

## **Governing Council Description**

The Governing Council shall meet monthly throughout the year. In addition they shall hold an Annual Meeting for the purpose of electing/confirming/announcing members and giving a report to the Members of the Center on the state of the Center, including an annual financial report. In addition, the Governing Council, in collaboration with the Center Director, is encouraged to hold quarterly Community meetings for the purpose of getting input from the Center members on proposed topics.

### The Duties of the Governing Council

1. **Vision:** The Governing Council (GC) manifests the Shambhala Buddhist Vision and the Shambhala Meditation Center of Chicago Vision and ensures that these visions are embodied in all aspects of the Center, with the Wisdom Council acting in an advisory role in this regard.
2. **Policy:** The GC nurtures this vision by developing appropriate policy guidance for the Center which follows and is consistent with the directives of the Sakyong, the President, the governance structures of the Shambhala Mandala, and the Center Vision statement.
3. **Long Range Planning:** The GC is responsible for insuring that long range and strategic planning takes place and for overseeing the process for doing this planning. The GC holds the overall vision for the Center that contains all the sectors and from this perspective carries out comprehensive planning.
4. **Financial Responsibility:** The GC bears ultimate responsibility for sound management of the Center's resources, especially financial resources. Financial planning, including annual budgeting and long range financial projections accompanying long range and strategic planning fall under the GC ultimate responsibility. The GC will review financial reports from the Center Director on a regular basis and at least quarterly, working in collaboration with the Financial/Fundraising Sector, comparing actual income and expense to budget.
5. **Hires, supervises, evaluates and if necessary terminates the Center Director,** represented in such activities by the GC Chair. The Governing Council acts in an ongoing advisory and supportive role to the Center Director, and receives monthly reports from the Center Director.
6. **In addition, all council members, except the Chair and Vice Chair, are responsible for a sector of Center life.** If the sector is functioning well, then the member may function more as a liaison between the sector and the GC. However, if the sector or some of its parts are not functioning well, it is the responsibility of the council member in collaboration with the Center Director to provide leadership to develop and/or strengthen the sector.
7. **The GC holds the perspective of all the sectors.** The GC collectively is responsible for acting in the interest of the Center as a whole.
8. **The GC members communicate individually and as a body to the Members of the Center and all others as visible, friendly, welcoming, competent leaders, being a resource for Center Members and each other.** When they communicate individually, they will need to make clear when they are communicating their opinion only and when they are communicating what the GC has decided. They set the tone for the Center and provide an example for the Center of thoughtful speech, neither gossiping nor speaking negatively of others themselves or participating as others speak in a denigrating manner of others.

### Terms:

Each Council Member shall serve for a term of 3 years. Council Members may serve two consecutive terms. After serving two consecutive terms, a Council Member will not serve on the GC for three years. Council members' terms are staggered to provide continuity on the Council. Terms of the Charter Council Members will be 2 or 3 years in length to achieve staggered terms.

### Decision Making:

The Governing Council shall make decisions by following the principles for decision-making used by the Sakyong's Council.

Minutes shall be kept of each meeting and shall be published or in other ways made available to the Members of the Center.

### Council Meetings

Meetings shall be open. However, the Council may hold a closed meeting for the purpose of discussing a legal matter or a personnel matter.

### Tasks for the Governing Council

- Create bylaws for its procedural operations
- Develop necessary policies, including but not limited to:
  - Grievance
  - Conflict of Interest
  - Financial
  - Personnel
  - The Leadership Structure for the Visit of a Major Teacher
- The first step in developing any policy should be to glean what already exists from the center of the Mandala, e.g., the Care and Conduct Policy.
- Receive training and coaching in running meetings and decision-making.
- Conduct an annual retreat of the GC under the guidance of an outside facilitator.
- Provide orientation for all new GC members.