

**TIBETAN CULTURAL INSTITUTE OF ARKANSAS
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
May 31, 2011**

Board Members Present:

James Ownbey, President
Sidney Burris, Vice President
Karen Chotkowski, Co-Treasurer
Geshe Thupten Dorjee, Member at Large
Ellen Thompson, Co-Treasurer
Bill Symes, Member at Large

Board Members Absent:

Jasmine Merced, Secretary

Committee Chairs Present:

Absent:

Georgia Lance, Land Committee

Committee Chairs

Cheryl Maese, Membership

Members Present:

Jeremiah Wax
James (Jay) Barrow

Kate MacNaughton Lonberger,
Fundraising
Wil VanLaningham, Students
for a Free Tibet
Christy Pollock, Community
Outreach

6:42 pm The meeting was called to order at Geshe Dorjee's residence.

OLD BUSINESS

Approval of the Minutes – Minutes of the May 15, 2011 meeting were approved.

No Budget Report.

NEW BUSINESS

Insurance on Retreat Center and Liability Waivers. Obtaining liability insurance for the Retreat Center was discussed by those present. Georgia Lance will check on the prospects of obtaining liability insurance and will get quotes for cost. Coverage for volunteer workers and visitors at the land will be included in the research.

In addition to insurance, the possibility of having anyone working at the land to sign a "waiver" of liability to the TCIA in the event of an accident was discussed. It was agreed that everyone should sign a waiver before working on the land. Georgia will

obtain a copy of a legal waiver to be used. The waivers will be kept on site. Georgia will keep copies of the signed waivers.

In addition, Jay said he would post signs on the land that state, "Construction Site: Do Not Enter" in addition to having each volunteer sign the waiver as kept by Georgia.

Retreat Center. Site Plans: Geshe Dorjee presented a copy of the site plans of the Retreat Center at Crosses, Arkansas as designed by Michael Cochram. The site plans will be posted on the TCIA website by James. Geshe proposes the addition of two more doors on the Meditation Hall than are shown on the plans. Each of the twelve proposed cabins will be named after the 12 boomeys. Georgia proposed that the two cabins closest to the east boundary be built in a location more toward her adjacent land than is shown on the site plan. Georgia recommends a septic field and flush toilets be installed. It was brought up that we may have to prioritize regarding costs/expenditures. Jay is building temporary buildings from scraps from a lumber yard.

Chain Saw Collection: Georgia is collecting monetary donations to buy a chainsaw for the retreat center. She has collected \$142 thus far and estimates that \$400+ will be needed. It was suggested to check with S and J Small Engine Mechanics on Martin Luther King Blvd. for a good used chainsaw. Bill volunteered the use of his chainsaw to Jay who will assume responsibility for care and safe use.

Report from Jay: The camp site for workers will be finished in the next few days. Plans to clear the land will follow. A backhoe will be rented for an estimated \$350/week. It will take about two weeks to get the site cleared. Georgia will try to line up someone to cut down the unwanted pine trees with a chainsaw. The platform for the main Meditation Hall is estimated to cost around \$3,500 to \$3,900. Geshe recommends the teepee be used for storage during construction. Georgia will set up the teepee on her land. Setting it up will take about 2.5 hours. The teepee is made of marine duct canvas and is waterproof.

Electricity: The deposit for opening the account for electricity with Ozarks Electric Cooperative was \$400. This was \$250 more than originally quoted by OEC. However, since the TCIA is considered to be a "business", the larger deposit is required. This was paid from the TCIA account and will be refunded after a year of timely payments on the account.

Expenditures: Bill made a motion to establish a maximum expenditure amount that can be withdrawn from either of the TCIA accounts without requiring Board approval. He recommended an amount of \$2000. James seconded the motion. Further discussion on the matter followed. In the event Board approval was required, Ellen recommended that voting by the Board on expenditures over \$2000 could be done by e-mail or by phone with follow-up documentation by e-mail. The motion was seconded by James and passed unanimously.

Donations: Jay has had inquiries from donors in Florida wanting to know how to donate to the Retreat Center. James will put donor opportunities for the Retreat Center on the TCIA website. James also pointed out that donations to the TCIA can currently be made through Pay Pal which is linked to the website.

New Meditation Space. The sangha will be needing a new location for Sunday meditations. Dramis Hardwood Floors has provided meditation space to the sangha for the past five years, but will no longer be able to house the weekly Sunday meditations after June 12, 2011. The TCIA is appreciative of their generous donation to the sangha. Suggestions for a new meditation space included Nature's Water on Huntsville Road in Fayetteville. The owners, Moshe and Hamsa, have offered the space at no cost to the meditation group. The space is about the size of Dramis Hardwood Floors and parking is limited. Bill suggested that we look also to area churches for the use of space. He volunteered to check possible religious groups for a meditation location, including the Presbyterian Student Center and St. Martins near the U of A campus. A lot of suggestions have come in from sangha members and friends of the TCIA. Bill will coordinate and check the suggestions. Georgia will contact the Unitarian Universalist Church. It was noted that storage space on site and adequate parking would be important considerations in selecting a future location.

Update on "Pennies for Partnerships". Bill reported that Leann Halsey (organizer of Pennies for Partnerships) met with the Tibet Office and is meeting with organic Tibetan farmers for her program. The general idea of the program is to purchase farm commodities (namely, rice) from the Tibetan farmers and distribute it to families in need of food. The proposal to support Pennies for Partnerships as an umbrella organization under the TCIA is under consideration by the Board and has been put before legal counsel at the U of A Law School Legal Aid Clinic. The clinic is researching the legality of the TCIA participating in this program. More will be reported at a later date.

Meeting at Retreat Center. Georgia proposed setting up a meeting of Geshe with the Madison County judge, Frank Weaver. Geshe agreed. Georgia also proposed contacting the local newspaper, The Madison County Record, to do an article on the future Retreat Center. Geshe declined at present to have an article in the local paper.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Minutes taken by Karen Chotkowski.