might not need to worry about testing everybody.
10. We’re working on a proposal to open up the cabins for personal retreats.
11. Appreciate having practices other than Vajra Dance such as Mandarava and Yantra Yoga.



12. We can have other practices in the Vajra Hall and the gompa like Long Life Practice, Chod, and Yantra Yoga and be together if we're vaccinated. We have two locations that can be used.
13. It's important to come to the Summer Celebrations to do more than dance but to do other collective practices.
14. If people are vaccinated it's much safer. We don't know what will be in 2-3 months but right now the risk is relatively lower.
15. Wondering if it's better to overlap the dance and Summer Celebration retreats or have them consecutively.
16. Suggests a separate retreat that would combine dances that are easy to learn with other practices as well. Perhaps a combined 12 Ahs and Mandarava retreat or a retreat with Dance that Benefits All Beings combined with Six Lokas practice. Would love to do Summer Sangha retreat following guidelines from Rinpoche. Concerned about younger people coming to the retreats who currently can't be vaccinated.
17. The dance practices will bring more people to the Summer Celebration. Consider having an event in NYC that will create interest in more people coming to Tseg্যালgar.
18. Consider having Team Leaders or Project Managers to organize retreats and Karma Yoga.
19. Would like dance and practice overlap.
20. We need to be flexible to adapt to changes in virus.
21. Keep retreats simple and organization not complicated.

DEDICATION OF MERIT