

Board Meeting minutes

Location: Virtual - Zoom

Date: 7/19/22

Attendees: Frank, Brandon, Morgan, Drew, Keijiroh, Sachiko, Taiko, Yuka

Time: 6:30pm – Meeting called to order 6:40pm

Agenda items

- 1) Approval of Agenda
 - a) Approved unanimously
- 2) Approval of previous meeting minutes
 - a) Approved unanimously
- 3) Membership survey (Frank)
 - a) Results
 - i) Only one former member completed survey and twelve current members completed survey
 - ii) Suggested improvements/new activities
 - (1) Lectures and discussion groups
 - (2) Additional tea gatherings
 - (3) Local pottery/kiln tours
 - (4) Member only events
 - (5) Newsletter
 - (6) Possible discounts on tea
 - (7) Visits to New York City
 - (8) Online/virtual events
 - (9) A few members suggested term limits
 - iii) Fee Structure
 - (1) A small increase in fee was acceptable to most members
 - (2) Only 1/3 of respondents were interested in modifying the membership structure
 - b) Next Steps
 - i) Sachiko mentioned that 2 members said they didn't get the survey

- ii) Morgan suggested an email reminder
- iii) Frank will send a reminder to former members
- iv) The issue was raised as to what we will do with the survey results
 - (1) Sachiko – it will be used to improve the organization
 - (2) Drew – What does improvement mean, how are we defining it and measuring it
 - (3) Keijiroh – survey is to find areas for improvement
 - (4) Frank – survey is to collect ideas from members
 - (5) Morgan – survey is good way to gauge members needs and get new ideas, especially important post-pandemic. It seems the survey shows the members want more of an internal focus on furthering the students studies
- v) Need for Consultant
 - (1) Frank – first we need to determine what our needs are and what the consultant would be focusing on in order to find the right type of consultant. Without a general focus a consultant would likely want to start with a strategic plan
 - (2) Drew – In agreement with Frank, do we know what we want to ask/achieve with the consultant or do we want to give the consultant free range
 - (3) Sachiko – would like to see the consultant focus on fundraising and PR, help us adapt to the changing times, and to improve the organization, as she feels the organization is not functioning well, as the bylaws need to be revised, but that is still a work in progress.
 - (4) Morgan – we need to determine objectives and find a way to get there. Do we need a consultant for that?
 - (5) Keijiroh – We need to review the Roles and Responsibilities
 - (a) It was pointed out that this was recently addressed
 - (6) Morgan – We need to focus on concrete objectives
 - (a) Example – to increase membership
 - (i) Determine who should be the lead, and how should we accomplish the goal
 - (ii) Our needs have changed and instead of focusing on the roles of individual officers, it would be more productive to start with a set of priorities and figure

(iii) out how to best achieve them.

(7) Sachiko – we need to address the changes mentioned in the survey, especially regarding the issue of married couples serving on the Board at the same time. A discussion followed regarding the motivation behind raising this issue. No resolution was reached.

4) Demonstration Procedures Document (Drew)

- a) This is only for demonstrations outside of our work with Shofuso
- b) Points 1-7 in the draft document are the existing procedure, while #8 is an alternative where the Tankokai takes responsibility, and the individual demonstrator is not involved with the money/negotiations etc
- c) Keijiroh – how many demos are done through the Tankokai
 - i) Morgan – in the past it was quite a few, but since 2013 it has the number has declined
 - ii) Keijiroh to Morgan – how many requests come in per year
 - (1) Morgan – in the past About 12
 - (2) Sachiko – now about 3 per year
 - (3) Drew – during my chairmanship it was about 6 per year
- d) Keijiroh – would like to add a suggestion to donate part of fee to the organization or perhaps say “encourage”
- e) Drew – this doesn't belong in a formal policy document, even if it is a practice many follow as it sounds too much like a quid-pro-quo – you get to do demonstrations that were arranged by the Tankokai, but only if you give some of the money back to the organization. If a person doesn't choose to do this, will they be assigned fewer demonstrations?
- f) Frank - all donations should be a personal choice, not part of a formal policy
- g) Keijiroh asks the question again
 - i) Frank – there could be possible legal implications and that is the reason it should not be part of formal policy document
 - ii) Drew in agreement with Frank, everyone knows they can donate money to the organization, but when it is policy, it takes on a different meaning. Donations always need to be at the person's own discretion
- h) Frank – asks for a motion to approve policy as written

