

**Families Anonymous**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors**  
**June 19, 2021**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. **Call to Order:** 2:03 EDT, by Maria S, Chair
2. **Roll Call:** by Maria. Maria welcomed the new Board members: Chris Z, Greg C, and Sara L.

<b>Name</b>	<b>WSB Role</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Monthly Report</b>
Maria S	Chair	P	W
Marcia C	Vice Chair	E	W
Cindy C	Treasurer	P	W
TBD	Secretary	NA	NA
Barbara S	BMAL	E	W
Ann P	BMAL	P	W
Bob S	BMAL	P	W
Chris Y	BMAL	P	W
Chris Z	BMAL	P	E
Greg C	BMAL	P	E
Helen L	BMAL	E	E
Jeff S	BMAL	P	W
Marc B	BMAL	LOA	LOA
Mike B	BMAL	P	L
Sara L	BMAL	P	E

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:**

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

**4. Tradition One:**

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

## **5. Approval of May 2021 WSB Minutes:**

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

## **6. Chair's Report:**

- Maria spoke to Craig W from AA’s Group Services to find out why AA does not have a presence on social media. Craig shared that AA made a decision in 2011 not to use social media due to similar concerns raised by some of our board members (i.e., potential loss of anonymity, appearance of affiliation, difficulty of monitoring posts).
  - Jeff and Mike noted that 10 years is a long time; social media and its prevalence have evolved since then.
- AA is getting ready to publish their Service Material Flyer, where they list other 12 Step Groups. The flyer specifies that there is no affiliation between any of the groups listed and AA. Other groups are listed for purposes of cooperation. They would like to include FA in that flyer. It was agreed during the board meeting to allow FA to be listed.
  - Jeff found it interesting that the AA group services representative had not heard of FA until his conversation with Maria. Jeff felt that this speaks to FA’s need to create awareness about our organization.
  - Maria mentioned that AA occasionally has a Day of Sharing, where various recovery-related groups get together to share information as a resource. The AA service group representative will reach out to us to let us know the next time they are planning one, so that we can send someone from FA to share their experience.
- A communication was sent to the recovery-related contacts. Because of the large number of bounce-backs, Get Response (our provider) temporarily suspended our account. Because these contacts didn’t explicitly grant permission for us to contact them, we were required by Get Response to delete those contacts from their mailing list. Nicole is currently exploring opportunities with other emailing vendors. The good news is that we did get some hits to our website as a result of the emails going out, and there was also an inquiry by someone interested in starting an FA group.
  - While searching on the web using key words such as “Families Anonymous,” Chris Y found that there were a number of rehab centers that listed FA as a resource for families. As a followup communication to our recovery-related

contacts, we could provide information for them to post on their websites if they wish to include FA as an available resource. Chris will work with Jeff to draft something for our next communication (once Nicole has found an alternate vendor).

- Ann mentioned that she had not received some of the material distributed by Maria to the board. Maria will check her distribution list to make sure she has Ann on there.
- There were no other comments or questions concerning the Chair's Report.

## **7. Treasurer's Report:**

- Cindy provided the May monthly financial reports as part of her monthly report.
- The month of May was not bad for us; we experienced a net loss, but it was less than expected. This was primarily due to two reasons:
  - 1) Our expenses were less than expected, mainly due to the timing of MaxxPotential website invoices (services were performed later than anticipated in the budget).
  - 2) Revenue was higher than expected; slightly up for group donations, but a significant improvement over budget for literature sales. There were group orders this month.
- Our cash is holding; Cindy had provided a graph with the financial report.
- Greg asked Cindy about the fiscal calendar. Cindy shared that the fiscal year runs from May 1 through April 30. In February the annual budget was officially approved.
- Ann mentioned that she finds the graphs and other visuals provided by Cindy to be very helpful.

## **STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS**

<b><u>Committee</u></b>	<b><u>Chair</u></b>
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	Barbara S
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	Greg C

