

**MINUTES of the BOARD OF DIRECTORS
of the BAY AREA VIPASSANA CENTER (BAVC)
HELD OCTOBER 18, 2015**

Facilitator: Adrian Foley
Timekeeper: Adrian Foley
Location: South Bay Vipassana Hall (SBVH), 3375 Scott Blvd. Suite 432, Santa Clara, CA 95054

In Attendance: Karen and Tim Donovan, Meenu Gupta, Nobuko Yamada, Mark Mushkat, Doug Jackson, Nikhil & Shubhra Jain, Brooke Wright, Mukul Agarwal, Sonali Aggarwal, Susan Wayland, Shana Holmes, Kim Ngo, Anand Mirji, Rama Acruva, Rahm Bala, Manuel Rubi, Sudhakar Reddy, Tayeko (Tai) Yamada, Sandeep Nayyar, Jimmy Thanki, Ann Seitz, Adrian Foley, Vijay. (24)

Agenda	Questions-Answers-Comments Proposals to the Trust & Action Items
Meeting Opening	<i>Q=Question, A=Answer, C=Comment</i>
A one-hour sit began at 8:30 am. A quorum of Trust members were present and the meeting began @ 9:56 am.	
Restatement of Trust Process	
i) Stick to written agenda items giving those presenters time to speak, thus moving the agenda process along; ii) Questions are addressed when people raise their hands. They are called on in order and put “on stack.”	
Call for New Agenda Items or Announcements for end of meeting	
Website discussion of dead sites, redirects, links, and other topics from Outreach Committee. Holiday potluck.	
Introductions	
Mark Mushkat (<i>President of the BAVC Trust 2015-2016, BAVC Finance, Search committees</i>) Nikhil & Shubhra Jain, (<i>BAVC co-Treasurers, South Bay</i>) Ann Seitz, (<i>BAVC Secretary, lives in Hayward</i>) Rahm Bala (<i>North San Jose, recently from Texas</i>) Jimmy Thanki (<i>Assisting with design projects for posters and brochure</i>) Adrian Foley (<i>EBVH, BAVC, Berkeley</i>) Doug Jackson (<i>EBVH, and BAVC Finance committee, Berkeley</i>) Meena Gupta (<i>Lives Palo Alto, served on mid-Atlantic association, Registration for Children’s Courses. Part of Delaware center evolution</i>) Susan Wayland, (<i>BAVC Finance committee</i>) Tayeko (Tai) Yamada (<i>EBVH Treasurer, BAVC Trustee and Finance Committee, Berkeley</i>) Nobuko Yamada (<i>EBVH, lives in Berkeley</i>) Mukul Agarwal & Meena Gupta (<i>Search Cttee, BAVC Outreach Cttee, Children’s courses, South Bay</i>) Sudhakar Reddy (<i>Search Cttee., Children’s courses, South Bay</i>) Brooke Wright, (<i>Chair BAVC Outreach committee, Occidental Food Committee, BAVC Outreach, Santa Cruz</i>) Karen & Tim Donovan, (<i>Center Teachers, BAVC Search Committee, Los Aptos</i>) Rahm Bala Shana Holmes Kim Ngo Anand Mirji Rama Acruva Manuel Rubi Sandeep Nayyar	
WELCOME REMARKS--Mark	

Thank you all for joining us, especially newcomers. We are a fairly new trust taking on lots of responsibility and need people to join who live nearby and share the long-term goals of BAVC. See any trust member afterward and we will be glad to talk to you about how you might get more involved. Your talent and commitment would be a great support to us and we'd love an opportunity to explain further, to help you explain to your friends who also might want to get involved how this meeting and group works.	
