

Dec. 4/09 Minutes

Attending: John and Shelly Hilditch, Janet Lironi, June Fukushima, Brock Brown, Marion Irish, Joanne Marks, Sally Kimpson, Linda Chan, Heather Martin, Carmie Verdone

Hosts: John and Shelly

Chair: Janet

Minutes: Carmie

A warm welcome to Marion from all.

Agenda Item	Action
1. <u>Umbrella group description</u> , originally written by John and revised by Sally and Carmie was submitted for discussion. It was endorsed by all.	Linda will put the UG description on the website once we have a contact person.
2. <u>VVC Brochure</u> : the draft was discussed with suggestions for change, ie: parking, details of Sunday night sits, <i>vipassana</i> and <i>metta</i> descriptions.	Carmie will email Heather the descriptions for her to review and revisions will be made by Carmie based on Heather's suggestions plus the group discussion today. Carmie will email the revised brochure to the Umbrella Group members for final endorsement. Carmie will price out printing costs and email these as well.
3. <u>A) Sunday night sits</u> : Update from Brock—the numbers go up and down, an average of 12 with some younger people coming more recently. Now that Rod and Isy are away, Brock has assumed more responsibility. Joanne and June are helping out with facilitation. Joanne now has a set of keys to the studio. Future guest speakers: Margo McLoughlin who is a storyteller and possibly Lama Tara. There is a dilemma for Dec. 13 sit, as there is no umbrella group person to host the evening. June is available to facilitate even though she is not an Umbrella Group member and because of that there was a general consensus that it should not be up to June to be the solution for this dilemma. There was discussion as to whether there could be a stand-	Janet will ask the larger UG for someone to facilitate the Dec. 13. Sunday sit. Janet will also ask for volunteers to be on a stand-by list.

<p>by list of 3 people, at least one from the Umbrella group and others from the larger community, to call on to open and facilitate the Sunday night sits.</p>	
<p>B) Tuesday nights sits: update from John and Shelly: an average of 7-9 people. This sit will continue for Dec.</p> <p>June noted that the Sunday Times Colonist has a page of spiritual/meditation groups and wondered about putting our sangha sits/study group there.</p>	<p>At the end of Dec., John and Shelly will assess how it's working out.</p> <p>Brock and June will write a description for the paper and email it to Linda, who will forward it to the Times Colonist.</p>
<p>4. Retreats: Review of Nov. 7/8th Queenswood retreat: Lynne Walker and Rod were absent from this meeting to comment. Rod was registrar but could not be at the retreat so Brock stepped in to help at the retreat. The facility was good. Meals were booked in advance but with several no-shows on Sunday, those meals were not taken. VVC paid an extra \$100 to cover the cost of the meals.</p> <p>Retreat Finances: Update from Sally: The deposit and rental totaled \$1465. We received \$1595 from <i>dana</i>. Factoring in teacher travel and lodging expenses, VVC lost \$263. [Note: <i>Dana</i> was actually not way down from other retreats. Rather our expenses were way up, with \$900 going to meals alone]. We have also lost a small amount of money this fall on yoga studio rental.</p> <p>There was a discussion about retreat financing.</p> <p>Heather commented that we run the risk of consistently losing money if we pay for retreats using <i>dana</i> only. She also expressed concern that there are a number of people not attending on the Sunday of a weekend and suggested that asking for retreat fees up front would influence people to attend both days.</p> <p>Part of the discussion was about the cost of meals. John wondered about meal vouchers and said that he would like to talk with Sandra Price at Q. about the need for everyone to eat Q. lunches as Queenswood has requested.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sally and Janet will work on the wording regarding fees for the next retreat notice. <p>Linda will list upcoming retreats in 2010 on the website.</p> <p>John will talk with Sandra Price about options for those not wanting to pay for meals.</p>

Sally wondered about increasing the amount requested by \$10 to cover costs.

Charging retreat fees at the time of registration was endorsed with the proviso that those unable to afford this cost would contact the Scholarship Committee and apply for funding. We supported the practice of encouraging people to consider giving more to help cover the cost for those unable to afford the retreat fees.

Jan. 30/31, 2010^t Retreat: John reminded us that this is a beginner retreat and no break-out space is needed.

