



REVISED Community Meeting Report

June 9, 2019

11:00AM - 2:00PM

Convener: Shastri Kim Kelso

Purpose: To keep the momentum going, check-in on activities, create agreements going forward and celebrate!

Desired Outcomes

- A shared understanding of where we are today
- Recognition of contributions over time
- Commitment to maintain positive forward momentum
- Clarity about next steps

Summary

Shastri Kim Kelso began our gathering with a meditation to get everyone centered and grounded so we could be fully present.

The Re-cap

Requests from May 12, 2019

There were many requests voiced at the May 12th community meeting for consideration in preparing this agenda (2.5 hours).

The request for more work included:

- Confirming our values and re-visiting the Culture of Kindness document
- Creating a vision for the future; what do we want this Center to be?
- Determining the governance structure and decision-making processes
- Determining our Shambhala affiliation; do we want to stay affiliated, change our name, legal ramifications
- Determining what has changed since our last meeting and identifying what volunteer efforts are needed.



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Kim explained that we would get a start on many of these items but that some would be tabled until the fall. She acknowledged that there is a lot to be sorted out and that for today we would spend time addressing the Culture of Kindness, offering an interim governance structure, taking time to evaluate where we are and asking for additional volunteer help with some creative team brainstorming. She took some time to acknowledge that Tucson Shambhala has a 21-year history of volunteers who have contributed their knowledge, time, skills, and money to keep the Center going. She acknowledged the ongoing activities including; morning meditation, Sarapashana, Dharma Punx, umdze training, Team Shine (cleaning Shambhala), and book discussion.

Group Discussions; participants broke into groups of three to respond to this check-in question:

What has become clear to you about the Tucson Shambhala Center and your connection to it?

Responses:

The Center

- How can we make use of the physical space, invest in its continuation?
- The Center brings a lot of value, we need to settle issues. We need to build the community. Who do we ask for what?

Organizational Culture

- Understand the **Culture of Kindness** are values we aspire to. We want these to guide how we behave.
- A need for some introspection for past conflicts. Understanding what was my responsibility in it? This is a time of self-knowledge and introspection. A brief conversation ensued regarding the need to know the history of what happened and what were the issues in our local sangha. Kim suggested that not all participants in the room have a history with TSC and that those wishing to meet to discuss past issues could do so at a different time.
- What is the history of TSC; the story of our beginning since 1998? It would be helpful to know. There have been so many contributions



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Volunteer Efforts

- People who volunteer need to be clear about their intentions and know what they can do and what they cannot do. Don't over commit, know your boundaries. Check your personal calendar before you say YES.

Global Shambhala

- What global issues? Do we have any sexual misconduct locally? How are we doing locally? Kim took a minute to respond; there is nothing reported in our local center.

Community Outreach

- How can we do more outreach to build a younger community?

Ideas for the Future

- Start a mid-day meditation group for those cannot make it for the 8:00 a.m. sit

Governance

- We need an organizational structure with clearly defined descriptions of what needs to be done. Form a Task Force
- We need to motivate people to take on leadership, be realistic in finding replacements
- We need to be more horizontal, more leadership, more communication to everyone
- Did we have an administrator/coordinator? We need info on position responsibilities.

RE-Cap: Appreciations; What people said they appreciate about TSC (why TSC is important)

- TSC offers a safe and welcoming place to meditate together
- A community of like-minded folks with whom to practice, discuss and socialize
- A place of spiritual growth healing and support
- A place that is inclusive and welcomes all identities, all religions and all who want to meditate and apply that to their lives (additions: all sexual preferences, there are different descriptors, need to articulate specifics)
- Classes and teachings!



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Review of the Culture of Kindness

Marianna prepared copies for everyone to have. She suggested that everyone take it home and put it someplace where it would be seen everyday and perhaps to mediate on some of the phrases. Kim stressed that it is aspirational and that we will use it to guide our behavior. The Tucson Shambhala Center will use this guide to shift our culture with inspirations taken from Shambhala teachings.

The Plan for the Summer; June 9-September 22, 2019

Kim has spoken with many people and there have been many other side conversations among members. It is clear that the Center has ongoing activities that are currently running successfully with volunteers and that these can continue. (they were listed at the beginning). She recommended we get behind a local Transition Task Force as an interim solution starting June 9th and concluding on The Harvest of Peace Celebration, September 22, 2019. The following people, who have agreed to offer their skills and serve in this capacity. September 21st is a Saturday, and this would be designated as a workshop day with Sunday September 22nd being designated as a celebration day.

