

Chado Urasenke Tankokai Philadelphia: Executive Board Meeting | MINUTES

April 23, 2022 (Saturday) | Zoom

Meeting called by Frank Chance
Facilitator Frank Chance
Note taker Morgan Beard

Attendees:

Frank Chance, Morgan Beard, Brandon Forsht,
Drew Hanson, Sachiko Houck, Taiko Ruf, Keijiroh
Yamaguchi, Yuka Yokoyama

Absent: none

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m.

The agenda was adopted by consensus with some changes.

AGENDA TOPIC: Minutes Approval

Minutes approval: The minutes from the meetings of 3/20/22 were approved with no changes.

AGENDA TOPIC: Chanoyu Scholarship in English

Drew Hanson recommended two sources for scholarship on chanoyu in English:

Dr. Morgan Pitelka is an expert of tea culture, in particular ceramics. In particular, Drew recommended three books:

- Spectacular Accumulation: Material Culture, Tokugawa Ieyasu and Samurai Sociability
- Japanese Tea Culture: Art, History, and Practice
- Handmade Culture: Raku Potters, Patrons, and Practitioners in Japan

The other person is Professor Allen Palmer, who teaches in the Urasenke tradition in Boston. Last fall he did a series of lectures on tea-related topics, and has begun writing about his observations on the website Chanoyu Decoded (www.chanoyudecoded.com), where it's posted for free for anyone who would like to read it.

AGENDA TOPIC – Dogu at Shofuso

Drew gone to Shofuso to collect some dogu that he had lent for the purpose of study. There was a mizusashi and two chawans that he is still missing, and asked everyone to let him know if they see them.

Also, he noted that with the construction happening at the Sakura Pavilion, there is the potential for the mats to get dirty or damage. He suggested that the mats be moved to King of Prussia; there was general agreement that that was a good idea.

Action items

Person responsible Deadline

Move association tatami mats from Sakura Pavilion to King of Prussia	No one assigned	None
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OTHER TOPIC – Drew and Shofuso

Drew detailed a situation where he had not been included in communications from Yuka about tea lessons in the fall at Shofuso. He later discovered that there had been accusations that he had been abusive toward the staff, and he asked Yuka to explain.

Yuka said that Shofuso has been working to improve its working culture across the organization. She didn't feel it was appropriate to discuss specific incidents, since the people involved no longer worked for the organization.

There was an extensive discussion of this situation. In conclusion, Frank said that while it's not the Tankokai's role to adjudicate individual disputes, it might be beneficial to have a process by which complaints like this can be discussed between the two organizations.

AGENDA TOPIC – Changes at Shofuso

Kim Andrews has resigned from her position as the Executive Director of the Japan America Society of Greater Philadelphia. She will work through the end of April, and then a process will begin to find a new director. There will probably be an interim director.

Urasenke Philadelphia will continue to work with staff members at Shofuso as an organization. For activities at Shofuso, we can work directly with site manager Candace; Yuka expressed that she would rather not being the contact for things that affect the house.

As a member of the JASGP board, Frank said he was happy to answer any questions about the transition that we might have.

The JASGP is revisiting its relationship with other Japanese groups as well. Yuka is working with the Please Touch Museum on Asian Heritage month activities such as tea demonstrations, origami demonstrations, and so on. She is hoping to explore other ways to work with them as well.

AGENDA TOPIC – Hiring an Accountant

Following up on action items from previous meetings, prior to this meeting Morgan had consulted with an accountant about how to handle payments made to demonstrators. The accountant said that we can only treat an expense as reimbursable if we get a receipt for that amount; if we are also reimbursing the demonstrator for their time in making the sweets (as with a per-piece amount), then it would be considered a fee, and we should issue the demonstrator a 1099.

That information was sent prior to the meeting via e-mail. At the meeting itself, Morgan asked if the board wanted to go forward with hiring an accountant to handle the paperwork.

There was discussion of various options. In the end, it was agreed that rather than reimbursements would be given only for expenses where we have receipts, so that we don't have to issue 1099s.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Write up the policy for reimbursing demonstration expenses	Drew Hanson	No deadline given

AGENDA TOPIC – Membership Survey

Frank updated the membership survey as discussed in the previous meeting and shared his screen so board members could review it.

Keijiroh asked if it would be sent to current members or past members as well. It was agreed that it should go to recent members, but for people whose membership had lapsed a longer time before, there should be a separate survey. Keijiroh will send his suggestions for questions for the past member survey.

Taiko suggested also surveying past members about their experience with tea classes. She will send her suggestions for questions about that.

The board reviewed the survey, including an extensive discussion of how to handle to membership question. There were tweaks made to that question and some other aspects of the survey.

Frank will work on those questions and send out the revised survey to board members in next few days. Frank will also work on exit survey for members who have left us.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Update membership survey	Frank	Before next meeting
Put together past member survey	Frank	Before next meeting

AGENDA TOPIC – International Tea Bowl Exhibition

There had been a question sent via e-mail about whether we would be willing to be listed as a co-sponsor for an upcoming exhibition of tea bowls at the Wallingford Community Arts Center. The exhibition will take place in 2023 and go on for about a month. They have asked Frank to give a lecture on ceramics, and we will also be presenting a tea demonstration at the venue.

It was agreed that if they are not asking for financial support, there was no objection to being listed as a co-sponsor of the event.

Keijiroh mentioned that they are discussing building a tea room in the gallery, modeled on the room shown here: <https://www.millieme.jp/business/assemble.html>. However, he will seek prices for someone in the US to build it, because the cost would be prohibitive to ship.

AGENDA TOPIC – Other Business

Morgan reported that a former student from La Salle has been in touch, looking for a place to donate her tea utensils. The student did not give details, but is due to visit the area in June, and we should get more details then.

Frank is talking to an outside consultant on nonprofit management next week. They are from the La Salle Nonprofit Center, and we will probably need to become a member of that organization in order to receive advice.

AGENDA TOPIC – Next Meeting date/time

Because several members had to leave early because of other commitments, Frank said he would send a survey out to determine the next meeting date.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:57 p.m.