

# Vancouver Island Vipassana Association

## Trust Meeting

**Date:** Sunday Sept. 20, 2015 **Location:** Dhamma Modana

The meeting immediately followed a one hour meditation session.

**Meeting Time:** 11 am.

Attendees:

**Facilitator:** Robert Baker **Secretary:** Kim Weaver

**Speakers' List:** Don **Timekeeper:** Steven

**Task List:** Kim

<b>Trust Members Present</b>	<b>Trustee Regrets</b>	<b>AT's Present</b>	<b>Friends of Trust</b>	<b>Trust Members Attending Remotely</b>
Robert Baker	Doug Cooper	Steven Armstrong	Harry Mensink	Greg Lundh
Kim Weaver	Rob Weaver	Evie Chauncey	Don Williams	(part of meet'g)
Carsten Hunter		Daniel Gomez	Carl Wolford	
Hope Funk		Jenny Jeffs		

**Quorum:** 4 of 6 of trust members in attendance

COMMITTEE	COORDINATOR	MEMBERS	A.T. ADVISOR
Operations	Steven	Arnis, Harry, Deb, Carl, Carsten, Kyle, Daniel, Don, Doug C & Doug C	Daniel
Outreach	Rob W	Harry, Doug, Robert	Steven
Finance	Hope		Evie
Website	Robert	Jim	Selina
Water	Carsten	Kyle, Carl, Arnis, Bill	Steven
Registration	Jim Swift	Judy	Daniel
3-Day Committee	Steven	Harry, Evie, Keith, Robert, Don, Kim, Deb, Hope, Jamie, Rob W.	Steven
Children's Committee	Elyena & Greg	Kim	Elyena & Greg
Landscaping Committee	Rob W	Don, Doug Cooper	Steven

## **Opening Formalities**

- Round of introductions/Attendance - Completed
- Review the agenda, add any needed items & prioritize – None to add.
- Set time for meeting & agenda items - None – more informal process today.
- Read trust meeting guidelines – Completed.

1. **Announcements:** None.
2. **Corrections and approval of past minutes:** Ongoing.
3. **Last Meeting's Tasks:**
  - Steve to talk to Jim regarding posting our courses to Dhamma Surahbi's website more visibly (ongoing).
  - Don – to price out shade cloth and an auger (ongoing).
4. **E-mail decisions made between meetings:** None.
5. **AT Report** – Nothing this month.
6. **Committee Reports:** (Some of the following reports can be viewed as attachments)

**a) Finance Report – Hope – Report Attached.**

**b) Three-day course – Steven – Nothing to report.**

**c) Outreach/Inreach** – New day sit and weekly group sit location required for Victoria from November 2015 onward. Steven is to meet with John Hunter Wednesday who has a local business in Victoria (physiotherapy business at Bay and Fernwood). There is a separate building in the back approx. size 12x16 for the group sit, and another site on the top floor of the building that may be a good space for the day sits. If the site isn't suitable for the day sits, then the Eastern Star (Fernwood) site may still be viable (John Waters).

\* Harry stated he would like to continue the Duncan day sits on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of each month. Victoria will do the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday, and Nanaimo can hold their day sits on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday.

**d) Water – Carsten** – met with Shane from Independent Pumps at the site – came up with a cost for a pump test, \$2,125.00 (24 hr test). Carsten to get additional quotes. Shane stated we also have to work with a hydrologist, which will be an additional \$2000. The quote charges are somewhat vague.

**Carl** – states the quote seems very high and wonders if we can get a description of all that is involved in the test, a breakdown of each step and what equipment is used, especially if we're doing it ourselves.

**Steve** – asked about the misconception/confusion around the pump flow at the upper pump. Registered at 5 gallons per minute.

**Evie** – Red Williams drilled the original well and said it had a 5 gallon per minute flow, but they suggested we get another quote. We went with BC Aquifer, who did a pump test that came in at 1.5 gallons per minute, but they didn't measure the depth of the well properly so are unsure if the 1.5 gallon per minute is accurate.

**Carsten** stated he understands from speaking to pump test companies that the optimal time to perform the test is by the middle of October.

**e) Web Site – Steven – Nothing to report**

**f) Children's C'ttee – Kim – Nothing to report.**

**g) Landscape Committee** – Don spoke about moving the young alder trees down by the bridge to a site near the meditation hall. Daniel and Don pulled most of the thistles along the road.

