

Minutes of the Open Meeting of the Triangle Insight BOD

February 4, 2018

Present: Board of Directors:, Jeanne van Gemert, Ron Vereen, Cynthia Hughey, and Scott Bryce, and guests Daya Breckenridge, Barbara Shumannfang, John Marens, Paula Chesnaky, Hart Pillow, Mike Hall, Leah Rutchick, Gerri McGuire

Absent: Phyllis Hicks

Location: Duke Episcopal Student Center

1. Ron gave a brief history of Triangle Insight.
2. Each person introduced her/himself and stated his/her intention/reason for attending.
3. Ron explained that concerns have been expressed within the Sangha regarding general decision-making, especially regarding decisions to prioritize examining racial equity in the Sangha, including:
 - a. Is the Sangha on board with this path?
 - b. Who decided who would be on the Equity Leadership Team?
 - c. What is equity referring to (e.g., power, gender, sexual orientation, race)?

There is confusion around the way the process was communicated. Some people have been left wondering if the Sangha is a Buddhist sangha or is becoming a social justice organization. There is a fear that this could prevent the Sangha from being wide enough to include everyone. Despite the concerns, there has been continued interest in racial equity at Triangle Insight (Wed night teachings, Ruth King workshop, public actions, Racial Affinity groups were named as examples). This renewed interest was energized by the First White House Buddhist Leadership Conference in 2015 which identified two main issues of our times for local sanghas to address: racial injustice and climate change. Like many western sanghas in the U.S., Triangle Insight has started a process of examining its role in these issues. Leah raised the concern that relatively few Sangha members have actually come forward to participate in activities to promote community and connectedness despite the fact that some members have expressed desire for these things. At the same time, some members have mentioned difficulties in finding ways to connect and build community. The KM and RA groups are thriving but are operating independent of other Sangha activities.

4. It was decided previously by the Board that the initially proposed process of examining issues around racial equity should be postponed for the time being. Kathleen Crabbs Clark of Open Source Leadership and Sebene Selassie, formerly of NY Insight, both recommended that Triangle Insight look at its governance structure before deciding whether to go forward with looking at racial equity issue. A neutral facilitator should be brought in

for a sangha-wide meeting to help the sangha clarify shared values and norms.

5. What would be the most skillful structure to move forward with this process? A further recommendation by the Open Source leadership is for us to explore how other sanghas organize and implement their governance structures.
6. It was recommended that we explore how other sanghas organize and implement their governance structures..
7. Kathleen recommended three local facilitators. Another was recommended. It was agreed that Ron, Daya, Barbara, and Scott would each contact one of the facilitators and ask:
 - Have you ever worked with a Buddhist or other spiritual community?
 - Do you offer any tools, such as surveys or prompts for reflection, in advance?
 - How can people unable to attend the community meeting provide input?
 - Should it be a half-day or full-day?
 - What is your fee?
 - What is your availability?
 - Can you provide references?
8. There was agreement that the 4 interviewers will compare notes to see what they learned about each of the facilitators. If there is a question about which facilitator to choose, another board meeting will be arranged including others who want to attend.
9. Barbara found dates that would work at Self-Help through April 1st. She will wait to see when facilitators are available to check into specific dates.

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Hughey