

PeaceWorks International Board of Directors Minutes for 9 March 2010

PeaceWorks International Center for the Dances of Universal Peace Board of Directors Telecon Meeting Minutes 9 March 2010

(Action Items in Italics)

BOD Members Present: Kabir Stuart McKinnon, Darvesha Victoria MacDonald, Halima Sussman, Maitreya Jon Stevens, Allaudin Sandy Hill

Also present: Munir Peter Reynolds (Director); Martha Bracken (Office Manager); Sky Majida Roshay (Administrative Assistant)

*Toward the One,
the Perfection of Love, Harmony and Beauty, the Only Being;
United with all the Illuminated Souls who form the Embodiment of the Master,
the Spirit of Guidance.*

AGENDA

Welcome and Check in
Approve Minutes from 9 February telecon
Seattle Office Closing
New Website Update
New Certification Guidelines Distributed
Old Website
Communications, Dues, Regions and other issues
Administrative Committee Meeting
Chilean Telecon
Closing and Check Out

Next Telecon Date: Telecon and Annual Meeting, Tuesday, 20 April; 5 p.m. Eastern time.

Out of Town Schedules:

Darvesha will be in Colombia and Ecuador March 18 - April 9, and will be away from the telephone but working on email from April 26-May 25 for a retreat/vacation.

MINUTES

Welcome and Check-In

Board agrees to dispense with the check-in.

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Approve Minutes of the 9 February telecon

Kabir moves, Halima seconds, that the minutes of the 9 February 2010 telecon be approved for distribution. Passes unanimously.

Seattle Office Closed

Through Martha's huge efforts and volunteer help from Helen Gabel and Hayra Fatah, the Seattle office has been emptied of its contents, except for a few last boxes. Unneeded office furniture and shelving has been donated to nearby offices in the same building. Martha has rented a storage locker at a cost of \$54/month to hold the remaining inventory of *Spiritual Dance and Walk*, the Foundation Manual cds and other DUP cds, some financial records and materials that still needed to be sorted through.

PW-IN will for now retain the P.O. Box address. For now the IN office phone number will be forwarded to Martha's home phone. This forwarding service costs about \$30-\$40/month, including taxes. Munir has some questions about the expense of this and whether in the long run we want to let the number go and/or make another arrangement. Munir authorized Martha to order a \$165 memory upgrade on her 4 year old computer in order better accommodate Quickbooks.

New Web Site Update

Work continues on the new international web site. Art design is being completed with Fatima Lassar, and Bruce Heeter is creating templates of the web pages. Big questions include whether or not to charge for downloads of dance write-ups and/or .mp3 files and the need for volunteers to help produce pdf files of dance writeups and .mp3s of the CD tracks so that Munir doesn't have to do it all himself.

Halima reports that the basic design is moving forward; it is being tested against the draft page layouts as they are delivered. They are also sorting through all the material that needs to be on the website to determine what needs to go where. She asks everyone to bring up any items they feel are important to have on the site but which have not been recorded anywhere yet. The same is true for the design. This is the time to bring these things up and make refinements.

The design team no longer plans to restrict access to the leaders resource/library only to mentored leaders, which would present large administrative challenges. Kabir asks if that might be changed later. Munir responds that, yes, a log-in potential is built in but won't be implemented for now. Halima adds that it seems difficult to take materials that are not restricted now and make them restricted on this new website. It is possible that there will be one set of information under "About the Dances" and another library of leader materials for Dance leaders in another section, to keep that information in context. Kabir says that it will take a while to implement the dues structure and figure out how to work with that, but in the future, access to these materials might be more tied to dues. But for now, it does seem best to be as inclusive as possible.

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Halima adds that every topic this Board discusses seems to come up in the process of designing this website, including, for example, the name of the organization. Munir says he, Kabir and Darvesha have been talking about the possible need to change the name of the organization early on and unveil it on the website. Allaudin comments that an internet search for "Peaceworks" brings up a number of organizations, but "Dancing Peace" brings up far fewer. *Munir asks people to collect and send any possible names they have thought of to everyone for us all to consider; we will discuss this further on the next telecon.*

Munir describes work that needs to be done for the new website. Some of the current information on the old website will just transfer over, but other material needs to be gathered. A big area is the need to re-enter the write-ups and music from the Dance books to create pdf files from; several people have offered to help with the typing, but volunteers who can work with music programs are still being sought. Maitreya comments that he is prepared to "gear up" to assist with the musical notation for the rewriting of the booklets.