**h) Operations – Steven**

**Carl** – tomorrow (Sept. 21) work party is going to put a shingle roof over top of the existing roof. Shingles are good for 25 years. Keith, Ben and several other meditators have volunteered to re-do the roof. Steven said the group feels they can complete the task in half a day.

**Carl & Steven – other projects** – getting a tin roof over the last overhang, and fixing the leak around the trailer door frame.

**Steve** – talked about prepping for next year's 3 day courses, possibly building large tenting shelters for shade and windscreens. Little to no additional infrastructure development required for next year's 3 day courses beyond developing the tenting areas.

## **8. DISCUSSIONS AND NEW BUSINESS**

**a) Request to Purchase Logs** – Doug Child asked if he could purchase the logs laying on the Dhamma Modana site. Doug offered to pay some money for some of them. Unsure if they are rotten. Don stated Doug is wanting to sell firewood to make a little bit of money, and it's better for us to have the logs out of the way as well. Carl reminded us that a few years ago we tried to find someone to buy the logs, but were unable as those interested said they'd take the wood but wouldn't pay for it.

Evie had questions around liability: if Doug is injured while he is taking the wood, are we covered? Evie agreed to write an agreement with Doug around volunteering to clean up the wood from the Dhamma Modana site to limit our liability.

**Lunch – 12:30 pm. Reconvened at 1:30. Three-minute meditation.**

**b) Local Business Rezoning Application** – Daniel went to open house but wasn't clear on all the facts. Harry had a newspaper article that describes moving Sun Fest (20,000 + people for the weekend for camping, music and drinking) by the group that runs it to a site 2 km west of the Dhamma Modana site on Youbou Rd. The plan is to have one 3-day Sun Fest and other musical events as well. Open house held in Lake Cowichan by "Lake Town Ranch", and the town seems to be supportive as many feel it will pull a lot of people and money into town every year. Harry thinks the application will be accepted. Rezoning is required.

**Evie** said the developers need to finish their sound presentation and send it to the CVRD.

**Steven** said the presentation showed the developer wants to build 90 cabins, a sound stage with the amplifiers facing the mountain, which may bounce back to the Dhamma Modana site.

**Daniel** stated his concern is that when the zoning is changed, it will be not just for 4 days, but for the whole year. Daniel is concerned there will be many loud events over the summer and will change things for Dhamma Modana.

**Carl** stated he went to the CVRD and looked at the proposal, and confirmed the orientation of the amphitheatre is towards the mountain. Next public meeting September 28th in Lake Cowichan. In relation to Dhamma Modana site, there is a ridge and housing between us and the proposed site. Carl feels it's not the easiest thing to get rezoning, and many interests will be heard from, and limits may be imposed.

**Evie** stated she called the planner as well, and as soon as the sound report is done, it needs to go to CV Regional District Council and then a public hearing, and it may happen fairly quickly, within 4-5 months. When it is turned into a proposal we will be able to send our views in a letter. Evie wondered how many times a year people will want to attend festivals there.

**Carsten** said the article in the paper states the cabins and site could be used for a mountain bike festival, and symphony concerts, and feels it would be a really good idea to have a meeting with him.

**Steven** stated there is very little lake access from the proposed site so it might not be a very big draw other than the festival(s). Steven asked Greg (attending by phone) if he had any comments.

**Greg** said when he arrived at Dhamma Surabhi at 11 pm and heard loud music and thought it was nearby, and found out later it was a small music festival 5 km away with woods between; a little perspective. We're only 1.9 km away from the proposed site, and it's going to be much louder event. Probably 4 months of the summer it may be a very busy, noisy place.

Carsten said it may be worth suggesting a noise test be conducted prior to the rezoning approval.

**Daniel** feels that nothing is going to stop this developer. He owns the Tim Hortons in town, he's very charismatic, and once he gets the zoning he can do whatever he wants.

**Carl** said it's not the town that will make the decision, it's the CVRD.

**Daniel** - worst case scenario, the guy gets his zoning and does what he wants. Best case, he is denied. Daniel feels it will be something in between, and whether it will be good or bad for us it remains to be seen.

**Greg** Google-mapped the site and there are few residential properties between the proposed site and us – it's basically wilderness, or perhaps 3 houses on a loop road. Do we have anything to lose by waiting and seeing? Is there anything we can do about it now?

