

BUDDHIST COUNCIL OF QUEENSLAND INC. (IA29696)



*An Umbrella Organization Representing Buddhists and
Buddhist Groups And Institutions In Queensland* ABN 69 825 774 318

-- Affiliated Member of the Federation of Australian Buddhist Councils Inc. --
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MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING

MEETING DATE: March 29, 2008

TIME: 10:40am

VENUE: Weng Residence - Calamvale

ATTENDANCE: Kim and Maeve Hollow, Chee Weng, Jenny Le Neveu, Rachel Hannam & Jim Ferguson.

QUORUM: Yes

APOLOGIES: Donna Imeri & David Wee

CHAIRPERSON: Jim Ferguson

SECRETARY: Rachel Hannam

1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

Minutes of the January 27, 2008 meeting were confirmed

Moved by Jim Ferguson

Seconded by Kim Hollow

Accepted

MATTERS ARISING OUT OF MINUTES:

Preamble ratified, Chee mentioned that Choe Lam Tan's contribution was very valuable and may be able to help the BCQ a lot in the future. Maeve also added that she has arranged for books on Buddhism in Chinese to be delivered to Jeta Gardens also.

2. CORRESPONDENCE:

IN-

- a. Dalai Lama In Australia information on June tour and teachings in NSW;
- b. Book list from new publisher or distributor on Buddhist books – BCQ should be eligible;
- c. BEMAC invitation to join as membership either individual or as a group;
- d. GU-MFC brochures on both forthcoming and past events;
- e. Jeta Gardens latest newsletter;
- f. Chorten's latest newsletter;
- g. Cultural & Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Communities;
- h. Invitation to attend local meeting for 2020 Summit – Kim is attending Beenleigh next week on April 3 at 6:30pm;
- i. Q150 Grant Application pack – to be discussed in Business On Notice;
- j. Optus telephone a/cs x 4
- k. Australia Post invoice for mail box renewal.

Moved by Kim Hollow

Seconded by Chee Weng

Accepted

OUT-

none

MATTERS ARISING OUT OF CORRESPONDENCE:

none

Moved by Kim Hollow

Seconded by Chee Weng

Accepted

3. TREASURER'S REPORT:

Current funds are \$650.18 at bank and \$50.00 petty cash, totalling \$700.18. Payments made since the last meeting were four Optus accounts totalling \$36.00 and a cheque for \$38.10 to lodge the Annual Return to the Office of Fair Trading. No other expenditure or income occurred.

Moved by Kim Hollow

Seconded by Jenny Le Neveu

Accepted

MATTERS ARISING OUT OF TREASURER'S REPORT:

Jim tabled the account and payment to Enetica P/L for the 5-years renewal of the BCQ domain name for \$124.75 to 2012. – donated by Jim Ferguson.

Jim also moved that the AGM postage & other expenses be approved in advance, up to \$100 to facilitate that, which has to be completed by the 10th of April.

Moved by Jim Ferguson

Seconded by Chee Weng

Accepted

Jim also asked Kim if the BCQ account had gone to the auditor and he said they were being delivered next week. It was resolved to also approve payment of the auditor's fee, around the \$120 value, in advance to also aid that process.

Moved by Jim Ferguson

Seconded by Jenny Le Neveu

Accepted

4. BUSINESS ON NOTICE:

A. FUND-RAISING STRATEGIES

Jim mentioned he had sent the letter to his local member as he had circulated to the rest of the committee for doing likewise. To date, no reply has been received. Jim urged everyone to seek out their members and send similar letters.

Also received has been the invitation to apply for funds under the Q150 Grant that celebrates Queensland's 150th Anniversary in 2009. Jim has identified the categories that we will be eligible to apply under and it was suggested we strive to integrate a similar theme as we applied under the MAQ Grant application but with the primary activity being the staging of a Vesak Day event in 2009 independent of Buddha's Birthday run by Chung Tian, seeking to engage all the other centres as a complement to, rather than in competition with, their event. The BLIAQ has effective ownership of the Southbank event and they do it very well. We will aim to look at integrating the other traditions to enhance Vesak for all other expressions of Buddhist practice to Queenslanders.

Applications for this second round closes April 13, but if we don't make that one, there is a third round in June. Given that is in just 2-weeks, we will try by having a sub-committee convene on April to try and pull it together. After much discussion, it was agreed that Jim, Kim and Maeve would meet at around 8:30pm at the Beenleigh Community Centre, after the 2020 Forum that Kim is attending on Thursday April 3, and we need to have the postal submission lodged by Friday, April 11.

