

Families Anonymous
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors
April 17, 2021

INTRODUCTION

1. Call to Order: 2:03 EDT, by Barbara S, Chair

2. Roll Call: by Maria

<u>Name</u>	<u>WSB Role</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Monthly Report</u>
Barbara S	Chair	P	W
Maria S	Vice Chair	P	W
Cindy C	Treasurer	P	W
TBD	Secretary	NA	NA
Alan B	BMAL	LOA	LOA
Ann P	BMAL	P	W
Bob S	BMAL	P	W
Chris Y	BMAL	P	W
David M	BMAL	E	L
George R	BMAL	P	L
Helen L	BMAL	P	W
Jeff S	BMAL	E	W
Marc B	BMAL	LOA	LOA
Marcia C	BMAL	P	W
Mike B	BMAL	A	N
Odalys A	BMAL	LOA	LOA

Attendance Key: P=Present, A=Absent, E=Excused, LOA=Leave of Absence

Monthly Report Key: W= Submitted by deadline, L=Submitted after deadline,
N=No report submitted, E=Excused for extenuating circumstances, LOA = Leave
of Absence

3. Acceptance of Published Agenda:

- George moved to accept the Agenda, Ann seconded, voted on and accepted.

4. Tradition One:

- Read by Maria: *“Our common welfare should come first; personal progress for the greatest number depends on unity.”*

5. Approval of March 2021 WSB Minutes:

- Marcia moved to accept the March WSB Minutes, Bob seconded, voted on and approved. Maria to distribute.

6. Chair's Report:

- There were no comments or questions concerning the Chair’s Report.

7. Treasurer's Report:

- Cindy provided the March financial reports as part of her monthly report, as well as the proposed budget for Fiscal 2021-2022.
- March is the 11th month of our fiscal year, and at this point we are running a loss of \$15K. Literature sales continue to struggle. Donations have been a bright spot this year. Expenses are on track.
- A reserve for possibly obsolete inventory was booked at \$8,300.
- Cindy reviewed the proposed budget for next year. The proposed net loss is \$24,100. She provided figures showing our deteriorating cash position. We will run out of cash in 3 1/2 years if we do nothing, or unless we make positive changes.
 - Cindy has already made the following changes to reduce expenses:
 - found new vendors to reduce office supply expenses
 - renegotiated the Comcast contract
 - There will be an opportunity renegotiate our lease; but those changes won’t come into effect until September 15 of this year. For example, if we forego our storage room in the basement we can save \$185 per month. We could also consider relocating to a less expensive location.
 - Because we only have 2 employees, payroll is not really an option to reduce expenses. If we reduce their hours, it would hinder our ability to generate revenue.
 - We need to improve our cash position by increasing membership and generating revenue. Cindy emphasized that we need to do this soon in order to turn the tide.
- **Motion to approve the proposed Fiscal 2021-2022 Budget was made by Cindy, seconded by Ann, voted on and approved.**

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Chair</u>
SC-1 Public Information	Jeff S
SC-2 WSO	Maria S
SC-3 Literature	Ann P
SC-4 Serenity Messenger Newsletter	Robert S
SC-5 Bylaws, Parliamentary	George R
SC-6 International Groups	Helen L
SC-7 Budget Committee	Cindy C
SC-8 Sponsorship	Helen L
SC-9 Group Outreach	Marcia C
SC-10 Financial Oversight	David M
SC-11 Technology	George R

- **SC-1 Public Information:**
 - **Facebook Page**
 - ▶ Jeff has been working on a Facebook (FB) page for FA.
 - ▶ George expressed concerns, similar to those mentioned by Ann in her monthly board report. They both would support an informational FB page, but would not support one that was interactive.
 - ▶ George indicated that the FA website used to have a “forum” section, but it was taken down because inappropriate comments were made and it became too difficult to maintain.
 - ▶ Maria had spoken with Jeff prior to the meeting, and he had asked that Board members provide him with specific concerns so that he could address them.
 - ▶ Jeff had agreed to pin a disclaimer at the top of the FB page, or in the “About Section”, indicating that links / posts do not denote affiliation with FA, nor represent the opinions of FA.
 - ▶ Ann felt that our original purpose for using social media was to create awareness of FA and to get people to join our groups. It would also be a good venue to highlight our literature, reaching those outside our fellowship. Unlike at our meetings, there are no boundaries or parameters for sharing on FB. We now have virtual meetings, which more easily allow people to join a meeting and share.
 - ▶ Bob shared what he saw on the AlAnon FB page.
 - There is a member interview which talks about the benefits of the program and is very impactful.
 - There were other posts from their WSO.
 - It seems that the shares on that page are controlled.

