

# BUDDHIST COUNCIL OF QUEENSLAND INC. (IA29696)

*An Umbrella Organization Representing Buddhists and  
Buddhist Groups And Institutions In Queensland* ABN 69 825 774 318  
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## MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING

**MEETING DATE:** November 4, 2006 **TIME:** 9.50am

**VENUE:** Karuna House – Windsor

**ATTENDANCE:** As Per Attendance Book

**QUORUM:** Yes

Also welcomed to this meeting Ms Kwee Choo and Ms. Thanh Le and later Ven. Ani Lozang Chopel.

**APOLOGIES:** Rachel Hannam, Chee Weng

**CHAIRPERSON:** Jim Ferguson

**SECRETARY:** Rachel Hannam

### **1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:**

Minutes of the November meeting were confirmed

### **MATTERS ARISING OUT OF MINUTES:**

n/a

Moved by Jim Ferguson

Seconded by David Wee

Accepted

### **2. CORRESPONDENCE:**

- a. emails: Gold Coast City Council – Harmony Day – MCF – confirming Meeting
- b. email: Siddharta School NSW – Selling silk scarves as a funding exercise
- c. email: Aust Tibet Council – 2007 Calendars for sale as fund raising exercise
- d. email: Democratic Social Republic of Sri Lanka – Movie Invitation & Dictionary for sale
- e. emails: noted for discussion on notice from Kwee, Graeme Lyall, FABC National Inter-faith Festival.
- f. mail: Who's Who In Australia – seeking nominations for 2007
- g. mail: Qld. Gov't introducing the new Minister for the Environment
- h. mail: Regional Insurance Brokers – Receipt for Public Liability Insurance
- i. mail: Diamond Cutter Buddhist Centre – notice of courses for early December
- j. mail: Qld, Premier's Dept – Thank you letter for Multicultural Festival attendance
- k. mail: Dalai Lama in Australia tour – brochures etc.
- l. mail: Vajrayana Institute – Seminar Invitation – Happiness Project
- m. mail: Qld Govt – Multicultural Resource Directory 2007
- n. mail: Qld University – Professional Development Courses -information

### **MATTERS ARISING OUT OF CORRESPONDENCE:**

Also Jim moved that to ensure timely notice of what appears to be an increasing number of urgent communications the Council's email be cleared at least weekly and the mail box every ten days.

Moved by Jim Ferguson

Seconded by Donna Imeri

Accepted

### **3. TREASURER'S REPORT:**

Balance of account was \$69.12 less Optus a/c \$18 leaves \$51.12 plus \$50 cash.

Jim confirmed he has paid the printing account of \$308 for the Council's brochure as a donation. Jim also confirmed that the Commonwealth Bank has received the copy of the minute appointing Rachel as Secretary for signatory purposes.

Moved by Kim Hollow

Seconded by Jim Ferguson

Accepted

#### **4. BUSINESS ON NOTICE:**

##### **A. BUDDHIST EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS PROJECT**

Jim introduced Kwee as initially meeting her at the opening of the Ling Son Hut temple at Bellbowrie and the subsequent email correspondence each way leading up to a founding meeting last Thursday's evening at the Amitahba Buddhist Centre at Calamvale where Brother John Cartwright of Chung Tian temple has been appointed as the interim Buddhist representative to the Religious Advisory Committee of the Qld. Education Department. Jim read the presentation document that has been distributed to those present outlining the current Buddhist Council and how we can assist with this project.

Kwee then reported how this project has evolved, largely through her own direct contact with various people throughout Australia including the Buddhist Councils of Victoria and New South Wales, Centrelink, Volunteering Queensland, the State Gov't. and various dharma centres. She mentioned that the Education Department was not aware of the BCQ and was seeking a representative.

Kwee has done this by directly contacting individuals rather than groups since she wants interested people to take up the issue personally rather than going through more formal organisational structures that consumes too much time.

The inaugural meeting has now agreed in principle to establish this project and formed an ad hoc team to include all the Asian temples, at least two Tibetan centres and now the BCQ. Chung Tian, since they already have well established and recognised training program in place has been appointed as the co-ordinating centre and now it is urgently suggested that as many representative as possible attend their training program for "Coaches" so as to establish a base from which to train the teachers for this project. The next course is December 17 at Chung Tian temple at Underwood (1/2 day and if offered free of cost). She said John Cartwright is a good candidate since he has been teaching dharma since 1990 and has current relationships with the state government.

She stressed this project needs to stand alone in order to be eligible for tax deductible donations, grants and have independence of centres. Kwee wishes only to be an interested observer rather than a participant.

Kwee introduced Ven, Ani Lozang Chopel who also has a legal background and will be involved in this project. Jim shared his latest information received from the BCV and will forward whatever we have to her. Kwee said what we have to do now is to contact John Cartwright to move forward.

