

PSMC Council Meeting Thursday, September 17th, 2015

Agenda

Attendance Members present: Lisa Stanley, Corey Adkins, Bettina Hetz, John Smith, Jack Bodner, Dan Rubin, Jason Bray, Michaela McCormick

Members absent: None

Sit; Contemplation, raise Windhorse

Check in

Questions/discussion from Reports

Prioritize Agenda

Agenda Items- High Priority

Items that need to be accomplished this meeting.

- Welcoming Dan Rubin
 - *The Council welcomed our new Rusung, Dan Rubin, for whom this was his first meeting.*
- Committee Dir of P&E Search
 - *Our Director of Practice and Education, Michaela McCormick, will be ending her tenure on Shambhala Day of 2016. The Council discussed forming a committee to work on this search, which has been ongoing this current calendar year.*
 - **Issues:**
 - Director doesn't feel capable of holding this entirely. Who else would be involved?
 - Discussing restructuring it so it's a more manageable position.
 - **Decisions:**
 - Volunteers: Bettina, John.
 - Suggestions of Committee Members: Timaree, Rayna.
 - Dan willing to look for someone from Kasung pillar to sit on committee.
 - Director will be on this committee.
 - **Action Items:**
 - **Unresolved Issues:**
- Fall Fundraising Campaign, phone calls
 - *The Council discussed plans for the current Fall fundraising campaign, which kicked off at Harvest of Peace.*
 - **Issues:**
 - \$7,000 goal. Fall Campaign, not just Harvest of Peace.
 - Phone calls later in the Fall when we see where our goals are at, our Financial Situation.
 - Asking people to increase dues being very important.

- Dan willing to teach a class on Service as Path- incorporate in Janie's ROTA training?
 - Lisa and Corey will turn this into an agenda.
 - Send Bettina reminder to check for her house.
- **Unresolved Issues:**
 - Bring David into a later meeting to discuss membership and social action.
 - Invite Abbey to December Retreat?

Agenda Items- Moderate Priority

Items that need to be accomplished soon, preferably this meeting.

- Shambhala Day - weekday or Saturday? - JB
 - *Shambhala Day in 2016 is on February 9th, which is a Tuesday. The Council discussed whether we should look to have our community celebration on the official day, or wait till the weekend following.*
 - **Issues:**
 - Including more people vs. being able to see the event live.
 - It is a real religious holiday.
 - Gap from the Don days to Shambhala Day
 - Could have a real Neutral Day
 - **Decisions:**
 - **Broad agreement** to aim for the Saturday the 13th
 - **Action Items:**
 - **Unresolved Issues:**
- Year end report to Members - LS
 - *The Director is generating a year-end report on the center's activities which will be mailed to members.*
 - **Issues:**
 - Short, way to reflect back to ourselves and community what we've accomplished.
 - Could be a way to share the goals. Town Halls.
 - **Decisions:**
 - **Broad agreement** to work on this together.
 - **Action Items:**
 - Deadline to submit items December Retreat.
 - Go out before Shambhala Day.

Agenda Items- Low Priority

Items that can be discussed/accomplished if time allows.

Member Reports:

Director

Outreach - Graceful Exit; we're pretty well organized at this point - defined work study positions; publicity out including a banner ad at NWDA and postering. Current sales are - 36 participants, revenue of \$6590.00. UPDATE as of 9/17 - 39 \$7205.00

HoP - I sent letter to invite members to attend. We have 18 registered which is unusual to have people register, projecting a good turn out. Jason has the details organized and getting volunteers in place. Jack and I have worked on the fundraising needs and he is taking the lead.

Membership - Last count = 132 members. Membership team working on the Halloween Appreciation Event. Town Hall scheduled for HoP to focus on Relocation. Working with David on Membership budget for 2016 to reflect increasing #s and subsequent increase in expenses to support that.

2016 Calendaring - the CG is having ongoing meetings. We have completed entry of a good majority of the regular ongoing practice events as well as all of the curricular courses.

Relocation - Bettina and I met to plan for Town Hall and initial meeting with small group of those who worked on prior relocation efforts to plan the first seed.

Completed job review with Abbey, will ask her to forward summary to Council once written version completed.

Working with Jack on Fall Fundraising Campaign and 2016 budget.