**Hope** stated she thinks it's still in the "what if" stage and so we can't really do anything yet.

**Steven** said he just wanted everyone to have the same information at this time.

**Carl** said many centres face these types of issues, as Dhamma Kunja faced with dirt bikers in the past.

**Evie** stated she thinks we should speak out at all the meetings we can.

**Steven** said we'll gather and share info as it becomes available.

**Evie** stated said issue hasn't reached CVRD Council yet.

**Hope** asked about a meeting with the developer. Steven suggested there may be no point until the rezoning is complete, and then request a meeting to ask his plan and let him know what we're doing here.

**Greg** – final word is that musical acts are booked a year in advance, and so developer has a huge interest in getting the zoning passed ASAP. He has acts booked for next year, and venue in Duncan has been ruled out.

### **c) Development Presentation, and d) Short Term & Long Term Plans for Dhamma Modana – Keith Tetlow – discuss plans to develop the centre.**

Septic Designer John Rowse came up to look at the property and suggest how we could proceed in a phased approach. What can we do with \$50,000 to \$100,000?

He suggested 2 different septic systems that are approx. \$50,000.

Treatment Plant - Type 3 system (\$50,000) or Type 1 system – (\$54,000) high efficiency system but less area, which would support course for 20 plus support staff.

Are we ready to get a bit more serious and start to move towards building?

**Robert** – if it is initially for 30 people, can it be expanded? If we upgrade, how much would it cost?

We could do 4 upgrades where each upgrade would cost the same as the initial input.

**Evie** spoke to how many people we need to be able to serve to make it viable, and her numbers looked like it would be 30-40.

Moving ahead, we need water and septic to be in place to hold any courses. The labour and the will may be there to get a start this spring, if we're going to go this way.

**Carl** – did some research a couple of years ago about pre-fab housing at a cost of about \$180,000 (for men and women's units in one building). He then spoke to a local concrete

supplier who quoted \$16 or \$18,000, so around \$200,000 for a prefab housing unit for residences, which Keith said was a good price per square foot just to give us an idea of what we can do with a certain amount of money.

**Evie** – 20 individual rooms at a total cost of \$44,000 - \$50,000, what would that look like? Keith replied 7 x 20 feet (including 4 foot hallways) which would cost up to \$100 - \$150 per sq. ft. with a certain amount of volunteer labour and efficiencies we might realize (which would allow us to build 1.5 rooms for \$50,000). We could build the units in a modular way to get the ball rolling so as more funds come in, we could move ahead with more modules, and the cost will go down as we become better/more efficient over time and realize more savings over time.

**Jenny** described rooms built at Dhamma Surabhi: For the portable classroom at Dhamma Surabhi, or for any building, if we have single rooms, approx. 7'x9' and a common bathroom, a 1000 sq. ft. building can fit 7 single rooms, plus hallway, bathroom, linen/student storage. We can build, without plumbing, for \$100/sq. ft. with mostly volunteer labour, up to \$150/sq. ft. if some bathroom included. This includes arch and engineering fees. So at \$100/sq ft accommodations for 7 students will likely cost at least \$100,000. Single 10x10 cabins are in the same \$100/sq ft cost range, I guess as there are more external walls. But we can't build cabins until we have a main building.

**Carl** said he feels the numbers are depressing, but he can think back to other centres he has been to that started with dormitory style housing and then once they can hold courses, the centre seems to takes off.

**Steven** – said the discussion is around “what can we build”? Well we can’t build anything without a septic system. We can’t really build even a proper dorm in order to hold a 10-day course, but maybe we can build some rooms, part of a bigger structure. It’s part of a thought process around how do we move forward and start holding larger/longer courses? Maybe this is a way to get things done.

**Daniel** – if you are talking about a course for 20 students, you need beds for 20 students. One or 2 rooms, with 18 others in tents, wouldn’t work.

**Keith** said 2 units doesn’t make sense to him, he’d prefer 10. And there are many mature students on the Island (who would prefer single rooms) and single rooms makes more sense to him rather than a dorm style building.

**Robert** – can the current kitchen provide food for 20?

**Keith** – that would be the next area of expansion.

**Carl** – We could make a building that is the shell, use some of it as single rooms and some as dorm, with ability to change the interior spaces within the shell as we develop and our needs change (and our income changes).

**Evie** – could we fit 4 septic modules on our site? **Keith** – Yes.

For the money, we could build 2 single rooms and then where do we put 18 students? To build single room accommodation, each with their own bath for 20 students, it would cost \$400,000 which isn’t feasible. This means we look at something more like a dorm as Carl describes, which would then start to take away from the quality of experience that Steven was describing. How do we move forward, and how much would Keith charge?

