

**Minutes SOA Board meeting 7 December 2025**

**via ZOOM from 11am Pacific to 12noon Pacific**

Present: Connie, Jim, Rob G., Laura, David P.

Excused: David F (proxy to David P.)

Guest: Sandra Bengtsson, SOA Treasurer

**Overview of Agenda:**

- I. SOA Financials**
- II. SOA 2026 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**
- III. SOA Website**

Welcome and Mokuso. Connie welcomed everyone and informed members that David Franklin is at a memorial service for his recently deceased mother. There were no additions or changes to the agenda.

**I. SOA Financials**

Connie introduced and welcomed Sandra Bengtsson, SOA Treasurer. Connie thanked Sandra for her collaboration to maintain SOA financials and accounting.

- A. Sandra presented the balance sheet and cash basis profit and loss statement ending November 30, 2025. Sandra highlighted important points for a non-profit – a) Sandra and Connie communicate on expenses and income, b) that restricted donations are recorded on the balance sheet as restricted and tracked for accounting on designated uses, and c) current report is only to end of November. The final year end report will be the final financial report for reporting purposes.
- B. Sandra presented the 2026 budget includes a proposed increase to \$70 for SOA members. She supports this increase. The last change was about in 2016.
- C. Sandra gave a line-by-line review of the 2026 budget, which includes providing scholarships for both teachers and students and expenses for the webmaster and updates to the SOA website.

Discussion included: a request for a report that shows net profit from programs and sales. Sandra agreed and states that for March 2026 the treasurer's report will show membership dues and support to ongoing operations and show programs offered with net profit. One member prefers to see year-to-year comparisons rather than month-to-month comparison (i.e., balance sheet). Connie stated this was her decision to show on the

balance sheet the \$5000 donation received after the June membership meeting and the expenses of \$819 for the October Kenjutsu workshop, leaving a balance of \$4,181. This \$4,181 is included in the 2026 budget to show the fund supporting scholarships/travel by both teachers and students. One member asked what a restricted donation is. Connie replied that when a member gives a donation with parameters on how the funds are to be used; then that is recorded as a restricted donation. A general donation is money given to be used for overall needs of the organization.

**Action item:** Treasurer (Sandra) to give report in March on general operational income and expenses and program income and expenses.

D. **Motion** by David P and seconded by Rob G. to increase SOA membership dues to \$70 for 2026. To be effective 1/1/2026. The increase will indicate if there is financial hardship to contact the SOA President for options.

Vote: 6 yes (including David F. proxy); 0 no's, 1 Abstain (Connie). **Motion passes.**

Connie requested and Laura as membership secretary, volunteered to write a short announcement for membership for 2026. It was also suggested to include a phrase and option for members to donate additional amounts to help support those who are experiencing financial hardship.

**Action Item:** Sandra to develop new PayPal 'button' for website. Connie suggested that Sandra can work with Sarah Baker on this task as Sarah has done this task before for several events. (Sarah also has website administrative access to insert the PayPal 'button')

## II. **SOA 2026 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Connie reviewed the plans that have been developed with Tomi and Rob G. The plans include a yearlong celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of SOA. As there will not be a 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary Gasshuku, Connie suggests that each Keiko, each workshop, and each day of practice be done with gratitude for the founding of SOA. There is planned to have 50 posting on social media from the archives of SOA Body Dialogues and SOA YouTube Channel. Tomi has worked with a graphic designer designing a graphic and T-shirt for the 50<sup>th</sup>. The theme is *Kumite: across time and space*. Connie screened shared to show graphics and T-shirt mockup. The last item is to have a WhatsApp group. This can be a place to share poems, photos, and Keiko.

Discussion followed. It was suggested to have a clear process for trouble shooting when there are problems such as T-shirts arriving damaged or wrong size etc. Connie to follow up with Tomi. It was also mentioned that this can

become both a memorial to Ito Sensei as well as a celebration. Connie will include this in looking at materials. Rob G. states he will be scanning some historical photos to share. Laura reminded the group of the importance of people responding to posts to show the interaction.

### **III. SOA Website**

Connie presented the pricing summary from Jennifer P-F the new webmaster for SOA. Connie recommends that in 2026 to do some incremental changes to the website that includes: new homepage, linking Printify Store, removing the event calendar, and designing a page for the store (proposed WooCommerce). This cost is \$2000 for 20 -25 hours. In addition, the budget has \$700 to cover hours needed for website troubleshooting and updates from Dream host.

Jim asked about the practice page updates. Connie states that Sarah Baker can do these updates at any time. Jim would like the website to reflect current teaching and practice opportunities.

**Motion** by David P and seconded by Rob G. to approve \$2000 for the website updates in 2026. Unanimous approval.

**Motion** by David P and seconded by Rob G. to approve the 2026 budget as presented. Unanimous approval.

**Action item:** Connie to notify Jennifer P-F of the approved website pricing and plan. Connie continue to include Tereza S., Sarah B. ,and Tomi N-R in the communication loop with our new webmaster.

### **IV. 2026 Dates**

March 15 – Topics: review of membership letter, review of treasurer's report for 2025 that includes reports of outcomes from sales and programs. Connie also states she will be working with Jason R. on a potential membership survey of the benefits to practicing Shintaido that might be useful with marketing.

June 14

Sept 13

Dec 13.

Same times of 11am Pacific, 2pm Eastern time and 8pm Czech time.

Minutes respectfully submitted by,

Connie Borden

Dec 7, 2025