As for other strategies, Jim opened the discussion about other ways to consider for raising funds for the BCQ. He advised and circulated his work to date contacting film distributors etc to secure a preview session or a block of free or concession tickets. He is particularly keen on the May 22 release of the new Indiana Jones film and has approached Paramount Pictures' PR person and Birch Carrol & Coyle – he will advise the outcome of that and other approaches. There may be restrictive pre-conditions attached to these but we will consider them as they are offered. Once we identify what options may be available, we can then also consider how the tickets will be sold and if there is value in offering drinks, nibbles, entertainment etc.

Staging a film night of a “dharma-friendly” film (via DVD or similar) at Jeta Gardens was also canvassed and considered worthwhile – needing a suitable film and the support of Jeta Gardens. Chee agreed to discuss the idea with Choe Lam Tan when we can come up with a title – we would have to seek formal permission from the distributor, etc, but that should not be a real issue.

Rachel offered her home at Nundah, to stage a Garage Sale on Saturday, May 31 from 6:00am. After further discussion this was agreed to and for the committee to promote this event with the requirement that items be delivered to her home on the Friday prior, May 30, with the further commitment that some members be available the Friday afternoon and evening prior to price-mark all the items. Rachel added that the most appealing items are CDs, clothes, books, jewellery, toys and dolls. Home-made also sells well but may not clear costs. She added that she staged a similar effort for her own Zen Centre in the past that made about \$1,500 – great for just a \$30 ad in the Courier-Mail. This was agreed by all present. Jim added that he will look into providing a sausage-sizzle for the day too, using Rachel's BBQ. Jim will prepare a flyer for the web and for circulation. We will also need to setup a \$200 petty cash change float.

Rachel also added that we should look into our CBA bank offering an interest-earning “Net Saver” account for our funds, rather than just having our money sitting there doing nothing. Rachel will look into this and advise.

Moved by Jim Ferguson

Seconded by Maeve Hollow

Accepted

B. F.A.B.C. ACTIVITIES – INCLUDING THEIR A.G.M.

The Buddhist Council of NSW initiated the 2008 Vesak Celebrations and extended an invitation to the other state Council's to send a representative to express solidarity across this country. It followed that this was suggested as an ideal time for the FABC to also convene their own AGM, whereby two state representatives would be entitled to attend. Jim added that he will be in New Zealand and not available to attend and that Kim had already agreed, particularly since he is also the Vice President of the FABC. Following discussions, Jenny Le Neveu has agreed to stand in for Jim at the AGM, being held in Sydney on May 3 & 4. All expenses will be covered by the FABC. It will require a 100% commitment for the weekend considering it will include participating in the BCNSW Vesak activities also.

He also discussed the other current FABC activities that have been dominant – a trip to Cambodia for a Multi-Faith Congress, which for whatever reasons, seems to have deliberately excluded the FABC from nominating the Buddhist contingent, instead being arbitrarily selected by the Dept of Foreign Affairs.

The other issue, apart from the AGM itself is also the delegation that will be selected for the World Buddhist Conference to be held in Japan in November. Brian Ashen of Melbourne has put forward a delegation but both Jim and Kim have expressed concerns as to how the people were nominated. This is still under discussion but needs to be properly discussed at this AGM. Jim and Kim both expressed their concerns about the

possible lack of democratic process in certain FABC activities and their desire to have this discussed and corrected at the AGM through full and proper representation.

Maeve also put the question as to whether any other Buddhist Centre have been invited independently of the BCQ to Japan.

Jim added he is presently preparing a paper on the concept, history and structure of Buddhist Councils since the very first, which took place just days after Lord Buddha's parinirvana, and those subsequently that have aimed at resolving differences between traditions and schools etc. He said we need to continue following this role. Jim identified his belief that there should equal and proportional representation of delegates based on tradition, lay & sangha, gender and so on, and not selected out of convenience or other criteria.

It was resolved that a statement to the FABC echoing these above sentiments be put to the FABC by the BCQ delegates for ratification.

Moved by Jim Ferguson

Seconded by Kim Hollow

Accepted

C. BCQ REPRESENTATIONS TO QLD. GOVERNMENT

Jim tabled the activities of the Religious Education Advisory Committee to the Education Minister [REAC] and the BCQ seat on that committee. The main emphasis is presently two-fold – the administration of School Chaplains in Queensland and the redrafting of the Handbook for RI teachers. He mentioned that at the moment he is the sole non-Abrahamic voice on the Committee since the Hindu and Sikh seats are currently vacant. He added that as a result of that he has also been asked to join the Accreditation Sub-Committee for the endorsement of Employing Agencies for School Chaplains, and which he has agreed to do.

The other key topic of the RI Handbook, is to review that document, and the issue relating to Buddhism is the insistence of Bible Studies being provided as the fall-back position where no external RI is delivered, and this by teachers who may not have formal guidance in the subject or inter-faith considerations. This is also a pressing topic at present. The Qld Teacher's Union representative holds strongly to the non-secular obligations of the State that should preclude RI all together.

