

**Minutes of SoA Board Meeting
Friday, January 16th, 2009**

In attendance:

In person in San Francisco:

Ito, Connie, Shin, Byron

By Skype:

Michael, David, Mary, Stephen

Rob will receive these minutes.

TOPICS COVERED:

SoA General Membership meeting:

Connie volunteered to moderate and Byron to take notes for the SoA General Membership meeting on Saturday during the Pac Shin Kangeiko. Rob Kedoin will show the rough-cut of the October film, and elicit feedback. The rest of the meeting is an open forum with no agenda, to brainstorm about the future of SoA--what it is doing, what it could be doing, directions for the future from our membership.

Review of financials:

Mary suggested we thank Sandra. Connie volunteered to lead a standing "O" at Kangeiko. [FYI from Stephen for Mary and Byron: we did thank Sandra and Connie more tangibly with cards and presents last year in January. SB]

Mary asked about the software for tracking SoA financials. The spreadsheets were sent in Excel, but Stephen thinks these are exports from an ACT! Database. Mary will find out from Sandra whether she can get the copy of ACT! from Sandra. [FYI from Stephen: SoA might have purchased this software, and if Sandra un-installs it, then it might be legally re-installed on Mary's machine, but you will have to verify this with Sandra. It may be her personal or business copy as Connie suggested. SB]

There was no other discussion of the financials for 2008.

NTC Travel Request:

Mary asked about the history of the request. Shin provided a history. SoA has been approving this grant for the last five years. The purpose is to help NTC Instructors attend workshops in other regions. This also benefits the regions, both in increased attendance and in the knowledge transfer that occurs. In 2007 because of the International, the amount was increased to \$1300, of which NTC spent \$1200.

The \$500 amount was proposed and unanimously accepted.

Database Update:

The database is in the Beta testing stage. Four volunteers [Robin Hathaway, Pac Shin and Southwest Shintaido, Carole Brouillette, Canada, Lee Seaman or a surrogate, Northwest Shintaido, and Kelly Gillen, Shintaido Northeast,] have been contacted, and have submitted email pledges of confidentiality. They will be send the URL and username/password to enter the database, and a Quick Reference Guide written by Stephen.

The Board acknowledged the hard work by Rob Kedoin to bring this project to completion. Once the Beta testing period is passed, we can make an announcement to the general membership to send changes to their information to the volunteer updaters. Rob and Stephen will continue to work on the database and add new functionality.

Website Changes:

Mary suggested we do the website changes in parallel with the October video. Use stills from the video, and post a link to the video. David confirmed that all this was technically possible. It was suggested we could wait until the video was done. Byron pointed out that we are not limited to the video and could work on them in parallel, and not confine ourselves just to images from the video. There are lots of available pictures, including the list that Mary sent in her "opening web page reflections" email that was attached to the agenda for the meeting.

David asked Mary what was the feeling or idea she was looking to convey, and whether she was talking only about the home page or the whole website. Mary said that initially she is talking only about the home page but that changes there could be a model for the rest of the site.

[Editorial comment from Stephen: the email contains this passage:

"What makes us different? A few thoughts come to mind:

- 1) We focus on opening ourselves.
- 2) We celebrate the opportunity to be outdoors and shed the trappings of other parts of society.
- 3) We, as a discipline, are accessible to everyone which is a huge strength; it's rare!"

These qualities are all also exhibited in the video. SB]

Shin asked if we were talking about just changing images or also text. David thought probably both, so the website more generally reflects who we are, what we do. Shin suggested Mary could be part of a team that made changes, added video and pictures, and then showed them to the whole Board.

Consensus was that the "capture' feeling of the front page, what keeps people on the site and makes them explore further, is what needs changing, at least for starters.

Mary suggested looking at the structure of the organization and Shintaido publications, and having there be a common face that we present to the outside audience. David pointed out that with the discussion we have been having about aligning the website and video, we are already moving in that direction.

David made a motion that the sub-committee be Mary and Rob as Webmaster. After some discussion, David and Byron were also added to the subcommittee, to develop a rough draft version of the revised home page to show to the Board. The motion was approved unanimously, subject to Rob reading and approving of a decision affecting him that was made in his absence.