- i) Brandon makes the motion to approve
- ii) Morgan seconds the motion to approve
- iii) Motion adopted after no further objections were made
- i) Keijiroh – asked for clarification on if this policy is to cover demonstrations arranged by Shofuso, but not on site.
 - i) Brandon – Ok let's replace "at Shofuso" to "including Shofuso sponsored events"
 - (1) All in agreement/approved by consensus

5) Committee/Business Updates

a) Demonstration Committee (Sachiko)

- i) July Shofuso demonstrations were both sold out, and many guest had questions about the tea ceremony, no public demos for August
- ii) The 1st Thurs attendance has been increasing. There is also interest in a kimono dressing demo
- iii) Upcoming – Sept 22nd -23rd Pa Tea Festival and Thomas Jefferson event in the fall

b) Events Committee (Morgan)

- i) Invitations have been sent and the link is on the website's calendar, invitation going out to former members and other associations soon
- ii) Sequence of events will be similar to the inaugural celebration, tea will be presented and served along with appetizers during the reception, followed by dinner along with a few select speakers
- iii) Using Misonodana or tatami? General consensus was for tatami as the association does not have a good misonodana and they are rather costly
 - (1) Drew to Sachiko – will you need the tatami for the Tea Festival, Sachiko replied they will not be using them for the event
 - (2) Keijiroh – who are the special guests? Morgan – they are teachers from NYC, DC, and JASGP, Drew – We are basing this off of invitees for the inaugural event, Keijiroh – I have other names to add to the list. Frank – be sure to have Denis Morikawa (honorary consulate) Drew – he is already on the list

c) Collections Committee (Frank/Morgan)

- i) Dogu Donation – Morgan received a donation of tea related items from a former student (LaSalle) as she is moving and downsizing,

Morgan suggested that items not needed for association could be part of “tea swap” event Keijiroh seconded this idea. Sachiko asked where the items are now and where will they all go. Morgan has the items currently, and they can join the other items in storage as KOP

- ii) Sachiko asked if Drew was interested in using any for his classes, he declined
 - iii) With no objection the donation was accepted, and Frank will follow up with a Thank you letter/note
- d) Admin – Questions on financials (Morgan)
- i) Actual figures have been updated, Morgan mentioned the costs of credit card processing and PayPal payments, because of Morgan is suggesting using Zeffy going forward as it is intended for nonprofit organizations and the fees are on a pay what you like basis. Zeffy also has membership management features and could be used to replace the current service, Join it. Zeffy has the same functions such as sending renewal reminders but has other added benefits

6) Old Business – Discussed above, nothing else to report

7) New Business

a) Frank and Keijiroh had a discussion with JASGP regarding our relationship with the organization. All agreed that we need to develop a letter of understanding to clarify the relationship. This would cover all tea events/demonstrations etc that are held in conjunction with JASGP/Shofuso. Clarification all needs to be made on how problems between the two groups would be resolved. As of now JASGP is not interested in weekend lessons (citing increased attendance) but may offer weekday evening classes

b) Keijiroh reported on the Wallingford Tea Exhibition and their intention to purchase a Tea room kit for an eight-matt room. He suggested that if the organization were to make some financial contribution, we would have access to the room for special events. Everyone agreed that we needed more details regarding this before making any decisions

8) Next Meeting Date: Friday September 2nd at 6:30

Action Items	Owner(s)	Deadline	Status
Email reminder for survey	Morgan/Frank		
Thank you for dogu donation	Frank		