MEETING NOTES – AGENDA	<i>Q=Question, A=Answer, C=Comment</i>
OUTREACH--Brooke & Meenu	
<p>Last July the bulk of this committee's work was on the Dana posters for the halls and establishing some ideas around outreach strategy for example answering questions like, how do people know about Trust meeting? We think streamlining the websites will insure old students can find the halls. Whether the websites are password protected in the Old Student section is at issue.</p> <p>There are many concerns:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Confusion when using the word "center" in reference to BAVC; 2. Old students searching on Google instead of going directly to known old student links and old student links requiring multiple clicks and sites to find; 3. Many old students forgetting the common sign-in and password; 4. Timely changes to the regular calendar are not reflected in a rapid response from any of the halls; 5. The reality that younger students don't read email and respond to up-to-the-minute texts and Twitter posts. <p>Our poster work activity has been slow. We struggle with old poster formats, the change and update of the format and archiving of low-resolution photos. The photos we have, when increased in size, blur. We have lots of technical issues but thank you for your feedback with regard to the content. We need photographers or a person to provide high-resolution photos for the new posters.</p>	<p>ACTION ITEM: Bill Osberg has taken down an EBVH test website. – <i>Completed.</i></p> <p>ACTION ITEM: Jimmy Thanki joined the Outreach committee, and together with Rahm Bala will share SMS, Twitter, Twillio, texting and Facebook tracking skills and DLSR high quality camera photography technical advice and equipment.</p> <p>ACTION ITEM: Outreach and its Technology arm will minimize the confusion on search engines, order of keyword and name appearance, the elimination of out-of-use test sites for the halls – Brooke, Nikhil</p> <p>ACTION ITEM: Jimmy Thanki and Mark Mushkat will work together to eliminate confusion on the new brochure regarding future donations and whether the mailbox address might be confused with the physical location of BAVC.</p> <p>Proposal to the trust, no resolution at this time: Shall we set up public "placeholder" or "dummy" pages for each hall with a link for old students with the usual password protection?</p> <p>Proposal to the Trust, no resolution at this time: Shall we create a Technology Sub-committee within Outreach to consult and make a recommendation to Outreach?</p> <p>Comment: I moved here recently and searched for a center or hall. I found them through another form entirely, not web. I suggest search words be more generic so all kinds of interested old students can better locate.</p> <p>Comment: If our old student pages are made public that can create calls for courses from those who haven't taken a 10-day course.</p> <p>Comment: "Mandrel" software applications automatically send out password reminders, maybe a search engine optimizer would be of help.</p>

	<p>Comment: In California we have a robust outreach program that include opt-in and opt-out lists.</p>												
FINANCE--Nikhil	<p>Q=Question, A=Answer, C=Comment</p>												
<p>For many years funds for the halls have been sent to and distributed through CVC. The Finance committee conducted a financial reconciliation together with CVC to facilitate BAVC's newly formed trust. We went through all donations and expenses and arrived at these figures:</p> <table> <tr> <td>Oct, 12, 2015 BAVC bank account holds</td><td>\$22,532.20</td></tr> <tr> <td>Due from CVC (NACCC)</td><td>\$19,684.29</td></tr> <tr> <td>Due from CVC (BAVC)</td><td>\$72,612.48</td></tr> <tr> <td>Amounts due from CVC</td><td>\$92,612.77</td></tr> <tr> <td>Total Available incl. NACCC</td><td>\$119,022.96</td></tr> <tr> <td>Total Available w/out NACCC approx.</td><td>\$100,000.00</td></tr> </table> <p>*NACCC funds are held and used by BAVC specifically for that committee</p> <p>CVC will send \$50k out of the BAVC fund and the entire amount for NACCC fund this month. CVC has already sent \$20k (not included in the amount above) to BAVC in the last few months. Remaining amounts for the BAVC fund will be sent after 1st March 2016 to reduce the dent in CVC's finances for 2015.</p> <p>The specific amount of \$250,000.00 is a designated donation not formally accounted for in the figures above that have been offered to BAVC for center property purchase. The donor gave it to CVC. To avoid a shortfall for CVC, BAVC will need to make a timely request to them for the remainder. The Donor recognizes a gap between request and payment may make a purchase difficult and has offered to give a bridge loan for any BAVC transaction.</p> <p>We have a new mail box address. It's located very close to SBVH. This new address will be published and all Dana requests will be directed to it. However, we don't want students to come to this location thinking it is a hall or center.