

## Quarter 4 Council Retreat Agenda

Saturday, December 5th, 2015

Portland Shambhala Center, 1110 SE Alder St.

**9:15-9:30** Arrive, settle

**9:30** Sit, chants, lhasang, contemplation

**10:00-10:10** Review communication agreements (see [here](#))

*The Council created these agreements towards effective communication in the previous Council retreat. This is part of an ongoing effort by the Council to improve our collaboration and treat our work together as a practice of Enlightened Society in action.*

**10:10-10:45** Council sharing on the view of authority in the Shambhala model of governance\*

*It has come to light that there are varying views in the Council about the authority of the Council, both as a group and individually, where this authority comes from, and how it is handled in practice. As a beginning to a conversation on this, we shared our views and the following documents.*

- From Pres Reoch---the format we use for leadership meetings, and comments on view and hierarchy. All of us should be familiar with this model as the key structure in decision making, it would be great for us to model it in other meetings, such as those you chair in your spheres. **pp 8-10** are where he talks more specifically to leadership, and hierarchy  
<http://fromourpresident.shambhalatimes.org/files/2013/01/Effective-Meetings-A-teaching-by-President-Reoch-17Nov2008.pdf>
- Kalapa Gov doc for all Centers: "Steps towards the Kalapa Governance structure at Shambhala Centres" Entire doc recommended but these pages might be most helpful, Council structure/role **pp 1-4** Director role **pp 6-8**  
<http://shambhalanetwork.org/sandbox3/index.php?file=2013/05/Steps-to-Kalapa-Governance-9-Jan-2014.pdf>
- Chicago's Gov Manual which outlines with detail they've added: **pp 5-8** on Council structure and Council-Executive linkage **pp 16-18**  
<http://shambhalanetwork.org/chicago/files/2013/11/PolicyManual.pdf>
- From the Kalapa Court, the vision of the Director's role **pp 1-5**:  
<http://shambhalanetwork.org/sandbox3/index.php?file=2013/05/The-Role-and-Appointment-of-the-Director-June-2015.pdf>
- At any time you can see much more material by visiting the Governance pages on [shambhala.org](http://shambhala.org). You need to sign in as a Member then follow the Governance links, esp "Resources" in this area.

**10:45-11:00** Break

**11:00-11:50** Review [2016 Calendar and Events Spreadsheet](#)

*The year-end retreat is where we typically handle approval of the 2016 Calendar and 2016 Budget.*

**11:50-Noon** Pre-lunch check in on Witness communications experiment

**Noon-12:45** Lunch

**12:45 - 2:00** Review 2016 proposed budget

*The year-end retreat is where we typically handle approval of the 2016 Calendar and 2016 Budget.*

**2:00 - 2:15** Short Tea Break

**2:15 - 3:15** Budget review, cont.

**3:15 - 3:30** Wrap up, and check in on communications and Witness experiment

### **\*View of Authority Structure**

- Pre-work; Council reviews Kalapa Governance docs prior to Retreat
- Each Council member shares their own personal understanding of this topic, and any personal needs. We will use the Council format which is essentially a talking circle. The key instructions are---speak from the heart, be pithy, listen fully, no cross-talk. (approx 3 min each, 25 min total)
- Check-out---any next steps? (10 min)

### **Notes**

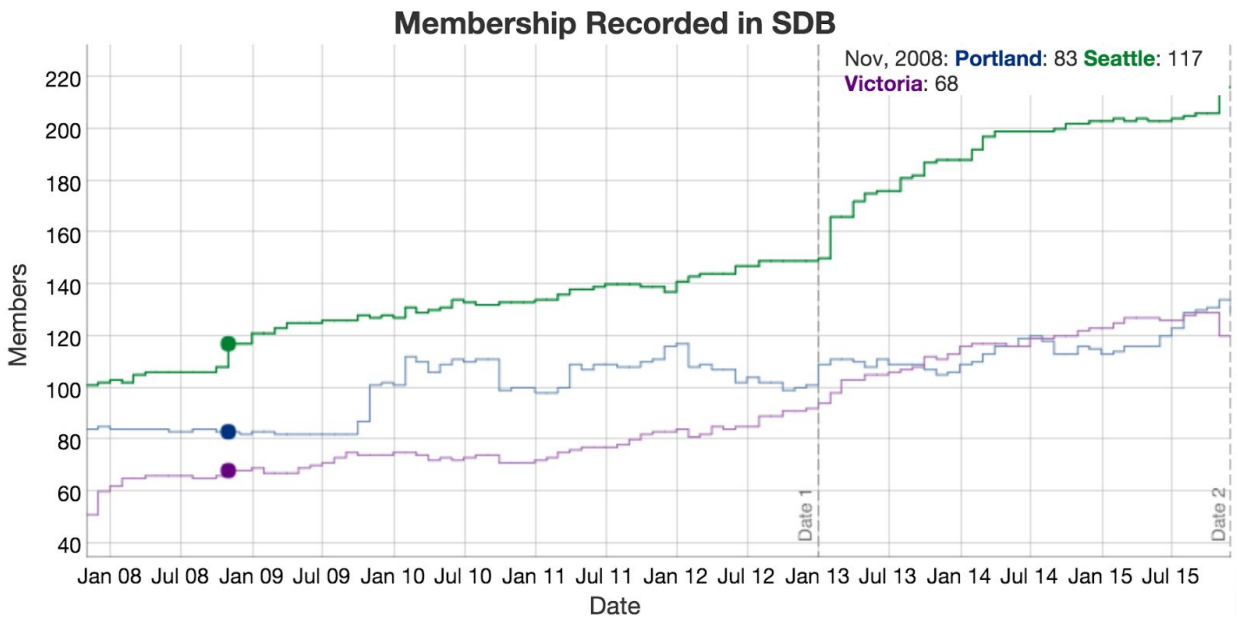
- View of Authority Conv.
  - Next steps:
    - Curious how Chicago organized themselves. they've thought through a lot. Is that the route for us? interesting to see diverging views in today's meeting: we have different interests. Need to give feedback & criticism.
    - Would like to schedule conversations how to govern, what's our authority as a council, and individually and how to organize it.
    - Look at other centers such as Chicago's work- how to govern best for our community. We are different than all other communities in subtle ways. Contemplate areas of personal development and accountability to each other.
    - Structural work and personal work/conversation. Want to learn from everyone. Curious about potential fears for the future.