- Question for Jeff: Is there a middle ground where we can oversee / restrict the content of shares (i.e., one-way posts)?
- ▶ Barbara said that we could use Alan to conduct short interviews and post those on FB.
- ▶ Marcia felt that social media is how many people relate today. Some people may not be comfortable attending meetings; this would be an additional forum for sharing. We could monitor and delete the most egregious shares. People on FB are familiar with how it works.
- ▶ George mentioned that AA, which is the most populous 12 step program, does not have a FB page. Barbara suggested that we find out why.
- ▶ Helen felt that FB is not the right place for FA because of anonymity concerns and possibility for inappropriate comments.
- ▶ Based on the above discussion, Chris suggested that we start using FB for informational purposes, and consider the interactive aspect as step two.
- ▶ **Ann made a motion that we move forward with setting up a non-interactive, informational Facebook page; seconded by George, voted on and approved.**
 - The Board agreed that we could consider the interactional aspects at a future board meeting.
 - George indicated that this will require a change to our internet policy; currently it discourages the use of FB. He will update it.
 - Marcia felt that it would be good to have an article in the Serenity Messenger about the change in policy and what the Board decided. Ann suggested that we wait until we have the FB page implemented; we could also send out an email blast announcing it.
- **PI E-Newsletter**
 - ▶ Marcia would like PI to begin using the recovery contacts database and send out a communication. Barbara suggested that someone volunteer to help Jeff with that since he has a lot to do. Maria and Bob volunteered to help Jeff and come back to the board with a suggested communication. Barbara will also reach out to Alan to see if he would like to help.
- **SC-4 Serenity Messenger Newsletter:**
 - Bob reported that the next newsletter is due out the first week in May. The deadline for submission of articles was April 10; the deadline for announcements, donations, and ads is April 23.
- **SC-9 Group Outreach:**
 - Marcia will start making calls in the next couple of weeks to those groups who have not yet re-registered. She will also be sending out an email blast to group secretaries as a reminder, and will include that they will lose their right

to vote at the June ABM unless they re-register by May 10 (i.e., 30 days before the meeting). Barbara indicated that we need to know which groups are meeting, and when / how they're holding their meetings (i.e., face-to-face or virtually); Marcia will include that in the e-mail blast. Donna D felt that because of the pandemic, we shouldn't drop groups.

- There were no other updates from the Committee Chairs.

AD-HOC COMMITTEE REPORTS

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Chair</u>
AH-1 Convention Liaison	Barbara S
AH-2 Intergroup Support & Development	Marc B
AH-3 Document Review	Ann P
AH-4 Long Range Planning	Marc B
AH-5 Revenue Growth Task Force	Cindy C
AH-6 Virtual Meeting Format	Maria S

- Other than the information provided in the monthly Board Reports, there were no additional updates from the Ad-Hoc Committee Chairs.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

1. MOTION LC-1 (April 2021)

- **Motion:** The Literature Committee moves that the WSB approve increasing the selling price of #8001S *New Group Pack (Spanish)* to \$28.50.
- **Rationale:**
 - The current selling price of #8001S is \$22.00. This price has been in effect since 10/2019.
 - A new component was recently added to #8001S. It is #1019S *The Twelve Step Workbook (Spanish)*. The direct cost (i.e., printing + vendor-to-WSO shipping) of #1019S is \$6.35.
 - According to a recent evaluation done by the treasurer, the direct cost of all the #8001S components (including the newly added #1019S) is now \$26.09. \$26.09 is significantly more than #8001S's current selling price of \$22.00.