Kim sought to confirm that the program will be directed at the broader Australian community and be in English which it will be to get Education Department endorsement.

Ms. Thanh Le then introduced her experience in teaching the Brisbane State High School students with Jim; the background leading up to that, and what she saw as the issues of not being able to give dharma instruction to those who are seeking it and to learn proper sitting and meditation. It was she who first contacted the Council seeking teachers. Jim added that on reflection the decision to provide such teaching lacked structure, resources and basic materials – only offset by wonderful commitment. The result of the recent survey undertaken of these students was tabled and gives the preferences for topics to be covered. It was noted that BSHS had 67 Buddhist students and Kwee's focus school – Inala State School, had 100. There are many more schools

obviously eligible but missing out. It was agreed that a graded approach is needed but is also governed by the available number of teachers to deliver the course.

Kwee commented on certain statement she had received questioning the place of the BCQ and our agenda, and Jim gave a brief explanation of the early history and how the current committee is very active and producing positive outcomes for the dharma. Our website was also confirmed as being present and about to be updated and can benefit all centres and this project. Ani Lozang reconfirmed the need to remain positive and forward thinking, which we all agreed was the correct approach.

She mentioned that the “Coach” course developed by Chung Tian for their Tai-Chi classes is also used in Australian Institute of Sport projects and is endorsed by multi-million dollar funding sources. Ani Lozang also said there is a win-win potential here by the teaching volunteers completing this training who can then train others for a fee and their centres may also benefit and receive funds if they provide the venues etc.

Jim commented that the merit of this project is obvious and worth supporting fully and the key element now is to liaise with Chung Tian to establish dialog and work together. Kim again stressed the need to ensure an open and uniform syllabus designed for the Australian student irrespective of ethnicity or Buddhist tradition. Kim added the problems that already exist for the “Western” Buddhist sometimes accessing dharma when only Asian-speaking centres are available in the vicinity and this echoes through to the younger population who grow up not able to speak their heritage language. Jim added that at the school level, the teachings are fundamental and common to all traditions and would be quite acceptable to all centres. Ani Lozang commented that the nuns at Chenrezig were to review the book resource for appropriateness before copies are printed overseas for the project’s use. She also added that there is definitely background support for this project to be deliverable across the state, utilizing the local dharma centres in each region, with David contributing the fact that there should be no bias from the respective teachers in case it creates confusion for the audience.

The committee thanked our three visitors for their contributions to this discussion and providing the opportunity to participate in this project.

It was then proposed that the Council move forward on this project and support it fully, liaising with John Cartwright at Chung Tian temple.

Moved by Jim Ferguson

Seconded by Kim Hollow

Accepted

## B. NATIONAL INTER-FAITH FESTIVAL - MALENY

Jim mentioned that this urgently raised invitation via Pureland College to participate in the inaugural festival at Maleny next March 10 and 11 – our role being to acquire two Buddhist speakers from different traditions to complement the Lama from Chenrezig already confirmed and the option of holding a stall and another forum member for a general discussion. This date is the week prior to Harmony Day weekend. Jim will be attended an organisation meeting next week.

He tabled a letter to Ven. Ajahn Brahm in W.A. who has replied his unavailability but there may be possible interest in future activities. Jim has already secured Zen Roshi Gregg Howard from the Ordinary Mind Zen centre in Toowong, and is waiting a confirmation from a Theravadan centre in NSW.

We discussed the idea of taking a stand over the two days for a low cost, Kim adding the lack of present funds. Since we are entering a new funding cycle it is probable that funds will be there and what we do need to confirm is support for staffing the stand and materials to distribute, and here Pureland support needs to be sought once again. It was moved we do both support the festival in securing representatives and also taking a stand at the event.

Moved by Jim Ferguson

Seconded by Donna Imeri

Accepted

### C. DALAI LAMA IN AUSTRALIA TOUR – JUNE 13 IN BRISBANE

Jim reported his meeting with the Priscilla Maxwell last Thursday in which a discussion was held about the Council's part in promoting the event. An inclusion in our mail out has been prepared together with access to catalogs and posters etc. Jim said they may meet part of the cost to produce the mailout via photocopying. In keeping with our previously agreed position, we will include this in our December mail out. Donna also suggested helping to distribute the posters and Ani Lozang collected a whole box of catalogs, Thanh Le's daughter is dropping them door-to-door, as well through her own dharma centre.