- Curious about how we can better serve our community, be of benefit to the sangha.
  - Learning from other communities. Learned about administration from calendaring study. Doing it systematically, targeting nearby centers. Concrete.
  - Have some training for when someone enters Council regarding the view / what we've been taught, contemplation together. Interesting to learn from other centers.
  - Encouraging personal conversations, can dig a little deeper. Chicago manual is really influenced by Sakyong's governance teachings, we could manifest differently, but don't have to reinvent the wheel.
  - **Each Council member is responsible for bringing in an item for discussion.**
    - Could include proposal of structure (how to talk about it.
    - Being specific with the item and the conversation we want to have.
    - Discriminating between personal conversations and Council conversations.
    - **Broad Agreement**
- Calendaring Discussion
    - **Issues:**
      - What feedback is being sought?/Comments on Calendar
        - Seeking Council Approval, noting that it is flexible and things come up.
        - Rationale of buildings cohorts through programming. Increase LTM's and Level 1s, main gateway for people coming in.
          - Look at increase in shorter classes or workshops which low staffing needs but high interest = good income, less taxing on staff.
        - IEL classes will help to develop Course Leaders.
        - Prison Program worked out well where the visiting teachers can teach Level 1's.
          - Doug often recruits teachers who are authorized for Level 1.
        - Higher # of Shambhala Arts levels being offered in 2016 at the direction of our Arts Council. These typically have higher cost and lower turnout. Abbey is polling people who are ready to do part IV and V to help determine/increase interest, so # programs might shift, if cancel any it would open up dates for other programming.
        - Arts Salons on fifth Tuesdays replacing the dessert outing.
        - Scheduled a VY program.
        - Weekthun has moved to June- teacher is unclear.
        - One of the Basic Goodness classes scheduled as weekend class.
        - Took away second Sunday sit from the calendar, in conv. with Janie, Carol and Ann Sihler. Feedback for this positive.

- Reduced Padmasambhava and Vajrayogini feasts. Most consistent supporter of Vajrayogini feasts has moved to Seattle.
- Moving Shambhala Day didn't change the Mamos schedule.
- YMG is meeting every Thursday. Meditation Warriors book group will be on hold. Heart of Recovery will restart in January as weekly on Wednesdays.
- Bodhisattva and Mahayana study/practice groups are quite large, initiating their own meetings. Good feedback to see this engagement.
- Idea for targeted programs during the day on weekdays; came out of aging survey.
- Are there more scheduled activities than in previous years? Concerns about staffing, especially coordinators.
  - Probably has increased because we took the second Sunday out, has opened up more possibilities.
  - Doing staffing trainings important.
- Scheduled an appreciation party.
- Did not schedule a Meditation Marathon. Need to have continued conv. about how we fundraise, whether this should be part of it.
- Town Halls will be folded into HoP and Shambhala Day as we've been doing.
- Keeping Michaela's retirement in mind.
- Strategies for publicizing programs regionally- Especially Sacred Path and Rigden Weekend.
  - **Action Item: a blog post about the calendar**  
Calendar highlights captured by John
    - mentoring new teachers; talking with teachers
    - hosting community -hosted groups
    - working with needs of teachers
    - Sunday mornings dropped -- more Nyinthuns
    - Nyida planning committee
    - regional with Eugene: nyida...
    - Kasung gathering
    - facility rental guidelines developed
    - calendar study, [sdb data](#). finding SDB data problems.
    - Prison programs coincide with Level I -- sending our best to the prison
    - working with cohort's needs
    - some programs generate a surplus others generate a deficit.
    - Shambhala day celebrated on a saturday
    - Elders meeting on mornings.
- Logic of how the calendar is constructed is really newsworthy, could make a good blog post.
  - **Action Item?** Calendar group capture a bullet point rationale for the calendar to send to John.
- Approving guidelines for facility rental