</p> <p>Further regarding donations we have a mobile, credit card swipe processing technology called Square available for sharing among the halls after group sit or events.</p> <p>The discussion pursued another line of inquiry about how Dana donations are earmarked for specific halls. Adding a Comment dialogue box to the donation page for specific instructions and requests might provide clarity. On the website <sfbayarea.us.dhamma.org/os/donate> there is a pull-down menu where donors can specify EBVH, SBVH, BAVC etc.</p> <p><u>Karen and Tim Donovan:</u> There are nine Vipassana halls in North America now. In general, all are self-sustaining but on occasion run a deficit. In Vancouver they started with \$20,000 and after quickly using it faced the larger issue of being self-sustaining. Do halls rely on a center? And, what does that mean for the existing Bay Area halls, as BAVC does not yet have a center? Long ago John Beary said a beautiful thing: "This hall as an extension of CVC; we will support you." We'd like to remind that the Halls are serving the needs of old students and do a different function than centers. Yes, BAVC is independent, we have a fund for the future but it does ultimately beg the question of being self-sustaining. BAVC must acknowledge we are on our own, what do we do when there is no other center to bail us now? The support of the halls and the teaching opportunities of the centers are both important. Right now, there's a small group</p>	Oct, 12, 2015 BAVC bank account holds	\$22,532.20	Due from CVC (NACCC)	\$19,684.29	Due from CVC (BAVC)	\$72,612.48	Amounts due from CVC	\$92,612.77	Total Available incl. NACCC	\$119,022.96	Total Available w/out NACCC approx.	\$100,000.00	<p>ACTION ITEM: The Finance Committee will work to accurately represent the finance reports for all the halls and have that work completed by January 1, 2016.</p> <p>ACTION ITEM: Nikhil will add two footnotes to the most recent Financial Report to clarify funds separated from CVC accounting: 1) Approx. \$20,000 is set aside for NACCC and 2) \$250,000 is set aside for use as new center seed money when appropriate.</p> <p>ACTION ITEM: Nikhil will ask the new Mailbox Company if BAVC can be listed as a "mailbox" only address.</p> <p>Question: How much support for each hall exists? If a hall is always running in the red, is it the goal of the trust to then support this hall? Or simply put more information about how the local area should support the hall?</p> <p>Answer: To clarify, the Trust supports EBVH, the hall is an arm of BAVC. Area teachers appreciate the commitments the various halls have to their local communities. No hall will go under because of a fluctuating income and expense sheet. And only if deeply, deeply in debt, would area teachers consider other options.</p> <p>Comment: Let's take a step back. We are a growing baby trust learning how to work together. We come to trust and when issues arise our process is to then kick it back to committee and in this way maximizing our trust meeting time.</p> <p>Comment: SBVH has noticed when we hosted Children's Courses we got a boost in Dana, periodically. EBVH, now at a new location with adjacent to Strawberry Park and with easier parking might consider the same to see if this might help bridge any financial gaps.</p>
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<p>in SF that wants their own hall and in need of more space. Their transportation is difficult; the location they use is freezing in the winter. If that group locates a hall they are going to be approaching BAVC with questions of their own regarding their funding, their size to sustain themselves especially with the higher rents in San Francisco. As a trust BAVC needs to be aware and confront this likely expansion for the student base in San Francisco. We need to and will work more on our communication with the San Francisco group.</p> <p>For clarity, the location used in San Francisco is actually a temple and Sr. Jesse lets us use the facility once or twice a month. One-day courses are offered but at this writing the San Francisco facility is not a Vipassana hall per se.</p>	
<p>SEARCH</p>	<p><i>Q=Question, A=Answer, C=Comment</i></p>