Vacation - I have 3 weeks left for this year. I plan to take off the weeks of:
Oct 19th, Nov 23rd, Dec 28th

Finance & Chagdzo

- Harvest of Peace donations to date: \$1,400 !
- Brief informal financial update: YTD through August, it appears that we are running slightly in the black and roughly \$5,000 ahead of budget (i.e. +\$500 Actual vs. -\$4,600 Budget.) Fundraising is still necessary because of very few revenue producing programs on the calendar for November & December (Assistant Director training in November was cancelled), and also to meet our minimum commitment of support for the Sakyong and core services.
- One area of concern: while dues are up significantly from last year (about \$440 per month more), dues income has been essentially flat this year, despite the increased number of members. (Further analysis is necessary to figure out why.) So as part of the HOP and Year End Campaign, a push for increased dues is important.

Practice & Study

[Summer Ikebana \(Japanese Flower Arranging\) Workshop](#): Aug. 16 – 11 participants.

[LGBTQ Weekend Retreat - Queer Dharma](#): Aug. 28-30 – 18 participants.

[How Can I Help? The Basic Goodness of Society](#): Sept. 2 – Oct. 7 – 17 registrants.

[Shambhala Training Level III](#): Sept. 11-13 – 12 registrants.

Need for Umdzes and Other ROTA Volunteers – We continue to have a shortage of umdzes and other volunteers to fill the Community Practice ROTA slots. Janie is planning on making an appeal to selected regular participants in the various practices to step into those roles, with the message that those who rely on the practices need to do so.

Ashe Society – Robert Archer, who has been holding this practice, and sometimes is the only participant, has informed Michaela that he will be traveling for the next several months and will not be available. We are suspending the practice until he returns.

Mahayana Practice – A group of mahayana practitioners will begin practicing the Bodhisattva Liturgy at the Center, in October, on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month at 8:15AM. They are recruiting a coordinator for the practice.

Ikebana Practice – Ikebana practitioners will begin monthly practice sessions on the 1st Thursday of each month, from 6:30 to 9:30PM, beginning in October, with the hope that they can continue in 2016. The Calendar Group will review the scheduling possibilities for 2016 and let them know if that is possible or if we need to find another date/time on the calendar.

Shambhala Sadhana – The Sakyong has directed all centers to begin a monthly group practice of the Shambhala Sadhana on or near the full moon, open to all members whether or not they have received the lung, and to include a feast or at least a social time with food when possible. The Calendar group has scheduled it for Oct 26, Nov 25, and Dec 28. Janie, as Community Practice Coordinator will oversee this, and Rayna as Shastri will lead it, at least in the beginning.

Guide Follow-Up Training – Rayna has scheduled this for Oct. 17 at Kristen's house, which is when all the Guide candidates can do it. They include Corey Adkins, Abbey Pleviak, Aletha Eastwood, Jay Stevens, David Englebrecht, Janie Paige, Caitlin Bargaquast, and Carol Lieberman.

Course Leader Training – Eight of our members are participating in the Course Leader Training in Seattle Sept. 11-13. They are John Light, Carol Lieberman, Erica Thygesen, Rebecca Jamison, Aletha Eastwood, Dan Rubin, Kristin Mullen, Ann Sihler, and Shastri Rayna Jacobson.

Societal Health & Well Being

Director (Jason):

Fall and winter nyida day planning is in full swing. Assignments are nearly complete for Harvest of Peace. A google group has been created for those involved with the Nyida Day Planning Committee: nyidadays@portland.shambhala.org

A committee is being formed for Winter Solstice/Children's Day (see Family Council report)

With the help of Kersten Carr from Eugene, my hope is that Midsummer's Day and Winter Solstice will be collaborations with the Eugene sangha in the future. Kersten is reserving our picnic spot at Silver Falls for Midsummer's (Saturday June 18th). As soon as that is booked, publicity will go out to the community to "save the date," and invite folks to reserve their own campsites if they desire. Midsummer's will also incorporate a Drala Hike at Silver Falls.

I am participating in the calendaring process for 2016. **If you would like to propose a program for next year at the center (ie: Young Meditators Retreat, Heart of Recovery Retreat, Aging Mandala or family oriented program), we are better able to accommodate these requests early on. Please try to get any proposals for such programs to me before Monday October 12th (Columbus Day).** If you would like help drafting a proposal, please contact me. We will continue to consider program proposals into the new year, but if you are able to propose your programs now it would be VERY helpful.

