

Announcement about the OBC Interim Board

October 18, 2010

Dear Friends,

Many of the senior monks of the Order, together with five lay ministers, met at Shasta Abbey this September for our scheduled conclave to discuss and update some of our rules. While so many of us were together, we also took the opportunity to have a good look at some fundamental questions that are affecting the Order and how it works. One of the central outcomes was a proposal to form an interim board to identify those areas needing attention and through a process of consultation come to a common solution. This should help Rev. Master Haryo in his role as Head of the Order and facilitate all the work that we wish to do in response to the many challenges that we face.

As many of you know already, the Abbot of Shasta recently left his post. As a result of the circumstances surrounding his departure, a committee was established at the conclave to carry forward a fact finding enquiry at Shasta Abbey by, or in conjunction with, an outside professional organisation for the purpose of seeing what we can learn from these events. This matter has been a wake-up call to all of us and contributes to a sense that we need a period of reflection. During the discussions at the conclave, it became clear that we are ready to embrace the changes that are necessary, including the formation of the interim board, to review our structures and how we are all working together.

This board, which will include two lay representatives and six monks, is still being formed and should be ready to start work on November 7th. The purpose of the board is to receive submissions from anyone who has comments, concerns or ideas about any aspect of the functioning of the OBC; to appoint committees as needed to look into the issues raised; and to make all the information and proposals available for further comment until we reach a point where there is sufficient agreement for a change to be implemented. We are beginning a process of self examination that will take some time, as we intend to do it thoroughly. The work of the new interim board will include a review of how we maintain our ethical standards as an organisation and how we respond to concerns when they are raised.

The lay community is establishing its own network through which discussion can take place. The intention is to come up with a proposal on how the lay sangha can develop a greater role than the present structure allows. The possible formation of a lay wing of the Order, open to sincere lay people committed to our practice, will be considered and any proposal then submitted to the interim board.

The chair of the interim board is Rev. Master Saido and the secretary is Rev. Alicia. You are welcome to contact them, or any other board members once the board is set up, with any suggestions or concerns via the contact details below. The [OBC Interim Board](#) has a website where additional information will be made available. You are also welcome to contact any of us and we look forward to hearing from you.

This is an important time in the life of the Order and we all hope that as the new methods of consultation are put into place, you will feel able to take part in this process of renewal.

With all good wishes and gassho

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Head of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives

Rev. Master Daishin Morgan
Abbot, Throssel Hole Buddhist Abbey

Rev. Master Meian Elbert
Abbess, Shasta Abbey

Rev. Master Daishin Yalon
Vice-Abbot, Shasta Abbey

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