

# **The North Carolina Zen Center Committee Structure General Policies Established 9/27/15, Revised 7/1/16**

**The Board has officially established five committees:**

**Practice Committee  
Outreach and Programs Committee,  
Facilities and Finance Committee  
Membership Committee  
Advisory Council**

The Practice, Programs, Facilities and Membership committees share similar structure and responsibilities and will be herein referred to generally as the Board-level committees, or Board Committees. The Advisory Council is significantly different from the other committees in structure and duties and will be discussed separately.

## **The Board Committees**

### **General Structure**

- The four Board committees are standing committees which will stay in place unless terminated or substantially altered by the Board of Directors.
- The four Board committees shall have a minimum of three members and a maximum of five members.
- As far as possible, a member of the Board shall at all times be a member of the committee, such that each committee shall have a different Board member sitting on it. This Board member slot shall be filled either by a Board member volunteering or by appointment by the President of the Board.
- The other members of the committee will be drawn from the Voting Membership, either by simply volunteering, or by being chosen by the Voting Membership by a process of their preference, or by appointment by the Board, in which case that appointment is subject to approval by vote of the Voting Membership.
- The committee members shall elect a chair of the committee. The Board prefers that the chair of each committee be one of the members drawn from the Voting Membership. However, the Board member who sits on the committee may chair the committee if necessary, or if chosen by the committee members.
- Committee members may serve for a maximum of six consecutive years followed by one year off, after which they may volunteer to serve again, with individual members' terms staggered by one-year intervals.

### **General Duties and Responsibilities of the Committees**

The four Board committees are charged with working closely with the Board on the specific areas of their purview, as outlined below. The chair of each committee shall report to the Board on their committees' discharge of its responsibilities quarterly at a minimum, and more often if requested by the Board.

## **General Duties of Committee Chairs**

### Facilitate Committee Work

- Plan and lead committee meetings
- Assign tasks to committee members
- Monitor the group's progress and communicate with staff members as needed
- Resolve conflicts among committee members
- Arrange for the committee to evaluate its work periodically

### Communicate with the Board

- Serve as the liaison between the Director, the Board President and the full Board
- Form part of the Advisory Council
- Ensure appropriate reports are submitted to the Board and keep the Board President and Director informed of the committee's progress

## **General Duties and Responsibilities of the Board Committees**

The duties herein specified are necessarily broad and general. It is the intention of the Board to leave them open to interpretation and improvement by committee chairs and Boards, and to revision by future Boards.

### **Practice Committee**

- Oversee the development and continuation of the Center's practice form and schedule
- Provide practice guidance and Sangha support during times when the teacher is absent
- Assist the Teacher with support of the practice community
- Assist the Teacher with oversight of religious affairs
- Oversee the placement, continuance and discontinuance of residents
- Grievance and ethics oversight

Because the duties of the Practice Committee go right to the heart of the function of the Center, it is the goal of the Board that the Practice Committee bring together the highest levels of skill, experience, and maturity in Zen Practice that are available in our community. It is the expressed intention of the Board that the Practice Committee be chaired by a Voting Member who is one of the senior members of the Sangha and who has long experience as a Zen student/practitioner. We also believe it is important that at least two Sangha members of the Practice committee be senior community members with as much experience in the Zen world as possible.

### **Membership Committee**

- Review and maintain membership lists and membership process
- Oversee membership participation, dues, etc.
- Manage mailing lists
- Manage communication with membership
- Membership liaison

### **Finance and Facilities Committee**

- Work with the Director to oversee the Center's operations
- Oversee the operational affairs of the Center in the Director's absence
- Manage the Center's day-to-day finances and bookkeeping
- Manage the Center's general accounts including banking and utilities
- Contract for repair and maintenance services as needed
- Insure that the Center's physical plant and grounds are properly maintained and supported

### **Outreach and Programs Committee**

- Find and book visiting scholars
- Oversee the publication and distribution of the Center's quarterly newsletter *Kaihan*
- Promote and maintain the Center's visibility
- Manage the Center's Web presence including Facebook and Website, and otherwise develop on-line resources.
- Propose, develop and oversee various programs and events at the Center which enhance the Center's ability to fulfill its mission

### **The Advisory Council**

The Advisory Council is different in form and structure from the other Board committees. It is not assigned any specific task or area of responsibility. Instead, its purpose is to bring together the senior members of the community and others in an advisory role whereby they can (a) communicate with each other, (b) guide the Board as it makes critical decisions that affect the future course and health of the Center, and (c) provide a channel for communication between the Board and the rest of the community.

### **General Structure**

- The Advisory Council is a standing committee and will stay in place unless or until substantially modified or terminated by the Board of Directors.
- The Advisory Council will be chaired by the Center's Director, or by whomever the Director designates, or in lieu of that, by whomever the Board President appoints and the Board affirms.
- Additional refinement or changes to the Advisory Council structure may be discussed and offered by the committee itself, and may be put into place by approval of the Board.

### **Membership**

- Members will include Standing Members and Community Members
- Standing Members are the Center's Director and Senior Resident, the chairs of the Board-level committees, and any teachers currently affiliated with the Center
- In addition to the Standing Members the committee should have from three to five Community Members

- Community Members may have Zen experience and may be Voting Members, but it is not required. However, they should have some area of experience or expertise that is of value to the Center and which they can offer.
- Community Members may serve two consecutive three-year terms, followed by one year off the committee, before being eligible to return to the committee
- Community members participate by volunteering to do so and by having their membership approved by general consent or vote among the other committee members

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

- It will be the duty of the Advisory Council to offer its advice when requested by the Board of Directors.
- It is expected that the Board will actively seek the Advisory Council's advice, and that the Advisory Committee will actively offer it.
- It is expected that the Board will ask the Advisory Council from time to time to attend the open portion of Board meetings in their official capacity.
- Because the Advisory Council has no executive authority it does not need a quorum to be present in order to fulfill its advisory duties.
- The Advisory Council may meet on its own, at times and places of its own choosing, to consider proposals or questions put to it by the Board or to prepare proposals or other materials to present to the Board.

This is an Official Policy Document under Bylaws Art. III, Sec. 2., c.

Approved by the NC Zen Center Board of Directors September 18, 2016