Keith said he’d charge a “minor fee” that he may give back as Dana, approx. \$1,000 and \$2,000 with a proposal of how to proceed, possibly with 3 options with real numbers.

**Jenny** – spoke about different options explored at Dhamma Surabhi without bathrooms in each room, (cabins - \$7000 -\$10,000 per each – all volunteer labour) that provides options that is part of a phased in approach.

**Evie** – our zoning won’t approve small cabins.

**Kim** – moving ahead with improvements/septic/water seems like a good idea, whether we decide to proceed with meditation centre or sell with improvements if the festival site down the road becomes a bigger problem.

**Carl** – the way it is zoned, who would want to buy?

**Evie** – site is split into 2 lots, lower and upper. If we flipped the split, left to right, would make it more salable.

**Keith** – Is there an Action item from this meeting?

**Steven** – this meeting was mostly to give people an idea of where we can go. We have a limited budget, but not sure if we have a time line. Keith may be available in the spring to start moving forward, so information is timely.

**Keith** – is there a building committee?

**Steven** said yes, inactive for a while. Keith suggested it would be good to restart committee.

**Steven** – pretty major commitment to volunteer for a building committee as things start to move, it requires a lot of time. Requires dedication from a number of people.

**Greg** – are we closing the door to looking elsewhere to finding a site with buildings that's ready to go? Greg sent a link to a farm currently for sale in Shawnigan Lake as an example, ready to hold courses (although zoning and septic are uncertainties at this time).

**Robert** – it takes a huge number of people and person hours to build a centre, and when only a couple of people put their hand up to be part of the Building Committee, he doesn't see the energy in the room to start building. Robert would prefer to hold our 3 day courses next summer and see how the festival(s) next summer affects us. Round the room?

**Evie** – would like to proceed with water and septic, and see what a couple thousand dollars of Keith's report would give us – numbers to build are still daunting to her.

**Linda** – likes to see things moving forward, but understands Robert's view. Would like to see how we can proceed step by step. There were very few volunteers offering to help at this year's 3 day courses, and that doesn't feel like a good sign. Need to gather enthusiasm.

**Hope** – uncertain about moving ahead even with septic and water until we know about summer festivals, although there is a thought that we wouldn't lose money if we go ahead with the development of those things.

**Jamie** – when she sat the 3 day course she noted music from bar down the road (other students noticed it too, and were talking about it), it was noisy and caused her to wonder how the village will grow "out" over the years (and how it will affect the Dhamma Modana site).

**Jenny** - Waiting to hear about Sun Fest, but also a "shot in the arm" to hear about the possibility of holding 10 day courses, so want to see what steps we need to take, what energy there is, and let it flow that way. Yes, it's a lot of work, done by a few people, but the demand for courses keeps increasing, and so new people may come along.

**Don** – feels we should hold off until we talk to the developer, perhaps get the septic and water going, but no buildings. Keep holding 3 day courses. Our core group is pretty small and not much of a group to start a building committee.

**Harry** – wait for the decision on the festival site, meet again to make a decision. Would be good to have a bit more concrete plan, with how we can move ahead, it may be easier to attract more people with experience to join the Building Committee.

**Carsten** – agrees with Harry about moving forward with a plan and that generating energy and excitement, and potentially bringing in more dana and people with enthusiasm. Carsten said hearing Keith's proposal and ideas was stimulating for him, and would like to proceed with septic and water, which would increase the value of the land, regardless. Making plans and moving forward.

**Carl** – thinks we should speak to real estate agent that helped us buy this piece of land to see if she thinks from a financial perspective what any changes to the site would make. And as to a lack of energy to proceed with a Building Committee and building the centre, he remembers when it was time to build the Dhamma Hall, it looked like it was going to be only Carl & Harry. But when it came time to actually build (thanks to Robert & Evie phoning around), there were 28 different people involved at various times. Carl has the sense if we kept our building plans

smaller, the energy will come together, time wise and energy wise. Carl likes the idea of providing better shelter, sun shelter for students, for next summer's 3 day courses.

**Daniel** – so many issues. He is on the fence about doing the septic as he can see it from 2 points of view. Yes, it would generate energy, not too much money, but he doesn't see it as an appropriate gain for the investment. A buyer may not see the value in it. Secondly, we've been working hard on our centre, but we don't have much to show for it. It's not growing very fast as there is no money. At many other centres, they bought property with buildings, and as soon as you have that, you can start doing courses. It's fantastic. It's not that we have done anything wrong, but maybe we should revisit the idea of having property with something built. This will also take a lot of energy. It's a long process, possibly 2, 3, 5 years. But maybe we're at that point.