Interim Transition Task Force

NAME
Marianna Cacciatore
Tom Bourgeois
Shawn Bougeois
Tere Miller
Gary Jones
Deb Maher (facilitator)

Responsibilities

- Maintain financial management and expense approval process
- Oversee communications with the Committees, Center friends and membership
- Oversee website and data base management
- Begin to plan and coordinate education calendar for the fall
- Recommend governance structure
- Report out regularly to larger group (via the website).



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Committee Break-Out Sessions

After re-capping the activities that are currently running well and outlining the role of an Interim Transition Task Force, Kim asked for groups to get together to discuss ideas for maintaining the activities of the Center and then report back to the whole. The following summary outlines activities for consideration by each group. The Transition Task Force will be the coordinating entity with the leads for each Committee.

Practice and Education (includes Meditation Instruction) Tere Miller, Annie Franklin, Meg St. John, Aurore Chabot, Grace Foster Pollard, Jane Black Leah Mermelstein

- Consider having a two-person leadership team convene and be responsible for P&E Committee
- Offer meditation instruction every Sunday
- Enhance the chant book
- Learn shrine room protocol
- Provide Umdze training
- Create a Culture of Kindness, give the chart to all new meditators (get names and have a membership committee member follow-up with a welcome)
- Upgrade the audio-visual equipment so we can online courses. Tom will consult re what is needed and how much it would cost. (Emily is doing a fundraiser so we can have this by the Harvest of Peace, Sept. 22)
- Survey; What kinds of classes do people want?
- Be creative in bringing classes
- Teach Buddhism and Shambhala
- Provide volunteer training and diversity training to be more inclusive

Social and Community Building; Don Boyce (contact/coordinator), Clay

- Strengthen the internal life of the Center
- Introduce the public to Buddhism
- Have outreach events; meet-up, send out Evites
- Mindful meditation; Full Moon Services; free to everyone
- Offer intro course on Shambhala
- Have non-structured events for one-on-one conversations
- Meals together once a month; potluck lunch (with RSVP)



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- Coordinate with membership on food needs
- Evening videos of teachings
- **(Social/Comm Building cont'd)**
- Recreational biking and hiking
- Meditation hike, stop reflect, journal, share
- Build events into monthly calendar on the website; have a community page
- Build in a way for anyone to initiate an activity
- Conduct a survey to see what people want (make this the first step)
- Plan for the celebration Sept. 22!

Website Management and Data Base Maintenance; Bernie, Dana, Clay

- Welcome page update and clarification
- Possibility of linking to Phoenix and other communities (region) for training schedules
- Have a community page to post info on needs of members in the community (i.e. housing, service requests, etc.)
- Create an accountability committee
- List committees on the web page; what they do, who to contact
- Re-address the home page
- Clarify topics in the menu
- Update donations page
- THE PHONE! Nobody answers, this needs to be fixed!

Membership; Shawn, Cynthia, Rebecca, Anton, Lisa B.

- Define and Promote membership; not just money; how can people contribute in nonmonetary ways
- Clarify Logistics; How do I become a member (what steps); How do I cancel membership
- Provide a master form and downloadable/printable file(Cynthia)
- Post membership form on the website, make it clear how to start dues, stop, and change dues
- Set-up membership payments online; give payment options
- Update data base list of TSMC members (who is current) (Cynthia, Shawn, Dana)



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- Research how other Shambhala Centers handle membership dues payments
- Start a shared document to share ideas with the group, edit copy for the website, and keep a task list for committee members
- Review and update website Membership Page content
- Decide ways to acknowledge new and existing members (i.e. pin, welcome letter, Culture of Kindess document, etc.)

Finance Tom Bougeois and Shawn Bougeois

- Find Shawn's replacement
- Set-up and document auto pay as much as possible
- Monitor Balances and Expenses
- Deposit revenues (cash handling)
- Establish additional account signers
- Agree on how financial decisions will be made and executed
- Consider establishing role for Finance and Philanthropy planning
- Conduct and document an asset inventory
- Consider establishing a role for a Facility Steward
 - Asset inventory
 - Building access
 - Security
 - Quality of the space
 - Relationships; with utilities/landlord/neighbors/city
 - Pick up mail and handle telephone
- Finance elements could include; planning, fundraising, program support, membership, facility management (how tasks get divided is to be determined)



NEXT Steps

- The Interim Transition Task Force will meet on Tuesday, June 25th from 6:30-8:30
- TTF to create a meeting schedule and prioritize activities and divide up work based on the pertinent above-listed responsibilities
- The TTF will communicate with committee leads on next steps to ensure that we all are coordinated and moving forward together.
- The goal is to be ready to convene the entire community on Sept. 21st to engage in vision setting and to report out on the status of the organizational infrastructure development. This is a work in progress, some items will be accomplished, others will be in planning stages and some may be postponed given the level of volunteer commitment.