A related question is how/if to charge for these. Alima Stoeckel, the German advisor, says that it devalues the information to have it go from having a charge to being free. Board discussed whether to charge per item, or to ask for voluntary contributions. Kabir asks if PW-NA is getting contributions for their dance write-ups; *Sky Majida will ask about that.*

Halima would also like to have a collection of Dance photos from around the world for people to view and for Dance leaders to use. Sky Majida points out the need to give photo credit to photographers for their donations. *Halima and Sky Majida will discuss this and other photography related topics later. Darvesha will send Munir information from the very first Dance manual that might be good to include on the website.*

Board thanks Halima for her dedication and hard work on this; Halima also would like to acknowledge Fatima for her work as well.

New Certification Guidelines Distributed

The MTG Guidance Council letter with links pointing to the new MTG Guidelines was sent on 26 February to 1,057 mentored leaders via email. The percentage who have opened the email is higher (455 or 44.8%), compared to average non-profit mailings, but our bounce rate is also higher (41 or 3.9%). The email was sent using Constant Contact, which costs us \$270 for one year; for that, we can send an unlimited number of emails to up to 2,500 contacts. It also allows us to track what happens to the emails (opened, bounced, forwarded, etc.).

Old Web Site

Munir has gained the ability and access to edit the old PeaceWorks website and is in the process of creating a resource area for region leaders and others to see some of the documents we have been creating and to help people understand the direction of

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PeaceWorks. The area can be viewed at <http://dancesofuniversalpeace.org/intnetwork.htm>. Board responds with gratitude: the revised pages are a great improvement.

Communications, Dues, Regions and other issues

Kabir, Allaudin and Munir have been conferencing on a variety of topics centering around how to carry forward process and policy in several areas: communications, dues collection and region relationships. They have been trying to define issues and presentation approaches, and are perhaps looking for the Board's endorsement to continue to move forward this way. They are proposing that Allaudin focalize the development of strategies in approaching the regions and SRI in requesting and presenting information. Allaudin cautions that they are still very early in the process. Board agrees that this is a good way to move forward.

Kabir had written, "I envisage a task group with a mandate to communicate with each region in an exploratory way toward clarifying and developing an effective working relationship with the international organization. A focus of this exploration will be the stewardship of information and dues for Leaders Guild members in the region. However, the conversation needs to be broader than that because the new organizational structure, which we have implemented further to the Unity Council recommendations, includes a different vision for the nature and focus of regional dance organizations. It is possible (likely?) that the change will not have been well understood by the leadership of the regions. Also, because the nature and focus of the international organization has also changed considerably, there is a need for communication and building understanding and support. I envisage the work of this task group as temporary, perhaps a year at the most, and that it will lay the groundwork for what will become the ongoing communication strategy."

A discussion ensued about whether Ruhaniat Dance leaders pay dues to Peaceworks. Halima feels there is some momentum in that direction; Darvesha adds that there are at least 30 who don't. Munir feels there needs to be some focus on education, perhaps with Shabda's participation and support. Shabda said at the fall 2009 Jamiat Khas that he hoped all Ruhaniat initiates would support the Dance network.

Administrative Committee Meeting

Darvesha and Kabir have been advising Munir on a range of topics. These include the need to put updated MTG and BOD on the current IN website (which Munir has begun); purging and modifying the database; and dues collection and issues associated with that.

Kabir comments that it has been useful to have people to bounce ideas off of and compare information with as they each have emails and information coming in from other sources, to share and develop into advice.

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Chilean Telecon

On February 15, Darvesha and Munir met via Skype with three leaders from South America about the new PW goals. We had intended more leaders to attend, but there was a problem connecting via Skype to FreeConferencing. (We need to improve our conference call plan with South America.) The leaders are eager to have more information in their language. Sylvia Murillo has been a great asset in translating information into Spanish.

Munir reports that every teleconference he has been on has been productive; people ask good questions. He is hoping to be on Skype teleconference call with the Australian leadership team in April, and Halima is working to set up a call with the Russians.

Annual Meeting

Munir asks Kabir if there is anything that the Board needs to know ahead of time about what will be covered in the annual meeting. Kabir lists the financial reports from 2009 and the election of officers as the two main topics for that meeting. Because this is not a membership organization, there is no one to report to: the idea of an annual meeting is a safeguard that a Board is meeting at least once a year, something this Board doesn't have to worry about.

Allaudin asks if there is a need to post the minutes from the annual meeting anywhere. It is not required, and the meetings are probably not interesting to many people, but it might be wise to post them on the website anyway. Munir offers to post the minutes on the web. Halima asks if the full minutes need to be posted ("the web is very very very public"), or just summaries. Kabir suggests that people think about this until the next meeting, adding that he likes the idea of posting the minutes rather than having to keep a file of them.

Next Meeting

Tuesday, 20 April; 5 p.m. Eastern time, telecon and annual meeting