Queer Dharma (Jason & Michaela):

A WONDERFUL weekend with Julia Sagebien. Topics covered include what Queer Dharma is and isn't, the four noble truths, the three vehicles or "yanas" and their various archetypes (Arhat, Bodhisattva, Mahasiddha, etc), and samatha/vipassana meditation practice - all while beginning to explore how these topics are relevant to identity. 18 total in attendance for the whole weekend, and approximately 24 in attendance for the Friday evening talk.

Please feel free to listen to the recordings of the talks here:

http://www.mediafire.com/folder/yxobgn1uplh3e/Queer_Dharma_retreat_2015

22 people in attendance for our September 6th Queer Dharma gathering on the subject of grief and grieving - seems to be a rather close subject for many folks. The change in weather may have something to do with the attendance spike as well.

\$577.32 in net revenue for the weekend retreat

\$201 in donation year to date

Total of \$778.32

Family Council (Mark Douglass, Heather Shaw):

Meeting planned to discuss Winter Solstice/Children's Day - Wednesday, October 14th, 6:30-8:00pm at the center. All are welcome to attend.

Kersten Carr from Eugene sangha is on board and hoping to bring folks up from Eugene for the event.

Young Meditators (Corey):

Young Meditators met on August 27th, where Nick Urban led and discussed the chanting practice, specifically looking at the Supplication to the Shambhala Lineage, unpacking all of the characters there.

On September 4th through 7th, we had our joint campout with some young sangha from Seattle in the Olympic National Park. It was a good time, 13 attendees from Portland and 6 from Seattle. Some sitting together, hikes, discussion and lots of fire building. A few people who attended from Portland who've never been to the group and are interested in coming back. Was a first meeting for many of the Seattle folks amongst even themselves, as they do not yet have a Young Meditators Group, I'm hopeful that this can inspire the formation of such a group up there.

Then on September 10th another Social Meditation meeting occurred.

Attendance has been small to moderate, which feels typical for the summer months.

I'm hoping to soon convene a group of the regular attendees, new and old, and discuss the future of the group. Been feeling a lot of new energy which could take the group into new places. Also feeling my time in leading it is coming to an end, as I see some new folks who have the energy to take on the group themselves.

Heart of Recovery (Ruth):

Lewis and Clark Problem Gambling Services has requested someone from Heart of Recovery (i.e. me) to come and speak on a panel they are having on Sept 20th. I think it's a great way to get publicity/do outreach. Currently, we don't have any member who are struggling with gambling, but I'd be glad to have them. View flier for the event [HERE](#).

Diversity (Michaela):

Nothing to report.

Aging Mandala (Ann, Bill, Nancy):

The Aging group has been 'on vacation' and will be (this is my understanding) until after the Graceful Exit program October 16-18 with Andrew Holecek. We have talked about a follow-up after the program.(Bill)

Community Care (Jason, interim):

Nothing to report

Meditation Warriors Book Group (David):**Deleks (Aletha):****Drala Hikes (Liz):**

Planning for Saturday June 18th Midsummer's Day Drala Hike @ Silver Falls

Nyida Day Planning Committee

Early stages of forming - see Director's report above

Culture & Decorum - Bettina

My aspiration is that our Council conducts itself with decorum and civility so that we can better be of benefit to our community and the greater world.

Towards that end, I would like to suggest the use of fans during Council meetings and retreats. When discussions become overheated, this signal can offer a cool pause. Picking up this implement is a request for a moment of silence in which to reflect:

Can that be said more kindly?

How is respect being demonstrated?

How does our sangha benefit from what we are doing now?

Anyone can pick up a fan, which signals that talking is suspended, and when the fan is placed down, the discussion can resume. I will bring 3 fans and if you have one please do bring it. BH

Kasung

New Rusung for the Portland Center - Welcome Dan Rubin!

Cultivating the Path of Protection program with Shambhala Mountain Center's Executive Director Michael Gayner was help on Aug 7 - 9. The Friday night community talk saw 32

members in attendance, and there were 25 weekend participants, including people from Eugene and Mexico. There were talks, discussion and exercises in awareness and perception, including the ever popular butt-boxing! Dan Rubin was sworn into Rusungship. Eh Ma Ho!

Council Secretary

Worked on a boatload of stuff in the leadup to the Council Retreat (Communication, Dignities, Roles Contemplation), and then took a bit of a break.

Met with John to get him up to speed from the Retreat. I have a meeting tomorrow with Dan Rubin to do the same.

