

Springs Mountain Sangha
Annual Meeting
September 11, 2006

Following Sutra chanting, the meeting opened with dedications by Robert including "Season of Forgiveness" and by Sarah dedicating the work of the sangha.

Discussion of by-law changes.

There was a discussion about the resident teacher being an ex-officio member of the steering committee. Bill Brown observed that the resident teacher will be a member of the Steering Committee and approved annually by the Steering Committee. He also mentioned that it's always true that ex officio is out if s/he loses her/his job. The by-laws provide for removal of a teacher. It is not necessary to wait for the annual meeting.

The amendments to the by-laws were read and passed by voice vote:

The slate of active steering committee members for next year, consisting of Robert King, William Jeavons, Andrew Palmer, Pete Ordway, Clay Taylor, Frank Actis, David Cockrell, Judith Lee and Elizabeth King, was read and approved. Sarah Bender was approved as Resident Teacher.

David Cockrell said that he and Clay Taylor reviewed the Treasurer's books and helped Robert to put the records on Quicken, which is a giant step. Categories, income and expenses were established and approved. David further stated that a "good next step is to prepare a budget." The auditors' report was accepted.

Robert said the past year has been important in the sangha because there has been notable growth, more study groups, four long retreats, Non-violent Communication training, great cooperation from Colorado College and now, a Resident Teacher.

William presented Robert with a gift from the sangha in recognition of his service as chair of the Steering Committee.

Sarah spoke, opening with her vision of her new role as a *relationship*. She'd like to open a conversation with the Sangha and have that conversation continue. Her aims include the following: to lead within a collaborative framework, to do some good. She then presented her ideas on the range of possibilities for her teaching role. First, at the dream level: to participate in the sangha's being able to offer a full program and as much intensive practice and study as wanted, and to develop a program for family practice. At this level, she'd also be able to lead an exploration of further opportunities for sangha service to the community, such as: offering meditation instruction and possible other support to military personnel returning from

service in war zones, or to people who are coming out of prison; or offering meditation instruction and support to juvenile offenders in prison. Service to the community is very important to her. Ambitious programs like these would require actively seeking funding through grant proposals, and that takes time and knowledge. Such future endeavors would not preclude opportunities for things we can do right now. This will be discussed further at the October 3 meeting of the Steering Committee. She reminded us that she has to support herself. For her to commit to this level of service, she would need support. At a somewhat less ambitious level, she could still expand her offerings to the sangha: she could offer more talks and classes, as well as serving as teacher for retreats. At this level, some ongoing sangha financial support would be needed, but not as much as for the first option. Meanwhile, if the sangha prefers to move more slowly and allow things to evolve gradually, Sarah could do as she has been doing, with the addition of work in the room and teaching at retreats. She might receive some support through talks, classes, work in the room, a retreat or two a year, and weekend one-day retreats.

When David Cockrell started the Pueblo sangha, they had dedicated space from the beginning and he highly recommends having that kind of space.

Frank commented that finances will work out but that time is more of a problem. He'd like to give the core people a rest.

Sarah: "We've been a leaderless sangha. How do we keep participation alive? Ownership of the group needs to be collaborative."

Sarah asked what we are wishing for, to which Andrew replied, "Really diving into the practice, making richness a part of our everyday practice. The fire. Create a space for Sarah to burn but not to burn out."

Sarah: "If we had the space, we could do more retreats (maybe each month) with work in the room and all a retreat includes."

Ed Gallagher commented that one of the advantages of having a designated space is that you have a place to care for.

William sent around sign-up sheets for those who will help with events during Joan's residency.

Residency brochures were distributed.

The 2006 Annual Meeting was concluded.