

DZOGCHEN COMMUNITY WEST COAST
Board of Directors Meeting
Dondrub Ling
2748 Adeline Street, Berkeley, CA 94703
06/22/2013

First section: FUNDRAISING MEETING-this is an exploratory meeting. Fundraisers want to have a community meeting in August. Attendees went around the room to give their opinion of whether to continue with a physical location.

Present: Gene Kim, Lee Weiss, Richard Bermack, Dawa Lorian, Laurel Bellon, Rich Taylor, Luke Karamol, Roseanne Welsh, Margaret Bradford, Kathleen MacDougall, Heather Murphree, Earle Jennings, Craig Fiels

KATHLEEN M: Wonders how much we need a physical location. We have not done the things we need to do in order to move forward.

LAUREL B: There is no strategic plan in place. Without that we cannot establish a base to move forward.

DAWA (GAIL) L: Thinks we should continue with a physical location-what kind? We need a space for the dance mandala. It's important for people to know it's there, we need continuity-is open as to the appearance; wants to work on a relationship w. Tara Mandala.

RICHARD B: Speaking as a newcomer, he wants to figure out (as a group) what we want to do, where to go.

CRAIG F: Feels like the physical center is an anchor for the community and would like to see it continue, but it is not absolutely necessary to have a physical center. What does the greater community want to see? For 15-20 people do we need a physical center? Strategic planning would stabilize. Would like to see the the community buy property with half of it generating income (such as rentals), and fundraising, so we don't have to be reliant on dues/membership.

MARGARET B: Has been involved in the community since 1981. Her house was used as a center. She likes having the physical center but it is difficult for her to be as involved as she used to be. As a group, we need fresh ideas.

ROSEANNE W: Has been involved in the community since 1986. There are advantages to both sides. Meeting in members houses is more intimate. We are the first physical Ling in the U.S., and was given a name by Rinpoche. She doesn't want the name to disappear. It would be nice to have a central location. Change makes things move and different opportunities arise.

LEE W: We have a seed fund of 50K. The condition is that the community matches it or makes it grow. We could possibly grow the fund to purchase residential property that we could rent to community members, maybe out of town. As financial planners, how to use the resources?

LUKE K: Likes having a physical space. Likes the idea of property and growing the community. How do we carry things forward beyond participating on the gakyil? Likes the idea of a residential community.

RICH T: Has been involved in the community since the early '90's. Likes having a physical center with the mandala. We could rent to defray the mortgage/rental costs. Is concerned about the loss of money. We now have the lowest level yet. If we want a long term vision, go for it. Maybe we need to do it w.o. a physical center temporarily to attain this end. We have to look forward three years or so.

GENE K: Rinpoche stated that we “shouldn't stay gypsies” that we need a physical address but the form of the space is up to us. The Dzogchen Community is not a space, it is a group of practitioners. As long as we have that the community remains. Having participated in the design and construction of the current center, is somewhat attached to it but is ready to give it up is needed.

HEATHER M: Has been on three committees throughout the years to find a location to purchase. Much work was done. We were not able to find a location that met our space requirements, and have not been able to go any farther. Rates are low now for mortgages. What is the specific goal? How much money would we make by doing this? How long would it take? Fixing it up would cost money. What about auctions? Would like to move on with a very firm plan of what we want and how to get there.

EARLE J: There is no plan- there are a bunch of ideas. The rate of time to negotiate a sale is declining to one month maybe when negotiating. We would have to have a plan ready to move quickly if we wanted to buy property-wonders if distance makes things better rather than worse. Maybe we don't recognize what a wonderful cooperative group of people we have in this community. We have a foundation of relationships in this community that we need to protect. The most dangerous thing would be to lose track of that.

GENE K: We have a framework of where we want to go. The goal is to raise 200K in two years, 100K within a year, reduce our obligations from \$2500 per month to \$1500 per month, want to reduce our monthly obligations-how? Rentals? The request from the donor is that they don't want the project to be a distraction to what is happening right now. The reality is that we cannot make a purchase offer today, we need to sustain this place. How badly do we want this [what's “this”?--LB].