<p>Within the next year this committee plans to find a location within one (1) hour of San Jose, possibly raw land, to start the fourth center in California. The committee members are Mark Mushkat, Taru Jain, Mukul Agarwal, JT Woon with advisors and consultants Philip Bock and Craig Rublee.</p> <p>The Search committee continues to research and find out what's necessary to create a center or to take existing structure(s) and make it into a center. We are making progress, sometimes in indirect ways. The Search committee has taken a background role to its Research sub-committee at this time.</p> <p>Six (6) properties have been identified on the Internet that this group feels are appropriate for learning more about meaning zoning, septic, county requirements etc. We view two of the identified properties as actionable and are moving ahead looking at maps and photos to specifically develop more questions about them.</p> <p>Mark Mushkat has reached out to a Realtor about one property and found the listing ready for a developer to build five (5) new homes; it already has a well. Yet issues about a site eventually holding 120 students lead to pursuing Septic Percolation Reports to find out if the existing system is large enough for 120 student for 12 days at a time or if it would percolate into surrounding properties.</p> <p>Basic, primary work is being done. For all we know a property might reveal itself tomorrow, or tonight or years from now. Sudhakar is sharing information with a similar group in San Benito that has just been purchased and this informs our process.</p>	<p>ACTION ITEM: Jimmy Thanki will ask his real estate contacts to gather information about potential center locations in or one (1) hour from San Jose and report back to Mark.</p>
<p>OCCIDENTAL</p>	<p><i>Q=Question, A=Answer, C=Comment</i></p>
<p>Registration is underway for this yearly off-site course in Northern California. This course is unique in that people fly from all over the world to participate and it's often the only long holiday where they can sit a 10 day course.</p> <p>To date one hundred ninety four (194) students and fifteen (15) servers have applied, fourteen servers (14) are approved. The course requires thirty (30) servers. Before registration closes we expect to we handle seven hundred (700) applications for the course. November will be busy processing applications.</p> <p>Our focus now are the set up days Friday, Dec 20, Saturday, Dec. 21 and Sunday, Dec. 22 so even if you work coming for the weekend is possible. If you want to serve the course please apply.</p> <p>The course also needs clean up on Saturday, January 2, 2015. At the end of last year's course several people fell ill and a few who had agreed to stay couldn't. This course needs your service. Clean up must be completed before noon January 2 as part of the terms of use.</p>	<p>ACTION ITEM: A request for action taken from all is to apply and sign up to serve at Occidental course, for pre-set up, to serve the course, or clean up. Use the application on the course or contact Nikhil or Shubhra to apply to serve: Nikhil <nikhil.barjatya@gmail.com> Shubhra <00sankalp@gmail.com></p> <p>ACTION ITEM: Outreach will update the 4-o'clock talk, and use it after the Occidental course as "proof of concept" for streamlining the parting message for other halls.</p> <p>ACTION ITEM: The Outreach/Occidental committee will also determine if a Zip Code dialogue box can be added where students can be</p>

	connected to all pertinent group sit, hall, or center information closest to them.
NACCC (North American Children's Course Committee)--Karen	<i>Q=Question, A=Answer, C=Comment</i>
<p>NACCC is basically to support Children's Course programs in diverse locations meaning Native American, Black and Latin communities. This committee has provided funds for rented facilities, sent and trained teachers to Milwaukee, Newark, New Jersey, Chicago and other locations.</p> <p>The reason we inform the Trust is BAVC holds the funds. This committee seeks opportunities to spend its continued donations. We are delighted to report that four (4) new people have recently been appointed to the committee who more fully represent the communities being served. If anyone in the area knows of a community that might be interested in hosting a Children's Course let us know.</p>	<i>ACTION ITEM:</i> Karen and Tai will further investigate a location in Oakland regarding the NACCC, Children's courses and new committee members with a stake in the communities these courses serve.
EBVH (East Bay Vipassana Hall)--Doug	
<p>We moved from 9th Street in Berkeley to a new location: 1250 Addison Street, Room 212, Berkeley, CA 94709. It's a nice big space with a useful configuration with the door at one end and the AT area at the other. We are setting it up for winter weather. We offer two (2) one-day sits per month. We have morning group sits at 7:00am M-F, and an evening group sit 7:00pm Sun-Th. Evening sits are better attended. We now offer three (3) hour sits that often attract 20-30 people. We do a special event every three (3) months for new students to come in and find the hall. At our last event we played the Paul Fleishman audio. Our managing committee used to meet weekly, now we meet monthly. Nobu arranges the hosts for group sits. Things are going smoothly.</p>	<i>Comment:</i> You're doing a great job; the nearby park is a big improvement. And thank you for hosting the rotating Trust meetings.
