

Community Meeting Minutes 4/6/25

Present online:

Gakyil members Al Daggett, Marsha Ellison, Ellen Halbert

Community members Michael Sullivan, Gerry Steinberg, Nancy Paris, Diane Campbell, Mark Alton-Follansbee, John Shannon, Larry Howe, Martha Tack, Robyn Kinsey, Tu-vi Luong, Carisa O'Kelly, Andrei Laszlo

Present in gonpa:

Dominik Niceva, Helena Bankovic, Lauri Marder, Efrem Marder, Marit Cranmer, Paula Barry, Jim Smith, Kathleen Fekete, David Hayes, Cindy Thibeau, Vern Harrington, Gerald Miller

Guru Yoga

Agenda:

- 1) **Blue report:** The report was provided online before the meeting. It was noted the activities listed were only those with a formal registration, not including the many wonderful ongoing programs offered by local teachers and practice leaders. Mistakenly omitted was the Umze Training offered by Sebastien Remy with 35 participants. The two summer retreats planned, The Teaching of Dzogchen with Igor Berkhin and 8th Annual Dance Dance Dance were discussed, as well as the possibility of a July retreat which was requested by members in lieu of the Summer Sangha Retreat. Difficulties with the July retreat were mentioned, including declining participation in recent years and stretched resources. Michael Katz is willing to provide a July long weekend program focusing on practice, possibly Rushen of the Voice. Marsha will retire from the gakyil in September 2025 after 3 years' service.
- 2) **Red report:** The report was provided online before the meeting. Of the many maintenance issues listed, two are considered urgent: schoolhouse roof repairs and replacement of back gonpa door due to rot. Two other gonpa doors will also need to be replaced soon. Large projects needed depending on community priorities and budget are repaving schoolhouse parking lot, adding rip rap along new paved road at Khandroling, installing memorial garden and commemorative mandala garden near pond cabin at Khandroling, and enclosing the Vajra Hall and finishing the ceiling. Members requested additional signage at Vajra Hall to address danger of falls from wet floor, and tree planting around pond and pond cabin area.
- 3) **Dark retreat:** After considering many options, the dark retreat study group favors modifying the second bedroom in the farmhouse so it can be used for dark

retreat when needed and as a normal bedroom at other times. This would entail blackout window coverings, a lightproof pass-through for meals, additional ventilation, and a second door for soundproofing. This would be much easier and cheaper than any other option and could be completed relatively quickly for around \$1000. The gakyil still wants to renovate 2 rooms of the old dark retreat cabin when resources are available.

- 4) **Design ideas** for the memorial garden and Vajra Dance Historic Landmark garden in the pond cabin area at Khandroling were presented. It was noted that there are more and less expensive versions of these gardens, and that they could be installed in phases according to circumstances and available resources. Donations of about \$3800 earmarked for Khandroling could be used for the gardens if members approve.
- 5) **Urgent call for gakyil members:** Current gakyil members emphasized the urgent need for new members, as Al Daggett will retire as of June 30, 2025. A 3 person gakyil is the minimum necessary, but barely sufficient, to manage community needs. No new gakyil candidates have presented themselves.
- 6) **Yellow report:** The report was provided online before the meeting. FY 2024 total income was \$241,000 and 2024 projected budget was \$224,000. Donations accounted for \$105,000 and income from retreats approximately \$25,000, with gross profit of \$236,794. In spite of this the total 2024 deficit was \$31,500.44; considering the budgeted surplus of \$24,067.90 the total shortfall was \$55,558.34 due to higher than expected expenses. Total expenses were \$268,000, including repairs and maintenance of \$47,700, contributions to IDC of \$15,000 and property expenses such as taxes. Concern was expressed that because the 2025 budget mirrors 2023 budget we could end up with another deficit. The amount overspent was covered by rent income from Tsegylgar House (\$33,000) at Dzamlingar and a balance forward from 2023 of \$31,000. It was explained that there are two categories listed for repairs and maintenance, according to whether they are recurring or one time expenditures. Although some members had questions about the projected 2025 budget, it was approved by vote, with the understanding that it can be amended as circumstances require. Members were invited to meet with yellow gakyil later to answer detailed questions about the budget. It was noted that the last 5 years income was \$1,228,000 and expenses \$1,223,000; last 10 years income was \$2,366,000 and expenses \$2,498,000.
- 7) **Membership report:** The membership report was provided online before the meeting. There was not time to discuss it during the meeting.

Dedication of Merit