EARLE J: Do we have a cost/benefit analysis? We need six big retreats a year to bring in enough money to maintain our bills. There are three problems:
Anything hidden that could change the game.
If going downhill & nothing apparent to change the direction when do we step away?
How to build energy?

GENE K: Short-term plan—move out asap-would need to find a storage space and/or small office space. This space is underutilized. The alternative is someone else rents our current space and we sublet from them.

RICHARD B: We need to evaluate our needs in terms of space.

GENE K We need a core committee (Strategic Planning) for fundraising, real estate market investigation, need a vote as to whether we will continue here.

KATHLEEN M: Continuing the way we are is not sustainable.

LEE W: Last year we did not lose money. We had six retreats. So far this year we have had one.

EARLE J: In the last six months he has felt something change. For the first time he is open to giving it up.

RICHARD T: We need to find a way to reduce our expenses so we can keep going in the long term.

HEATHER M: How do we raise \$100K in one year? It is intimidating.

GENE K: We need to get out of poverty mentality-anything can happen.

RICHARD T: Eventually we will have to leave here and we need to be proactive.

Second section HISTORY OF TSEGYALGAR WEST-- Carol Field

Start time 2:30-ended 3:30

Attending: Carol Field, Gene Kim, Lee Weiss, Richard Bermack, Dawa Lorien, Laurel Bellon, Roseanne Welsh, Margaret Bradford, Kathleen MacDougall, Heather Murphree, Earle Jennings, Craig Fiels, Monica Hernandez, Tana Lehr

Carol gave a history of the development of Tsegyalgar West and what is happening now- these are highlights:

Carol has been studying with Rinpoche since 1984. Rinpoche came to California to work with Kennard Lipman. The first retreat was at Harbin Hot Springs. He started saying he could stay for long periods of time. People felt he was saying it was time to get a place. A gakyil was formed and a non-profit religious community was established. A piece of land was found in Cazadero. Problems arose with this land and Rinpoche said to sell it. Once the land was sold other communities world-wide asked for some of the funds from the sale. Rinpoche said to keep the money and find a gar in a warm place. The gakyil asked about a local place, and Rinpoche said to use some of the money for a small place in town.

The first three Baja retreats and L.A. were all arranged from Northern California.

Carol has sent the Baja bylaws to the international community.

A 3D model of the 3000 acres has been created with flags where different practices could be done-created by Mexican community members.

Legal relationships with surrounding rancheros can be challenging because livestock impinges on land.

There is a land thief who has been caught. The land has the water rights. The rancheros are dependent on it. They have to talk about the water, regarding livestock. People are now in agreement about water access/livestock. There is a proposal to form a council-legal/fencing/construction, maybe fundraising as well—this is not in the province of the gakyil. It is difficult to find people for this with the necessary qualifications. Rinpoche says there should be residences, ecotourism, agriculture.

Structure:

Top rung:

1. Gakyil
2. Executive Director
3. Committees, groups

Don't have all the statutes, definitions clarified as asked for by the international gakyil.

Question: How many funding pathways do you have?

They can get donations in Mexico, but since they are not a non-profit, they can have income and donations, but have not yet established the income part-gakyil is not thinking along those lines. Tana asked what are the obstacles keeping people from thinking about generating income. They need workshops about creating a master plan.

TITLE TRANSFER: Mexicans have paper stating an association-creating a Mexican Dzogchen Community that is a non-profit from outside Mexico [?incomplete—LB]

Status about the Gar/Ling relationship: If Baja gar was sued would we be responsible
Answer from Carol—NO.

Dzogchen Community is not a legal entity in Baja. The corporations are responsible.