A registrar is needed for this retreat.

May 2010 Retreat: Brock brought up the possibility of a Friday night talk by Ajahn Sona.

John asked Sandra Price about having a picnic at the summer retreat and that was fine with Sandra.

Sally and Rod met in the fall to talk about different ways of keeping track of finances. Sally's bookkeeper gave Sally a tutorial on how to set up an Excel spread sheet. Sally has now moved financial records from Sept. 2009 forward to the spread sheet. Sally requested payment from VVC for her bookkeeper's fees.

For the next retreat, Jan. 30/31, we will ask for \$50 retreat fees at the time of registration. Cheques will be sent to Sally for deposit. Sally and the registrar will communicate regarding the coordination of this new policy.

Linda will set up the website so that people can register online and send the \$50 registration fee to Sally directly. Also the website needs to be set up so that people needing financial assistance can make requests to the scholarship committee without having the scholarship committee email addresses on the website.

Sally will manage the Jan. retreat.

Sally will ask Beth Burton-Krahn who has done this in the past and if she is unable, Sally will make a request of the larger Umbrella Group.

Brock and June will manage the May 2010 retreat with Ajahn Sona.
Linda will be registrar

John will inquire about space and dates at Queenswood for a Nov. 2010 retreat.

VVC will pay the bookkeepers' fees.

<p>5. Study group: Management of the study group list now done by Heather is working well and Heather will continue to add to the list in subsequent meetings. A question came forward from the previous meeting about how the buddy system was working.</p> <p>Janet asked about an intro class for beginners next fall. Heather was enthusiastic and will be in a supportive role whatever that is. Further discussion about this issue is required.</p> <p>We all spoke of our appreciation for the support that Heather gives us.</p>	<p>There will be a discussion this afternoon at the study group about the buddy system.</p>
<p>6. Scholarship Fund: The scholarship committee (Beth, Sally, & Lynne Mustard) met in November to discuss scholarship policies. They agreed on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholarships funds are designated for longer personal <i>vipassana</i> retreats to support on-going practice. Funds are not available for retreats supporting professional practice. • Information required by the scholarship committee includes: Applicant's name, the retreat place and dates, and amount of retreat fees excluding dana. Whenever possible fees paid by the Scholarship Fund will be sent directly to the organization that's hosting the retreat. • Our scholarship policy is to provide 1/3 of retreat costs for those asking for financial help. • The scholarship committee agreed that we should set up a separate scholarship fund separate from general coffers. They suggested that \$1000 annually could be set aside exclusively for scholarships. This item requires further discussion and approval by Umbrella Group members. <p>The Umbrella Group agreed that it would be important to financially support those who are accepted into programs that benefit our sangha directly, such as the Community Dharma Leadership (CDL) program, should the need arise. The scholarship committee suggested that this support would be decided on an ad hoc basis by the entire UG and that funding would not come out of the Scholarship fund.</p>	

<p>Sally requested endorsement of the suggested scholarship policy. Once endorsed by the Umbrella Group, this information should go on the website.</p> <p>Also, requests for scholarships should go directly to a member of the Scholarship Fund only, to maintain applicant confidentiality. A gmail account for receiving scholarship applications, e.g., vvcscholarships@gmail.com to be accessed by scholarship committee members is needed.</p>	<p>Sally will send the scholarship policy information to the UG for discussion and future endorsement.</p>
<p>7. Roles: Sally asked if we could defer the subject of roles to an ad hoc meeting in Jan./09.</p> <p>We voted and endorsed this request.</p> <p>Brock suggested creating small 2-person groups comprised of at least 1 from the UG, to oversee each of the following: weekly Sunday sits, study group and w/e retreats. There was brief discussion about forming a retreat committee and/or other sub-committees as per Brock's suggestion. In addition, we need alternate or stand-by facilitators for Sunday sits.</p> <p>Janet raised the issue of having a consistent coordinator or chair person. This is another role to be discussed at a future meeting.</p>	<p>We agreed to have an ad hoc meeting in Jan. 2010 to discuss roles and other items from the Dec. 6th meeting that need more discussion. The date of the ad hoc meeting will be set via email.</p>