**Steven** – It's like a puzzle. It's important to have not only a committed Building Committee, but also a willingness to want to see it through. Dorms are a hard environment to meditate in. It's not the best environment in his opinion. He wanted to try something a bit different (a "better quality" experience for meditators). And if the energy isn't here at this time, maybe it will be in the spring. Like a puzzle, figuring out what we can do. We could plan to hold 3 day courses next year, see what the development next door looks like, and also look at how we might move ahead with building.

**Keith** – likes to build things, but not necessarily in favor of building here. He has been watching the Centre develop for 3 years, and doesn't feel like there's quite enough energy to move ahead with a big project. Better to break it down into smaller pieces that would allow those with energy something to work on/give dana towards. Lots to consider, including getting property valued by a realtor.

**Greg** – suggests rather than asking the realtor that sold us the site, ask a local Lake Cowichan realtor about the value of the property. Also would like to echo what Daniel said. Logical thing would be to wait until the zoning on the neighbouring property is changed, talk to the developer, then meet to again to discuss the options.

**Doug** provided comments prior to the meeting and said he would be more interested in selling the current site and buying something ready-made somewhere else.

**Robert** - stated from what he heard around the room, we would wait to hear how the rezoning process goes on the adjacent property, and speak to the developer at that point to hear more about his plans and to educate him on what we are hoping to do with our site. We can also proceed with next steps towards moving the water ahead, but not proceeding with septic until we speak to a Realtor about the value in adding septic if we then decide to sell the site.

## **9. DECISIONS OF THE TRUST** – None.

## **10. TASK LIST**

- \* Steven to contact John Waters regarding Victoria Day Sits if site at Bay/Fernwood isn't suitable.
- \* Carsten to get additional pump test quotes, and to request a more detailed quote from Independent Pumps. Also to check whether the pump test is required to be 12 or 24 hours.
- \* Carsten to send out an email to Trust to get assistance with phone calls to follow up with pump test quotes and complete test by mid-October.
- \* Evie to write up an agreement for Doug Childs around "volunteering" to clean up the wood from the Dhamma Modana site, and ensure he is wearing safety equipment.
- \* Daniel will check with Kyle to see if the logs placed on site by Kyle were placed there for a specific reason or purpose.

- \* Keith – forward septic estimates to Trust members.
- \* Evie – talk to Elizabeth (real estate) and Lake Cowichan real estate agent about financial implications of water/septic versus no improvements and value of land.
- \* Keith – talk to John Rowse to find out cost to install septic system for large family home on this property.
- \* Evie – call CVRD Main Planner to see where redevelopment proposal is at and report to the Trust.

**11. Review New Tasks** – Completed.

**12. Evaluation of Meeting** – Completed.

**13. Future Meeting:** Next Trust meeting Sunday, Nov. 15th – 10:00 am, meeting at 11 am.

**14. Meditation** (3 minutes)

**Meeting adjourned at pm.**

**Metta.**

## **VIVA TREASURER'S FINANCIAL REPORT**

**September 20, 2015**

### **VanCity Balances (September 19, 2015)**

Membership shares	68.55
Community Service Accounts 1 & 2	<u>67,922.06</u>
<b>Current Bank Total</b>	<b>\$67,990.61</b>

### **Year to Date Revenue (September 19, 2015)**

Dana as of July 19 Trust Meeting	\$21,091.00
Dana since July 19 Trust Meeting	<u>5,107.00</u>
(Day Sitting/Between Course/Monthly)	
<b>Total Year to Date Dana</b>	<b>\$26,198.00</b>

### **Major Expenses since July 19, 2015 Trust Meeting**

Outreach (postcards, etc.)	298.00
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### **Monthly Dana Totals as at July 19, 2015 (previous Trust meeting)**

<b># of Old Students</b>	<b>Total Monthly Dana</b>
10 Visa	510.00
24 Auto Debit	1043.00
2 Canada Helps	258.00
<b>36 Students</b>	<b>\$1,811.00</b>

### **Current Dana Totals as at September 19, 2015**

<b># of Old Students</b>	<b>Total Monthly Dana</b>
10 Visa	510.00
26 Auto Debit	1064.00
2 Canada Helps	258.00
<b>38 Students</b>	<b>\$1,832.00</b>