

Chado Urasenke Tankokai Philadelphia: Executive Board Meeting | MINUTES

February 20, 2022 (Sunday) | 6:40 pm – 8:35 pm | Zoom

Meeting called by	Frank Chance	Attendees:
Facilitator	Frank Chance	Frank Chance, Morgan Beard, Brandon Forsht, Drew Hanson, Sachiko Houck, Taiko Ruf, Keijiroh Yamaguchi, Yuka Yokoyama
Note taker	Morgan Beard	Absent: none

AGENDA TOPIC: Minutes Approval

Minutes approval: The minutes from the meetings of 1/13/2021 and 8/15/2021 were approved.

AGENDA TOPIC: Follow-up from the Annual Meeting

Regarding the changes to the bylaws that were discussed at the Annual Meeting, Frank suggested that the Bylaws Committee convene to address the points that were made. Since we said at the Annual Meeting that we would invite members to be involved in the process, Morgan will send an invitation to all members and ask them to respond if they are interested in attending; a draft will go to board members for review before it goes out to all members. (Later in the meeting, a date was set for the meeting that would be the effective deadline to respond.)

On membership changes, Keijiroh suggested that we send a survey out to members to find out what they think, not only about membership structure and fees but also the best way to organize demonstrations and fees, bylaw and organizational changes, and so on.

There was some discussion of how to structure the survey and what kind of follow-up would be best. The thought was we could include a question about whether the person is willing to share more thoughts and then we can send those people a follow-up survey as needed.

Frank volunteered to look into survey software and to begin putting questions together.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Invite members to attend Bylaw Committee meeting / participate in the development process.	Morgan Beard	March 1
Begin developing member survey questions; look into survey software	Frank Chance	Prior to next meeting

AGENDA TOPIC – Membership Benefits

Sachiko has been thinking about how to offer more benefits to our members, and proposed the following benefits:

- Translated articles from Japanese-language tea publications
- A 20% discount on matcha from Koyamaen
- Shofuso has agreed to allow Tankokai members have some of the benefits as Shofuso members, specifically a limited number of free admissions to the house during the year, and also free admission to Thursday member nights.
- Use of the association’s utensils for tea study or demonstrations

Keijiroh clarified that the translations of articles would only be summaries, because otherwise we could run into issues with copyright. Frank offered to help him with the editing of the articles.

Sachiko said that in order to ensure that Shofuso receives updated membership lists, she would like to be in charge of the membership program. After some discussion, it was thought that Morgan and Shoko could supply the needed lists as long as they knew who to send them to and how often.

Sachiko pointed out that the membership list on the shared Google Drive folder hasn’t been updated in quite some time, and expressed that the board needs to have an online list that is always up to date, including adding new members and renewals as soon as they come in. Morgan explained that we are currently in the middle of membership renewals, but once we have an updated list it can be uploaded and updates added as they come in.

There was some discussion of how the exchange of membership benefits with Shofuso would work. For free access, members will receive a code that they can enter when registering for a timed entry (which everyone has to do regardless of membership status); Shofuso will also need to have an updated membership list so that they can have those individuals’ names in their database.

Taiko asked if the benefits would include free access to monthly demonstrations; Yuka confirmed that they would not.

Taiko also pointed out that the Outreach Task Force’s update report (distributed separately that day) said that one of the things the OTF is working on is membership benefits. She asked Sachiko if she was working with the OTF on this effort? Sachiko said that she was.

Next steps: The question of what kind of benefits members would like would make a good question for the membership survey. It needs to be clarified whether the OTF is developing proposed benefits and making a recommendation to the board, or if these are the recommendations that the board is considering for final implementation.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Create online member list for board to access	Morgan Beard	Once final renewals are in
Add membership benefits to member survey	Frank Chance / all	Before survey launches

AGENDA TOPIC – Demonstration Fees and Expenses

There was an extensive discussion of how to handle demonstration fees. On one hand, there was a concern that we could get into trouble with the IRS if payments to members or others aren't properly documented. On the other hand were concerns that if demonstrators were not giving a portion of their funds to the Tankokai that the association would be unable to make money.

The consensus was that we needed to consult a financial professional, and if they said we needed to treat demonstrators as contractors when they're receiving funds from the association, then that is what we would do.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Find a CPA or other financial professional to consult on tax issues	Morgan	Before next meeting

AGENDA TOPIC – Events in 2022

Morgan reported that planning for the 10th anniversary in September is ongoing and invited anyone who wants to participate to do so.

She suggested putting together some members-only events as an additional benefit for members of the organization. There was general enthusiasm for a lecture series of the type that Keijiroh used to organize,

with experts on different topics coming in. This could be an “exchange” benefit with Shofuso that is extended to JASGP members also.

Morgan also suggested putting together member gatherings for Tanabata and Otsukimi, if pandemic conditions allow. More discussion is to follow.

AGENDA TOPIC – Cherry Blossom Festival

The Cherry Blossom Festival in 2022 is going to be a three-day event from April 8-10. There will not be vendors, but will be concerts, including nighttime concerts in the park under illuminated cherry trees. The festival will reflect a new strategic focus for Shofuso on promoting cross-relations between the Japanese-American and African-American community.

We won’t be able to do tea ceremony because of health restrictions, but there will be people picnicking outside and we could unofficially have tea there.

AGENDA TOPIC – Administrative & Other Updates

Update on outside consultant: Frank will work on finding someone for the next meeting.

Membership: Morgan reported that as of the date of the meeting, we had 22 renewals, and we expect that there will be more before the renewal period ended.

Prior to the meeting, she had inserted year-to-date actuals into the 2022 budget as approved at the Annual Meeting. She invited questions, either at the meeting or after. There were no questions, but Drew said that he had reviewed the numbers and they looked good to him.

Morgan also reported that she had sent the requested membership list update to Kyoto and would send the activity report and any needed supporting documents as soon as feasible.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Work on finding outside consultant	Frank	Before next meeting
Send activity report to Kyoto	Morgan	Before next meeting

AGENDA TOPIC – Next Meeting date/time

The date for the Bylaw Committee meeting was set for March 13 at 6:30.

The date for the next board meeting was set for March 20 at 6:30.