- Raising the selling price of #8001S to \$28.50 would cover the direct cost of all the components (\$26.09) while factoring in a margin of \$2.41 (just over 9% of the direct cost).
- A selling price of \$28.50 may seem like a startling jump up from \$22.00 to a group just starting out and without a treasury. However, a new group, when buying #8001S, would in fact be paying less than \$7.00 for a workbook that costs \$10.00 when bought alone.
- A selling price greater than \$28.50 is unnecessary to cover our direct costs and would place an added financial burden on new groups.
- This price increase need not be announced to the fellowship because it pertains only to new Spanish-speaking groups, of which there are none pending.
- **Feasibility:**
 - The literature catalog and the website e-store can be revised to reflect the new price.
 - Price changes in the literature catalog and on the website are all part of “Implementation” for any literature item produced by FA.
- **Implementation:**
 - Upon approval of this motion by the WSB, the Literature Committee shall:
 - revise the literature catalog to reflect the new price
 - ask the website manager to update the price in the e-store
- **Motion made by Ann, seconded by George, voted on and approved.**

2. **MOTION LC-2 (April 2021)**

- **Motion:** The Literature Committee moves that the WSB approve the creation of a Helping Series “bundle pack” consisting of #2003-1, #2003-2 and #2003-3 and having a selling price of \$5.60.
- **Rationale:**
 - The purposes of the “bundle pack” are (1) to introduce the new #2003-3 *Contempt to Respect* to the fellowship and (2) to increase sales of the existing #2003-1 *Negatives to Positives* and #2003-2 *Fear to Faith*.
 - The individual selling prices of #2003-1, #2003-2 and #2003-3 are \$1.75, \$2.50, and \$2.75, respectively, totaling \$7.00.
 - The direct costs (printing + vendor-to-WSO shipping) of #2003-1, #2003-2 and #2003-3 are \$.41, \$.66 and \$.80, respectively, totaling \$1.87.
 - The “bundle pack” selling price of \$5.60 is 20% less than the total selling price of the individual booklets purchased separately, and it is \$3.73 more than the total direct cost of producing the three booklets.
- **Feasibility:**
 - To prompt sales, this “bundle pack” can be introduced as a limited-time offer.

- This “bundle pack” can be assigned a literature-catalog number and included in the literature catalog and the website e-store.
- **Implementation:**
 - Upon approval of this motion by the WSB, the Literature Committee shall:
 - add this “bundle pack” to the literature catalog
 - provide information to the website manager to add to the e-store
 - introduce this “bundle pack” to the fellowship via an e-mail blast and a *Serenity Messenger* article that highlights all three of the Helping Series booklets
- **Motion made by Ann, seconded by Bob, voted on and approved.**

3. **Motion to Amend Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws (Bob S)**

- **Motion:** Move to amend the Articles of Incorporation and the By-Laws of Families Anonymous, Inc. to expand FA’s stated purpose from dealing with those affected solely by “drugs” or “mind-altering substances,” to include all forms of addictive behavior.
- **Rationale:**
 - The Articles of Incorporation filed in California in 1972 state that “[t]he specific and primary purpose of this corporation is to provide assistance to Member and Affiliate Groups whose objectives are to help its individual members lead a wholesome life in the adverse situations where relatives or friends may be involved with drugs.”
 - In addition to addictions to food and herbal remedies, many people today suffer from addictions to gambling, sex, pornography, online gaming, and perhaps other behaviors or activities. Unfortunately, advances in the Internet and technology seem to have multiplied the opportunities for susceptible individuals to become addicted to a range of activities and/or substances beyond traditional “drugs,” “alcohol,” or other “mind-altering substances.”
 - FA’s goal is to help persons who have a relative or friend who’s an addict, and who may find themselves enabling that behavior and/or otherwise suffering ill effects from their loved ones’ actions. The Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws, and ultimately all our literature, should reflect the all-inclusive nature of FA’s ability to help those suffering as a result of another’s addiction.
- **Implementation:**
 - Implementation of this motion will require that we prepare appropriate language to more broadly state FA’s purpose, and then file an Amendment to the Articles of Incorporation with the California Secretary of State reflecting that language. We will then need to go through the By-Laws to make them consistent with that broader purpose.