Jim has also challenged the REAC Terms of Reference's use of the word "tolerance" in its aims, suggesting that we should be seeking total acceptance of each other's beliefs rather than simply tolerating them.

Rachel raised her request to Jim a few weeks ago about connecting a Courier-Mail/ Sunday-Mail journalist to resources quantifying how many students are not receiving RI and being left without appropriate supervision. Jim will see what he can learn from REAC and pass that on to her.

Jim also mentioned that Yeshe Khadro of Karuna also approached him to take her place on the Qld. Multi-faith Health Care Council [QHMCC], which advises the Health Minister, along the same lines as REAC, but focussing on Pastoral Care and Hospital Chaplaincy – which he has also agreed to accept.

Moved by Jim Ferguson

Seconded by Kim Hollow

Accepted

D. BLUE CARD RENEWALS

Jim highlighted that his Blue Card is due for renewal in April and probably other members'

will be too. Kim has certified his for that renewal, and Jim has now received some other members renewal forms that will be falling due soon. Everyone is reminded that all members need to have a current Blue Card and the details recorded in our register. Those who have cards falling due can be processed as required.

E. BCQ OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

Jim mentioned he has attended recent events at the Griffith University's Multi-Faith Centre – one the Burma Solidarity Rally that was highlighting the plight of the Burmese citizens and sangha and the recent visit there by the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, branched in Melbourne, which has both raised funds for, and delivered them to the orphanages etc in Burma. He stressed that often Burmese military are disguised and infiltrate groups of sangha to both spy on and misrepresent their sangha in the media.

Jim mentioned that on that occasion and the later Harmony Day Celebration, he has met and spoken with Ven Chueh-Shan of Chung Tian and has been warmly received. He feels all the committee should strive to develop such relationships with their neighbourhood centres and the Asian groups to demonstrate our genuine desire to bring dharma together.

He also mentioned a dinner meeting with Ms. Helen Heath of the Parliament of World Regions (formed 1893) when she visited Brisbane a few weeks ago, who will be holding their next conference in Melbourne in December 3-9, 2009 (at 5-yearly intervals), and at which the Dalai Lama will be delivering the closing address. They have sought the support for the BCQ to promote the event as it draws nearer, becoming a co-sponsor in fact, and Jim suggested that this would be a worthwhile activity. She has already met both the BCVic and BCNSW presidents but has yet to receive their expressions of interest. This can be revisited once a formal approach has been received.

Jenny offered to see if she can arrange for some lapel badges can be made for the BCQ to wear at such events in the future. This was well received and would be welcomed.

E. DATES FOR A.G.M. AND NOTICES

Jim has proposed that the forthcoming AGM be held at Karuna Hospice Service for Saturday, May 10 at 10:30 am in the Mandala Room, which will therefore require all notices to be sent out no later than April 10. All were asked their interest in being available for re-election and there was general consensus. Jim added however, that should he be re-elected for another term, he feels it appropriate that he should not stand for President in 2009 to encourage other people to make their contributions to the growth of the BCQ.

Kim and Maeve offered to do the mailout of notices etc, with Jim preparing the content, and delivering them to Kim no later than April 5. Agreed.

Moved by Jim Ferguson

Seconded by Chee Weng

Accepted.

5. GENERAL BUSINESS:

- Rachel also surrendered the BCQ mobile phone to Kim since she is unable to continue answering the phone.
- Jim mentioned the invitation to the opening of the new Burmese temple that was handed out at the Burmese Solidarity Meeting at GU-Multi-Faith Centre, which was past but will be added to the Centre data-base.

- Jim also advised notice received last night of a fire puja being held at the Arya Tara Ser Ling centre at Labrador, which, for anyone who has not attended such a gathering, is quite informative and auspicious.
- Kim mentioned that they are also visiting the new Theravada centre at Kholo, with a resident monk of German descent, Ven Dhammasila, a student of Ajahn Brahm, who is seeking some support – he was previously housed at the Sri Lanka Monastery at Ellen Grove before it was sold and now lives in a small demountable on a bush property.
- Kim also mentioned that a new website has been setup for the BCNSW Vesak event called “Acts of Kindness” - www.actsofkindness.org Jim will be forwarding logos etc to help support this site.
- Jim also advised that the National Interfaith Festival organisation may have folded – their website has been shut-down and no emails are being answered.
- Jim finally thanked Chee and his family for offering their home today for the meeting and for the acknowledgement of the committee’s contribution to this very long but worthwhile and productive meeting

MEETING CLOSED: At 1:30 pm

NEXT MEETING:

Karuna Hospice Services – Mandala Room at 9:00 am prior to the AGM at 10:30 am

Signed by President: _____ Secretary: _____ Date: __/__/08