

Deep Spring Center Board of Directors Meeting
April 27, 2015, 6:30 pm @ Deep Spring Center
Ann Arbor, Michigan

attending: Rori Stienstra, Elizabeth Cheslak, Kay Mahan (Board Adjunct), Jason Riggs, Beth Mulder, Tana Dean (OM)

not attending: Barbara Brodsky, Amy Koch, Tony Rome, a teacher council liaison

Brief sitting

I. Sangha / Board Commentary - deferred

II. Board Membership - candidates that might replace folks rotating off the Board were discussed. Adrianna Medina will be coming to the next meeting to check it out, Colleen and Kevin Smyth cannot commit at this time, but wish to be considered in the future. Lisa Zucker has declined. Other candidate names are pending.

Plan: current Board members please follow up by contacting candidates before our next meeting

III. Deep Spring Retreats

A. Emrich 2015 The Emrich retreat is a tradition at Deep Spring as well as our largest financial commitment. The dates this year are June 13-19. At this time, registration is low. Hopefully it will pick up as the retreat nears. We have done our usual publicity. Additionally Barbara has written a beautiful and heartfelt letter inviting people to attend the retreat.

The concern at this time is twofold: will we break even in 2015 and how best to proceed in 2016 and beyond. The Emrich Center is a lovely, but expensive venue. The outlay is \$5800 paid in January and the remaining \$5800 paid in June. It takes \$12 k to just break even, and we would like to retreat to generate some funds for Deep Spring if possible. The question this year is: will we have enough people attending the retreat to cover our costs?

It seems clear that the new fall retreat, (2014 Geneva, 2015 Indiana) has had an impact on registration for the Emrich retreat. Can both retreats work for Deep Spring? or is it time to let Emrich go? It is time to look for another venue for the Summer retreat.

At this time, we need:

- to commit to Emerich for 2016 with a \$100 deposit, due by June 10th to hold our space
- to form a committee to look at alternative, more economic, summer retreat spaces

Plan: Make the \$100 deposit in June and discuss 2016 after the retreat

B. Steiner 2015 - This retreat was well attended and did well financially. It brought in \$3700 with only Steiner's rental fee to pay.

C. Howell Spring 2015 with Amma Thannasanti- this retreat also did well financially; Deep Spring cleared \$1900 after all expenses

IV. Classes

A. "Lovingkindness" with teachers Lisa Zucker and Karen Mori began April 22 and is full, with 19 enrolled. This is the first time a class other than "Beginning Meditation" has been offered by DSC through Rec & Ed. Many students found the class in the Rec & Ed catalog, and this may be a good strategy for offering future classes.

Plan: consider listing other Deep Spring classes at Rec & Ed

B. "Beginning Meditation" - Saturday classes at Deep Spring have been filling, with many new faces.

Plan: teachers need to consider a teaching schedule for Beginning classes for fall 2015

V. Financial Report Month to month, Deep Spring remains financially stable, and profit and loss numbers are comparable to this time last year. Donations are down. Retreat and class income has improved in 2015. Expenses are down from last year. Overall, DSC income is down by approximately \$1k. but March 2015 shows improvement from March 2014, and the first quarter of 2015 shows improvement over the first quarter of 2014.

A. Fundraiser Deep Spring held a fundraiser on April 23rd, with Davey Rothbart performing at Interfaith as dana for Deep Spring. It was a wonderful evening of laughter and creativity. The center cleared approx \$900 after expenses. Gratitude goes out to Davey for this very generous offering.

B. The proposed Budget for 2015 was discussed and has been accepted by the Board. We will revisit the Budget after the Emerich retreat and revise the numbers if need be.

VI. Website Tana presented a four stage proposal for redesigning the Deep Spring website, which would update the style as well as expand and improve all website functions. The process would begin with transferring all the information from our current website to the new site. Stage two would create a blogging system with audio and video capabilities. All the teacher bios and Dharma talks, for example, could be included there. Phase three would create registration and payment systems for classes, programs and retreats. Phase four would bring the archives to the main website.

Improvements are needed now to make our website more inviting, user friendly, and to enable use with mobile devices, etc. The revisions Tana showed the Board were lovely, clear and user-friendly.

The redesign would involve changing our website host to Ann Arbor Hosting, which is comparatively priced with our current host, local and green. Tana plans to use the website

development system “wordpress”. The Board would be involved throughout the process and have final approval before going live.

Tana expects this ambitious project to take between twelve and eighteen months, and to cost approximately \$2000. She has offered to do this work on contract basis for a per hour rate, in addition to her usual office responsibilities. She would bill DSC monthly for project work, which she is offering to do at the much reduced rate of \$20/hour.

The Board has given approval for the start of this project,

VII. Administrative issues

- A. We have received the Still Mountain deposit for the Howell retreat space for fall 2015
- B. Deep Spring business cards have been printed
- C. discussion about offering more Deep Spring classes through Rec & Ed
Plan: share this recommendation with the Teachers Council
- D. Day of Meditation for Sept- need to begin working on it to meet publicity deadlines
- E. The July “on line” fundraiser will proceed again this year.
Plan: Tana will send the Board the proposed email language for approval
- F. Indiana fall retreat: Board needs status update
Plan: Amy will give status update at the next Board meeting

Next Meetings: June 1st (meeting for May), June 22nd. All meetings are held at Deep Spring Center unless otherwise announced. All meetings are open to the Sangha. Minutes from past meetings can be found on the Deep Spring website.

Adjourned at 8:30 pm

Respectfully submitted by Elizabeth Cheslak, Secretary