Baja has three accounts:

1. Membership money in one account
2. Baja Gakyil account
3. Web site account

Carol and treasurer are signators on Baja accounts

There is a mercantile corporation to pay for materials

If there is a possibility of being audited—lawyers would address it. Auditors are legally entitled to five years of documentation.

In the U.S. Non-related income (not related to main purpose)-there is a tax rate for that. Only a certain amount of income can be non-related. This is much more limited in Mexico. They can never sell any part of the land except to another non-profit.

Question from Gene: If the land is ever sold would the Dzogchen Community recoup finances spent to acquire the land? Carol says we would get it all back.

More income ideas—location for filming?

Carol—idea for multi community collaboration—sights, sounds and sensations of dharma practice.

Second section ended at 3:30.

Third section: DEBRIEF OF L.A. RETREAT—Craig Fiels

Start time 3:30

Nearly 200 people attended. There were 50 volunteers, 18 scholarships, 130 paying attendees. The retreat is in the black. Rinpoche was invited for next year but no answer given. West Coast is not on the 2014 schedule.

L.A. wants to collaborate with the bay area-should include them in decisions regarding Dondrubling.

Bookstore took in [do not have final amount need a bookstore report—LB]

Raffle took in \$650.00--\$325 to L.A.

Some books and videos will need to be returned to Italy.

Official policy of the international community is no full scholarships.

Possible project for future—dance and YY demos at Himalayan Fair [does not belong in this section, s.b. blue gakyil discussion--LB]

End 3:45 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER: The monthly meeting of the Dzogchen Community West Coast was called to order at 3:45 p.m.

Attending: Gene Kim, Dawa (Gail) Lorien, Lee Weiss, Richard Bermack, Monica Hernandez, Laurel Bellon

Next Gakyil Meeting: the next regular Board meeting is July 16th, 6:30 p.m., also scheduled 8/3 at 11 a.m.

Minutes: for the Board meeting of 05-04-13 were unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Report: L.A. Numbers are missing. Can't say whether there was profit or loss for L.A.. Luke purchased \$6K books- how much sold? One month of rent left in checking account.

Agenda Items:

Blue Gakyil

1. Michael Katz retreat- need to break down tasks by shifts. Dawa will help with registration and manage bookstore. Monica will help set up.
2. JRZ-- discussion tabled until next meeting
3. Steven Goodman is out of town-- discussion about fundraiser tabled until next meeting
4. Retreat w. Yuden—no news yet. Gene will contact her.
5. Steve Landsberg—Sept 27th date-intro lecture on base practices, motion to have the retreat:carried.
6. Elio in October—Waiting on health report-coordinating with Heather and Earle
7. Naggon—will be scheduled (when?)
8. Bodhi—dancers are not showing up; maybe too much with Steve coming, too short notice
9. Spring 2014 First west coast dance and YY retreat in Ashland Oregon is in the planning phase- will be residential.

Red Gakyil

1. Strategic planning schedule- need to nail down a date in August/September
2. Rentals-Jackie and Rigdzin brought in \$1200 in rentals in June/July
3. Code of conduct—will be posted, not signed
4. Liability waiver-must be added to lease information on the web so it can be downloaded
5. Dawa volunteered to be our representative to the international community.
6. Cleaning—need to set a date for 6 people to clean the center after August gakyil meeting from 2-5
7. Yard sale discussion tabled until next meeting.
8. Thomas wants a key to lead a practice [can't remember if this was put to a formal vote-- LB]. Keys are only given to people who lead practice on a fairly regular basis, and to gakyil members
9. We need a new person to be in charge of key distribution.
10. Missing minutes discussion tabled-Laurel's responsibility

Yellow Gakyil

1. Need to have current financial information at the center—Laurel will work w. Lee on this
2. Transparency—Laurel wants to have an annual report on the website so people to see what their donations are being used for—Laurel will work with Lee
3. Spend \$45 for Meetup—motion to try it for one quarter carried-see if it brings people in.
4. Motion to spend \$200 to have someone clean the carpet and stairs—carried.

Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.