

**REFUGE RECOVERY BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**EMERGENCY MEETING**

**3:30 TO 5:15 PM PST: MARCH 31, 2018**

**Attendance:** Noah Levine (President), Jean Tuller (Chair) Ben Flint, Kristi Gilbert, Hillary Hildebrand, Erin Jensen, Chris Kavanaugh, Dave Larson, Rosy Ngo, Gensho Welsh, Joseph Sourhada, Don Westervelt.

**Guest:** Noah's attorney, Joe Liberoni, was invited to attend by Jean and was present for the meeting

**Not Able to Attend:** Daniel Fishburn, John Tydlaska, Bay Hagebeek

**Minutes:** Don Westervelt, Secretary

Topic		Summary of Key Points/ Action Items
Emergency Meeting	Meeting was called by Don to discuss recent allegations made against Noah concerning sexual misconduct.	
Executive Director's Statement	Jean provided some background concerning the reason for the meeting, the agenda she proposed, and her caution to the Board to avoid divisiveness in what she stated was a painful matter and painful time for the organization and the Board. She recognized that the Refuge community includes survivors of trauma, including sexual trauma, and that the accusations against Noah have caused extensive discussions on Facebook and other social media. Jean established as the agenda for the meeting 1) getting the facts before the Board, 2) developing a consensus statement for release by the Board, 3) reviewing Refuge's relationship to the Buddhist Recovery Network, 4) determining what would be most helpful to local Sanghas, and 5) determining the Board's position on upcoming teaching events sponsored by Refuge and led by Noah.	
Joe Libroni	Joe, who represents Noah regarding the criminal aspects of the allegations and investigation, recapped Noah's public statement that the allegations were false, that the relationship involved was consensual, and that Noah had and would continue to cooperate fully with the LAPD to resolve any questions. He stated that to his knowledge and belief, the investigation had "wrapped up" and that no report had been referred to the Los Angeles District Attorney.	
Statement from Noah	Noah reiterated his position that the allegations were false. He stated that both Against the Stream and Spirit Rock had cancelled or suspended his teaching activities and, in the case of ATS, his involvement on the Board pending internal investigations. Noah also indicated that he did not know the status of his invitation to participate in Wanderlust activities. He stated that it was his intention to continue to teach and that dishonesty by others should not prevent him from teaching. He also stated his preference to continue to serve as President of Refuge Recovery. He also stated that none of	

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	the allegations arose from any of his teaching or recovery involvements.	
Discussion	<p>The Board engaged in a lengthy discussion concerning the appropriate Board action or actions to be taken in light of the allegations. Key points of discussion on for which members had some consensus:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Question for the Board is not the guilt or innocence of Noah, the focus should be on what will best strengthen and support our sanghas and sangha members.</li> <li>2) There is a need for a unified public statement from the Board.</li> <li>3) There was no interest in pursuing an independent investigation by Refuge, and we were not tied to the actions of ATS, Spirit Rock, or any other of the various organizations pursuing their own investigations.</li> <li>4) Several members of the Board stressed that Refuge is not one person, and that what is best for the community as a whole should be of paramount concern in our actions.</li> <li>5) Don suggested that our concern should focus not on the truth or falsity of any allegation, but on the ethical responsibility of the Board to support our local groups and recognize the ethical precepts that are taught in our program.</li> </ol>	
Motion	Chris made a motion that the Board take no action regarding Noah's tenure on the Board of Directors or involvement in Refuge-affiliated teaching at this time and that we revisit the issue in May when investigations by other parties are complete. Motion was seconded by Joseph and Rosy. Vote passed on a vote of 9 to 2, with Noah abstaining.	Noah will continue as President of the Refuge Recovery Board and will continue to teach at Refuge-affiliated workshops.
Statement	Jean suggested that she draft a statement on behalf of the Board and circulate it to all Board members for editing and comment.	No public statement on behalf of the Board will be made until all members have had an opportunity to review, comment, and vote on such statement. No public statement will be made immediately.
Buddhist Recovery Network	Joseph asked that Refuge disassociate from BRN and have our meetings removed from their webpages. Noah offered some history about BRN and its activities, as well as its involvement in the current controversy. Consensus of the Board was that no action should be taken at this time.	

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Minutes Submitted	4/1/2018	Don Westervelt, Secretary

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