Postcard/Fundraiser:

Mary suggested we could set up a Google doc like the "future structure of SoA" doc to track changes and ideas ?and who contacted?

It was suggested and generally agreed that to save money we should do email contact first. Both Mary and Connie said that personalizing these contacts gives them the best chance to succeed confirmed it. Connie volunteered to contact Tomi about how she did the last one for Pac Shin.

David asked if this initiative also involved contacting people whose membership has lapsed and asking them if they wanted to rejoin. Connie answered that she already did this by letter and email, and cited several examples of people who had come back to the organization or joined for the first time. This new idea is strictly a fundraiser, the Heritage fund idea. Byron suggested that this needs to happen at the regional level.

Mary was asked if this was something that she would like to spearhead. She answered that she may volunteer to be Treasurer if no one else comes forward during Pac Shin Kangeiko, but that she could not do both. The decision on a leader for this initiative was tabled for the future.

October Video:

Connie and Ito have not yet seen it. Stephen has provided David with several emails of suggestions. Byron liked the music and the overall feel. Byron mentioned that the color was off in certain shots, and David confirmed that the color correction process is not yet complete.

Byron said that the shots of Shin's hands bothered him, and suggested that a shot of Shin's face first would help. David agreed and will make that change.

Shin suggested the need for a narrator at the beginning and end. David asked if title cards (text) would be an adequate substitute. Stephen suggested that this is a stylistic choice and would result in two very different videos, depending on whether or not a narrator is used. David will take this one under advisement.

Shin mentioned a scene where the voice is from indoors and the visual is outdoors, that he found odd. David agreed and will address this change.

Byron liked the segments of Margaret talking. Mary and Stephen both found the video "wonderful". We will get more comments at Pac Shin and SNE Kangeikos from viewings there by the general membership, and then David will complete the video.

Future Structure of SoA:

David hasn't looked at the doc for a couple of weeks as he focused on the video. Mary added some things in early January. Mary suggested categorizing the ideas. Connie found it difficult to do strategic planning online, and prefers the face to face process. The visual unification of our materials is the most useful thing that has come out of the discussions. Mary likes having a common place to have and see input, to build toward a 1-3-5 year plan, and as something different from the minutes.

It was generally agreed without a vote that we need more input and more discussion before proposing to do anything.

New SoA Board Member:

Rob Gaston was approved as a new SoA Board Member to replace Connie. He will be an interim member until the next slate of Board of Directors is put forward in January 2010. [Note: Stephen sent an email to Rob and the Board. SB]

Support for Shintaido Farm:

At Ito's suggestion, the Board spent the last few minutes of the meeting discussing ways in which SoA could support the Shintaido Farm, and not lose this valuable property. Stephen announced that he had a new job as today, and recused himself from the rest of the discussion.

Byron asked for a write-up of the Farm, what it does, and what it needs. David suggested looking at the Farm website, and Stephen volunteered to send the Board a PDF of the Farm brochure.

Someone mentioned that Bill Burtis is working on concrete ideas for supporting the Farm. Mary confirmed that she has been in discussions with Bill, Lee Ordeman, and Roger. Also SNE contributed 100% of the profits from SNE October event to the Farm. Stephen said that this contribution was very timely and helpful.

David suggested that this idea could be linked to the fundraiser. He reminded us that fundraisers are more successful when linked to concrete ideas, and suggested several including donations targeted for NTC travel, support for Shintaido Farm maintenance, etc

Ito suggested that he could propose to ISC-TC that Shintaido Farm could host an ISC-TC meeting in 2009 or 2010, and that a profit could be made from this event for the Farm. Ito thought that the French would come, and that some Japanese people are also eager to see this Shintaido space. Clelie Dudon is interested in setting up a similar center in France on her family's property and would like to look at the Shintaido Farm as a model. Stephen said that the Shintaido Farm would be happy to host an ISC TC Meeting.

Stephen expressed his appreciation that people in SoA and the regions are willing to help support the Farm.

ISC Articles of Association:

Please email Connie with comments on the ISC bylaws document she sent out.