- **Agenda Item** for future meeting
    - Certain classes with low attendance and having to bring in visiting teachers make a loss likely. Need to balance revenue needs with supporting the path of our members and sangha.
  - **Decisions:**
    - **Unanimous Agreement**
  - **Action Items:**
    - Publicizing programs regionally
    - John creates a blog post about calendar rationale
    - Future agenda item re: approving guidelines for facility rental
  
- Budget Discussions, focusing on the [draft budget](#)
  - **Issues:**
    - Not finalizing the budget today. Hope is to do it by the next Council mtg. Also deciding what to do with this year's overage.
      - What kind of things do we need to save for? Funds we need to replenish? Setting a percentage of Scholarship funding, to be able to advertise it.
    - From conv. with Chagdzu Kyi Khyap:
      - Her q. How do you prioritize the increase in revenue? What do you do with net profits? Her suggestion: 60% towards building fund. 30% for support for Center of the Mandala.
      - From conv. with Lisa- building fund transfers can affect the transfer % amount made to SI.
    - Revenues are increasing substantially.
    - We're at 14% for transfers to SI including individual donations, fundraising transfers. 25% is the ultimate target.
      - Staying at 14% in the coming year will be a challenge because of our increased revenues- means increased transfers.
    - When approving things we need to be clear that it's coming from the overage or part of the budget. Could have a budget that is projected in the negative because of presumed overages. (as in 2015 budget)
    - Overage (retained earnings from 2015 + overage from this year) of ~\$10k
    - Pretty good confidence on Actuals for 2015
    - We don't usually have time to do analysis. Acknowledging our success this year. Would be good to see why we did well, is that program revenues, donations, etc? These trends may affect our budget, since we have a trend last 3 years of doing better than projected.
    - Balancing being conservative with being confident.
    - Budget is a snapshot of how we've done things in the past, how things are going, and our plan and goals for the future.

- **Future Agenda Item:** Examining how we manage the increased load of fundraising on us and our volunteer structure.
- **Program Income:**
  - Some questions about the numbers for program income
  - Part of '15 higher program is because of having more higher cost programs and Acharya visits.
  - Room for growth here- examining increasing attendance in programs, advertising, etc.
  - Number is based on calendar, past enrollment, tuition, etc.
  - A conservative projection.
- **Membership Dues:**
  - Dues income had been flat since February, so there is some concern. However, for the last few years, total dues income has increased by around \$5000 per year.
  - Creating a spreadsheet that looks at membership, growths, to chart out projections for a percentage for membership growth. Membership amounts.
  - Ground feeling that there is a lot of room to grow in membership.
  - Average of about 8 or 9% of growth each year.



**Membership change between 2013-01-01 and 2015-12-01**

	City	Date_1_Members	Date_2_Members	Membership_Change	Percent_Change
1	Portland	109	129	20	18.35 %
2	Seattle	150	216	66	44 %
3	Victoria	94	120	26	27.66 %

Portland regional population: 2,350,000

Seattle regional population: 3,610,105

(Note that Seattle membership numbers include members that don't pay dues, whereas Portland members only includes people who pay dues.)

- A number of initiatives planned by the membership team to grow it.
- Looking at different centers, seeing how they are growing faster. Might be something the membership team could look at.
- Donations:
  - Above budgeted. Exceeded our “risky” projection from last year.
    - Balancing this with the fact it was a lot of work for our volunteers. Might be an **action item** to look at.
- Adjustments to Income:
  - Add 10% membership dues income increase.
    - Could have check-ins quarterly.
    - Allows us to build into the budget. Not a super liberal amount, seems fairly reasonable.
    - Good measure of community health.
    - Expressed desire for these to be checked in with membership team to make sure they are comfortable with these increased projections.
    - **Broad agreement** to increase between 8 to 10% based on Jack's extrapolation of data
- Expenses:
  - Salaries including Center Director's salary increase.
  - A few options for Office Manager: more hours per week and/or a wage increase.
    - **Decision Item** for Council
  - Bookkeeper has been using less hours than budgeted each month. Change to 6-7 hrs instead of budgeting 10.
  - Opportunities for in-kind contributions. Members buying appliances/furniture for Center, Ikebana materials, etc.
  - Considering having a leadership scholarship fund.
  - SI transfers- how much do we give monthly, increasing that? Besides just the overall percentage growth.
  - Items to prioritize/approve:
    - Office Manager's salary or hours increase
      - Must be Budgeted
      - Merit increase
    - Furnishing requests \$1,800 (+Refrigerator)
    - Council budget requests \$750
      - Must be budgeted
    - Leadership program money, leadership scholarship fund \$?
    - Requests for kensans and containers for Ikebana \$160