### D. COUNCIL'S NEW OFFICIAL LETTERHEAD

Jim presented the new draft letterhead for endorsement (above)

Moved by Jim Ferguson

Seconded by Donna Imeri

Accepted

### E. GRANT SUBMISSIONS

Jim presented a list of about 300 philanthropic organizations that need to be vetted to find those that are compatible with our vision. Kim has agreed to do this and come back to Jim so submissions can be commenced to try for smaller sums than the original application, but using segments of that concept as the purpose for these applications. He suggested breaking it up into amounts of \$2,000 to \$5,000. David asked if we satisfied the multi-cultural focus and Jim said that Buddhism defaults to that due to the spread of the dharma throughout the Asian countries at the very least. Jim commented on Kwee Choo's comment about some centres being unaware of this Council's agenda and functions, and this was to be a key element of that submission had we been successful – so it should remain as a key focus for funding. Jim added that he would most likely have time over Xmas to work on these which fits with the early 07 closing dates for some of them.

### F. 2007 MAILOUT INFORMATION

Jim has suggested that a letter be included with the 2007 renewal invoices and other enclosures to emphasise what the Council has been doing and what is planned for this year. Since there is a lot of information to be sent out spanning all the things on our plate, it needs to stress our need for funding and support – both financial and letters of support. Jim said he would email this out to the committee members ASAP and after comments, will use it to send out the invoices this year, hopefully in the next 10 days or so. It was moved that we adopt this approach despite the cost being probably \$1.00 or so for maybe 80-plus mailings.

Moved by Jim Ferguson

Seconded by David Wee

Accepted

### G. WEBSITE UPDATE

Jim confirmed that Josh has been working on the site during the past month and expect to have it finished possibly next week. As soon as it is ready, he will cut it over and it will go live immediately.

### H. GOLD COAST HARMONY DAY / MULTICULTURAL FESTIVAL

Kim reported his attendance at the meeting on November 15 regarding this inaugural event. He said the organisers are foundering with too many conflicting ideas and no key stakeholder to steer it. He made the statement at that meeting that the BCQ will support the event by way of a stand but we do not have the resources to become part of the organisation of the event. It appears that

the GCCC is not the convenor, that the Dept of MC affairs is trying to pull it together but since it is to be on the Council's infrastructure, there is no "glue" to stick it all together and as such, may not come to being. It was agreed we continue to keep in contact and support it if it does materialise.

Moved by Kim Hollow

Seconded by David Wee

Accepted.

#### I. GRAEME LYALL'S EMAIL RE BCQ

The committee is aware of the unfortunate email disseminated by Graeme Lyall (President of the BCNSW) to a very wide audience of dharma people including sangha, in Queensland, nationally and even overseas stating we were ineffectual. This was sparked, coincidentally, by Ms Kwee Choo's request for information to Graeme. Jim has rebutted the email and has had subsequent verbal discussions with Brain Ashen (President BCV) and Mohini Gunesakara (President FABC). Positive feedback has been received from a very large number of the recipients and hopefully that matter has now been put to rest. The correspondence is tabled as a matter of process. Jim's stated concern was if Graeme has some hidden agenda in mentioning Dr Peter Nai and was contrary to the best interests of both the BCQ and the FABC. Graeme is still a representative on the World Federation of Buddhists, which Jim has stated, seems inappropriate.

It was then highlighted that the Multicultural Directory shows the Buddhist Council of Australia (Dr Peter Nai) has our email address linked to his details. It was agreed that Jim contact the Directory to have the online address removed forthwith.

Brian Ashen is coming to Brisbane in late January and it is hoped he can meet the committee for lunch during that visit.

Moved by Jim Ferguson

Seconded by Kim Hollow

Accepted

#### J. FABC ISSUES

Given the recent correspondence from the Graeme Lyall issue, Jim suggested we allow the other issues of concern regarding FABC practices and relationships to settle for the moment, but to remain vigilant of emails until a more appropriate time.

Moved by Jim Ferguson

Seconded by Kim Hollow

Accepted

### 5. GENERAL BUSINESS:

1. David's Access to Minutes – It was agreed that David's email be forwarded to Julie's email address ( details to be passed to Jim)
2. David's Blue Card Application – David passed it to Kim for forwarding to the CCYPCG.
3. Optus Direct Debit Authority – Jim counter-signed the application that should resolve the phone account payment.
4. David's Offering to the Council's Funds – David kindly tendered a donation of \$200 towards meeting the expenses of the Council which was warmly accepted and receipted – this will allow the cost of the Xmas mail out to be met without difficulty.... Thank you David.
5. Kim to Clear Council Emails – Kim has offered to help ease Rachel's load and will takeover the clearing of emails sent to the BCQ email address, effective immediately.
6. **MEETING CLOSED:** At 12:30pm (2hrs 40min – long meeting but very successful)
7. **NEXT MEETINGS:** Committee to next meet Saturday, January 13, 2007 and the February meeting to be on Saturday, February 3 – both at 9:30am at Karuna Hospice Services.

Signed by President: \_\_\_\_\_ Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_