Continuing to work with the challenges of balancing my work with this group with work in other groups. Practicing setting a defined amount of time for my work, but finding that it is hard to complete all the work there is to be done in that time- I often spend it just reading and replying to emails- and I am reticent to expand that time as my schedule is only getting busier from here. Hopeful that I will find more ways to make it workable, and staying actually quite cheerful about it.

Communications

Communications profile

- **Calendaring**
 - Our Calendar study has been submitted to Council and the people who participated in the project.
- **Readership for popular or Recent blog posts**

There have been few blog posts in the last 6 weeks, so blog readership is down compared to previous months.

Post Title	Date	Page Views	Minutes on Page
July Council Meeting Summary and Meeting Notes	8/7/2015	32	3.57
Personal thoughts on Cultivating the Path of Protection	7/26/2015	17	1.02
Taking Refuge	7/14/2015	16	4.88
Co-Creating a Vision of Shambhala	7/5/2015	6	0.45
It's getting hard to talk...	6/20/2015	5	11.19
Stay in touch	2/6/2015	7	3.25
Queer Dharma Approaches First Weekend Retreat - Reflections by Co-Coordinator Jason Bray	8/11/2014	5	0.87

How to keep on helping	6/29/2014	7	0.84
Lisa Stanley teaching people to sit still 5 minutes a day	12/9/2013	6	0.78
3rd Annual Meditation Marathon Seeks Meditators	9/27/2013	7	0.82

- **Website changes this month**

- September 16, 2015 - John - Key Request form re-implementation
 - Replaced an inactive and possibly non-functioning Google Form with a Gravity Form that is in line with effort to make all our forms use one platform. It's displayed in the members-only area of the website.
- August 15, 2015 - John - Graceful Exit contact setup
 - Set up a contact for the Graceful Exit program

- **Consolidated email publications report**

I've begun sending the following report to those who actually generate the emails with the thought that they would be interested in seeing how their activity fits into the overall context.

Date	Message Sender	Subject	Total Recipients	Stats
8/13/2015	Abbey Pleviak	next Shambhala weekend retreat: Level III: Warrior in the World, begins Sept 11	44	
8/14/2015	Abbey Pleviak	Still Time to Register! Intro to Contemplative Psychology: Aug 22 +23	1460	
8/15/2015	Pub Team	This Month at Shambhala - August and September gatherings, programs, and events	1353	20.34% / 0.74%
8/17/2015	Pub Team	Newsletter: Open House Q&A; Heart of Recovery; Council Meeting; Intro. to Contemplative Psychology	1353	22.87% / 4.66%
8/17/2015	Michaela McCormick	Caretaking at LGBTQ Retreat	225	
8/17/2015	Michaela McCormick	Shambhala Program Staffing Opportunities, Oct - Dec 2015	239	
8/19/2015	Deborah Kuprunas	Welcome to Portland Shambhala Newsletter!	16	
8/19/2015	Deborah Kuprunas	Welcome to Portland Shambhala Newsletter!	13	
8/19/2015	Deborah Kuprunas	Welcome to Portland Shambhala Newsletter!	18	
8/19/2015	Abbey Pleviak	Shambhala Ikebana Fall Series begins on Sun,	1468	

		Sept 20!		
8/20/2015	Abbey Pleviak	Still Time to Register for: LGBTQ Retreat: \"Non-Self\" Help: Fri, Aug 28 - Sun, Aug 30	1465	
8/23/2015	David Engelbrecht	Members' Oath Ceremony, Pin, and Booklet	131	
8/24/2015	Pub Team	Newsletter: Community Practice & Talk; Young Meditator's Group; Ashe Society; Sadhana of Mahamudra; Queer Dharma: \"Non-Self\" Help\" weekend retreat	1354	22.62% / 4.07%
8/25/2015	Abbey Pleviak	Shambhala retreat: Windhorse, Sept 25-27	12	
8/25/2015	Abbey Pleviak	Windhorse coming up: Sept 25-27 -- Repeat tuition is 50%	29	
8/26/2015	Jason Bray	Queer Dharma Retreat Opening Talk with Dr. Julia Sagebien	1461	
8/26/2015	Abbey Pleviak	Still Time to Register for: How Can I Help? The Basic Goodness of Society -- begins Sept 2	1461	
8/27/2015	Jason Bray	Queer Dharma Retreat Tomorrow Night!	16	
8/27/2015	Jason Bray	Weekend Rota Task	5	
8/31/2015	Pub Team	Newsletter: Basic Goodness 2; Heart of Recovery; Drala Hike; VPI; Sunday Community Practice Talk; Meditation Warriors; Queer Dharma; Werma Feast	1350	22.98% / 4.60%
9/1/2015	Jason Bray	Thank you	19	
9/1/2015	Deborah Kuprunas	Welcome to Portland Shambhala Newsletter!	19	
9/3/2015	Abbey Pleviak	You're warmly invited to Harvest of Peace! Schedule and Volunteer Opportunities within!	209	
9/6/2015	Abbey Pleviak	Shambhala Retreat: Graceful Exits: Preparing for a Good Death: Oct 16 -18	1463	
9/6/2015	Abbey Pleviak	Still Time to Register for: Level III: Warrior in the World -- Sept 11 - 13	40	
9/7/2015	Pub Team	Newsletter: Open House talk; Young Meditator's Group; Shambhala Training Level III; Drala Meditation Hike; Cape Lookout; Sadhana of Mahamudra	1351	25.61% / 4.97%
9/8/2015	Deborah Kuprunas	Welcome to Portland Shambhala Newsletter!	16	
9/9/2015	Abbey Pleviak	Shambhala class Level III: Check In begins at 6:30pm on Fri, Sept 11	3	
9/9/2015	Abbey Pleviak	Shambhala class Level III: Check In begins at	9	