- Potential language we might use in the Amended Articles of Incorporation could describe FA's purpose as:
 - "To provide assistance to Member and Affiliate Groups whose objectives are to help its individual members lead a wholesome life despite a relative or friend's abuse of or addiction to drugs, alcohol, or other substances, behaviors, or activities, and related behavioral problems."
 - The By-Laws, which may explain in more detail, would repeat that purpose statement, and might elaborate as follows:
 - "This includes addictions to food, herbal remedies or other substances, and addictions to behaviors or activities such as sex, pornography, gambling, gaming, online activities, or any other behavior that can fairly be called an addiction because of its compulsive, chronic, habit-forming nature and its harmful effects both on the person engaging in it and on persons close to them."
 - Ultimately, we'll need to change many references in our literature to conform with this broadened statement of purpose. Once the Articles and By-Laws have been amended, we can change the references in our literature on a rolling basis, as each piece is updated or revised for other reasons.
 - I believe we will need approval from the Fellowship to amend the Articles and By-Laws. Ideally, we could do this at the Annual Business Meeting in June.
 - **Cost:**
 - The cost of filing the Amendment with the California Secretary of State is \$30. We should be able to prepare and file that Amendment, and to revise the By-Laws, without hiring an attorney. The language of the Amendment, and the By-Laws revisions, can be drawn up by a volunteer group from the fellowship.
 - The following discussion ensued:
 - George indicated that there is no precedent on how to change the Articles. Any changes to the By-Laws require approval by the membership. Barbara indicated that the ballots need to go out by May 10.
 - We pay a company in California \$148 / year to be our registered agent. Cindy will provide Bob with the information. Bob will follow up with them about the filing of the Articles and to see if there would be any other costs.
 - It was agreed to:
 - use the same wording in the By-Laws as proposed above for the Articles (i.e., not further elaborate in the By-Laws)
 - leave the wording "Affiliate Groups" in the Articles
- Bob will send George the suggested wording for the By-Laws so that he can prepare the motion for the ballot.
- **Motion made by Bob, seconded by Ann, voted on and approved.**

4. **MOTION- Virtual Meetings List (Maria S)**

- **Motion:** Move that the WSB approve the addition to our website of a virtual meeting listing that is sorted by day / time.
- **Rationale:**
 - This suggestion was made by a member of the Mahwah NJ FA Group, who said that another 12 Step group provides this.
 - This would allow FA members, who feel they urgently need the support of a meeting, to easily find one.
- **Feasibility:**
 - This listing could be added under “Meetings” -> “Virtual Meetings” -> “Virtual Meetings sorted by Day and Time”.
- **Implementation:**
 - If approved, I would follow up with Nicole to implement this on our webpage, and prepare an email blast to the Big List to notify the membership of this.
 - Determine, with Nicole, the most efficient way to implement / maintain this.
 - I will follow up with the Ramsey / Mahwah group member who suggested this, and let her know of the Board’s decision.
- **Cost:**
 - Nicole’s time / effort to implement and maintain. (Note: I will try to do some of the work to minimize the amount of time Nicole would have to spend on this.)
- As suggested by Ann, Maria will amend the table so that the first three columns are Day, Time, Time Zone.
- **Motion made by Maria, seconded by Bob, voted on and approved.**

5. **Board Slate for Next Year:**

- We need volunteers for the following two Officer positions: Vice Chair and Recording Secretary. She asked Board members to consider volunteering for the Vice Chair position.
- Barbara asked the board members to reach out to members in their home groups for volunteers for the Secretary position, and for Board Member at Large positions. She has received one nomination consent form so far.
- Barbara prepared a Word from the Board article for the Serenity Messenger asking for volunteers for the Board. It can also be used as an email blast to the Big List. Ann will follow up on this once she reviews / edits it for the newsletter.
- We also urgently need a board member to serve as Chair of the Financial Oversight Committee.

TABLED ITEMS: None

CLOSING

1. Announcements and Other Items:

- Based on the email sent by Ann, Chris will do some research on improving / optimizing search results on Google and other search engines so that the FA website and FA publications come up toward the top. Based on what he finds, he will send an email to the Board, including any potential cost.

2. Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn was made by Helen, seconded by George, voted on and passed (3:20 pm EDT).

3. Closed with the Serenity Prayer