San Francisco Vipassana	
<p>No one was in attendance to represent this old student group; there was no current report. Their website offers details for their group sits.</p>	<i>ACTION ITEM:</i> Tim Donovan will increase BAVC communication with the San Francisco group
SBVH (South Bay Vipassana Hall)--Nikhil	
<p>New books are on the SBVH library shelves, please feel free to see what we have.</p> <p>One of the very interesting things about all the halls is the difference in the communities they serve, for example San Francisco is generally car-based and offers more flexibility with sit schedules. The South Bay Vipassana Hall attracts more software engineers; the East Bay Vipassana Hall finds most in attendance have ridden their bikes to get there.</p>	
PAUL FLEISCHMAN TALKS--Tim	
<p>Paul Fleischman accepted our invitation in May 2015 to give an address to old students in both San Francisco and the South Bay. The feedback has been positive and BAVC is considering asking him to return every six months. Hosting Fleischman not only offers support and inspiration to old students for continued practice but also publicizes the hall and enhances the Outreach committee's effort to bring in old students.</p>	<p><i>Question:</i> Is there a recorded copy of his talks available to download or stream?</p> <p><i>Answer:</i> Not yet, but Tim is working with Pariyatti to make a free download available.</p>
GROUP DISCUSSION	
<p>We could better format our emails with a more professional look, to contain more succinct and less redundant content, to simplify our message with Who, What, Where, Why, Date, Time, Location content.</p> <p>A more simple approach to our message needs to be expanded to all of the Outreach avenues including all 10-day course materials and Welcome letters and the BAVC Outreach committee needs to focus in on what steps can be taken.</p>	<p><i>PROPOSAL AND CONSENSUS:</i> It's agreed that people are using email less and instead using more up-to-the-minute methods of communication like texting and Twitter. BAVC needs to address this fact.</p> <p><i>ACTION ITEM:</i> Judith, Nobu and Karen will coordinate to re-write text about Dana that is used</p>

<p>Once you sit a course that contact information goes into the main database. Once that course is completed the next steps to support practice for an old student are not altogether clear. The Metta Day talk given live needs to be edited, revised to better direct students find local and continuing support for their practice.</p> <p>Outreach suggested we add a link dialogue box where a student on Metta Day could add their Zip Code and be directed to all Vipassana activity closest to them. Further, the 4-o'clock talk could do a better job spelling out next steps for students.</p> <p>Communication needs to improve. The newsletter and email can be useful but many people look at them as "Spam" and seldom read further than the first paragraph.</p> <p>We need a point person, dedicated Webmaster, for all issues related to our website. Issues for rebuilding and redesigning our website would address how to make our keywords float to the top of the search, some tricks like testing on a "placeholder" or "dummy" page and have the Outreach committee address and smooth out those needs.</p> <p>The reality of more instant and immediate communication was acknowledged. Flash group sitting, already being used in Seattle, was discussed. Flash group sits can mean an AT finds themselves near a hall, a sit is called for 7pm, a SMS or Text message is sent to old students in the same manner a person "Texts To" to receive Earthquake or Amber alerts.</p> <p>Tim Donovan commented that he approves all hosts for any group sit in North America and only once has he ever received any comment from center managers about which group sits remain or are changed and concludes updating is an under-served issue. He also noted the "awesome responsibility" each hall meeting provides for old students.</p>	<p>on the hand out materials distributed at the various halls.</p> <p>ACTION ITEM: Nikhil, Karen and Anand Mirji anand_mirji@hotmail.com (anand (underscore) mirji (at) hotmail (dot) com) will hone the text used for group announcement emails to eliminate redundancies.</p> <p>ACTION ITEM: Feedback on the new brochure from all members is requested and should be sent to Mark Mushkat.</p> <p>ACTION ITEM: The Outreach committee with Karen will contact the Seattle center to gather information on their use of and experience with Flash group sits.</p> <p>ACTION ITEM: Jimmy Thanki (jeevit@gmail.com) and Rahm Bala (rahmbala7@gmail.com) will provide high quality camera, photo and printing information technical requirements to the Outreach Committee for use with Metta Day materials.</p> <p>ACTION ITEM: Before issuing any printed or to be distributed Vipassana materials they must be vetted for final approval with Tim and Karen prior to publication. Take this action as appropriate.</p>
ANNOUNCEMENTS	
<p>You are invited to a Sunday, December 6, 2015 Holiday party and annual Potluck in Casa De Anza Club House at 10351 Mary Ave, Cupertino 95014. If you would like to attend please email Sudhakar Reddy <sreddy007@yahoo.com>. He will put you on the reminder, invitation list.</p>	
NEXT TRUST MEETING DATE	
<p style="text-align: center;">Sunday, January 24, 2016</p> <p>Location: East Bay Vipassana Hall, 1250 Addison Street, Room 212, Berkeley, CA</p>	
<p>Two (2) minutes of meditation. Meeting adjourned 12:44 pm.</p>	
Respectfully submitted: Ann Seitz, BAVC Secretary 2015-2016	