		6:30pm on Fri, Sept 11		
9/10/2015	Abbey Pleviak	Ikebana Fall Series -- October Class Cancelled	7	
9/10/2015	Abbey Pleviak	Shambhala Harvest of Peace --Next Week! -- Volunteer Call!	208	
9/11/2015	Jack Bodner	The Harvest of Peace Campaign in Portland!	224	
9/14/2015	Pub Team	Newsletter: Open House; Heart of Recovery; Padmasambhava Feast; Council Mtg. Harvest of Peace; Sunday Comm. Prac.; Meditation Warriors; Ikebana Series	1352	23.16% / 4.83%
9/15/2015	Pub Team	This Month at Shambhala - September and October gatherings, programs, and events	1347	15.76% / 1.04%
9/15/2015	Lisa Stanley	Ikebana Class starts this Sunday	10	
9/15/2015	Deborah Kuprunas	Welcome to Portland Shambhala Newsletter!	13	

- **Registration and Website Activity**

The Graceful Exit program is getting a lot of attention (surpassed only by the LGBTQ Weekend Retreat). Transforming Stress through Mindfulness is **not** getting much attention. The Open House talk page for Ann Cason's 9/8 talk generated a surprising amount of interest, suggesting that our practice of putting a title and a speaker profile on the web does generate interest.

The Shambhala Sadhana is now listed in the calendar: how will its introduction be handled? It's a concern given that it displacing a Sadhana with an active group of users.

Program Name	Date	Registration	Page Views last week	Page Views total
LGBTQ Weekend Retreat - Queer Dharma:	8/29/2015	16	4	405
How Can I Help? The Basic Goodness of Society	9/2/2015	17	25	206
Open House Talk: Always maintain a cheerful mind: Working with dementia with Ann Cason	9/8/2015	NA	11	50
Shambhala Training Level III: Warrior in the World	9/11/2015	13	32	107
Drala Meditation Hike: Cape Lookout	9/12/2015	NA	35	98
Harvest of Peace Annual Celebration	9/19/2015	20	78	188
Ikebana (Japanese Flower Arranging) Class Series	9/20/2015	7	25	111
Windhorse	9/25/2015	8	29	102

Community Nyinthun	10/3/2015	1	15	42
Council Retreat	10/3/2015	NA	1	1
Transforming Stress through Mindfulness	10/9/2015	NA	36	83
Graceful Exit: Preparing for A Good Death	10/16/2015	NA	56	381
Vajrayana Practice Intensives	10/17/2015	NA	1	5
Fearlessness in Everyday Life	10/21/2015	2	13	58
Shambhala Training Level IV: Awakened Heart	10/23/2015	6	7	26
Drala Meditation Hike: Ape Cave	10/24/2015	NA	3	9
Learn to Meditate Workshop: Turning the Mind into an Ally	10/31/2015	NA	40	163
Members and Friends' Appreciation Halloween Party	10/31/2015	NA	5	10
Drala	11/6/2015	3	2	13
Shambhala Training Level I: The Art of Being Human	11/13/2015	2	22	131
Learn to Meditate Workshop: Turning the Mind into an Ally	12/5/2015	NA	2	7
Shambhala Training Level V: Open Sky	12/11/2015	3	2	15