- **SC-1 Public Information (Jeff):**

- Jeff found it interesting that AA allows their individual groups to use social media, although their national position is that they do not endorse using it. It seems to illustrate this gray area that everyone is in right now.
- Jeff has seen AlAnon on TV multiple times recently in the Atlanta area. He spoke with someone from AlAnon who heads their communication and outreach; she shared their history and costs regarding this.
  - It is viewed as a public service announcement (PSA), so they don't pay for air time. They produce the segments themselves (30 to 45 second spots), but pay for distribution. From start to finish, the cost could be ~\$150K (much of which goes to the distributor who pitches it to various stations).
  - They started doing commercials about 10 to 12 years ago, but have only gotten real visibility within the last 6 months to a year because they now pay someone to distribute them.
  - Concerning Tradition 11 (attraction not promotion), their explanation is "It's not about pushing Al-Anon as a solution. It's about planting the seed about recovery and raising awareness about Al-Anon."
  - They do get push back from some of their members; but this is the position they have taken.
  - Responses have been primarily positive.
  - Chris Y asked if there was a way in which they measured the impact of the PSAs. Jeff shared that AlAnon uses a vanity url (e.g., AlAnon.org\hope) to trace the impact of their TV spots. They also have other measures to see how cost effective this has been for them.
- Chris Y shared that it is difficult to find an FA group in Canada; AlAnon seems to be the support group of choice for families. However, some professionals there recognize that FA would be better for families dealing with non-alcohol related addictions. We need to do something different to grow awareness so that we can support families.
- Mike made the following points:
  - Before attraction and promotion there is visibility, awareness, and availability. When he underwent training to become a family recovery specialist, they listed all the 12 step support groups they are aware of, but FA was not included. Professionals are completely unaware of FA. He encourages them to put FA as an available resource.
  - He mentioned there is asynchronous social media (i.e., the same as a email blast) and i-synchronous (which is back and forth discussion, debate).
  - He encouraged the board to look at the AlAnon app to see what they're doing.

- ▶ He feels it would be worthwhile for the board to have a further discussion on the difference between attraction (and its parameters) and promotion.
- ▶ Groups that don't survive can't hope to thrive. He believes we need to take calculated risks not irresponsible risk.
- Sara commented that she agrees with many of the points that Mike made. They have a similar situation in Spain and are facing the same issues. FA is an organization that is quite unknown. She will be meeting with the head of the Spain NSB to discuss this.
- **SC-11 Technology:**
  - Chris Y has taken on responsibility to Chair this committee (previously headed by George). He will share updates in his future board reports.
- There were no other updates from the Committee Chairs.

## **AD-HOC COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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

- **AH-4 Long Range Planning (Mike)**
  - Mike asked to be on the agenda for the next meeting so that he can update Board members on the work he has done. He will prepare an executive summary (4 to 5 pages) on the highlights. There is a back-up document (~60 pages) which board members can refer to for more details. He suggested we use it to focus on areas that we have a greater interest in. Questions / comments / recommendations on the content can be sent directly to Mike B. Wherever anyone sees a problem, Mike would like to receive suggestions for alternate solutions.
- Other than the information provided in the monthly Board Reports, there were no additional updates from the Ad-Hoc Committee Chairs.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

## **1. Amending the Articles of Incorporation (A of I) (Bob S) - next steps**

- Bob had sent a summary out to all the board members prior to the meeting.
- We had proposed to amend the A of I because they are currently so narrowly drawn, limited to addiction to drugs.
- Bob had proposed more expansive language. Prior to this meeting, there were questions / comments from Ann and the Summit group in particular, who proposed alternate language. Bob now feels that his original language is too broad, and would propose we go with the Summit Group's language.
- The plan is to have a decision made prior to the next ABM so that the fellowship can vote on it.
- Bob feels that the addictive behaviors (regardless of the underlying substance / item they're addicted to) are the same, and the effects on the loved ones are the same. The families are dealing with similar problems and issues that we discuss at each group meeting. Regardless of the addiction, we are focused on the family member's problems...what is going on with them.
- Mike supports what Bob said and added that we are not supposed to have experience with the particular addictions; rather, we have experience with the behaviors that family members adopt to survive the addictions, and we offer alternate, more constructive behaviors.
- Chris Y agreed with Bob and Mike. He believes we shouldn't be turning away any family members due to the type of addiction. Meeting attendees can decide if this is the meeting for them. The meetings are for us, the family members; not the addicted loved one. He expects that we may not get a consensus from every member of FA on this.
- Maria added that before the changes to the A of I were withdrawn from the ballot, those who had already sent in their ballots supported the expanded language. As a board, we need to come up with the most clear and appropriate language. She asked that if anyone has alternate language they would like considered, they should send Bob their suggestions.
- Mike B asked Ann if our literature is focused on drug and alcohol to the exclusion of everything else, or could it handle in a general way other types of addiction. Ann indicated that the literature is based on what they currently have as their mission statement, which is drugs, alcohol, and related behavioral problems. It would be a huge undertaking to change the terminology.
  - Bob noted that the current A of I refer only to drugs. The LC has already broadened it to include alcohol and related behavioral problems. The literature could evolve over time to reflect what we're doing.
- Greg felt that as a family member, we are dealing with addiction...period. Whether it's addiction to drugs, alcohol, other substances or behaviors, we're learning how to deal with that and get on with our own lives. He feels that getting

so specific as to the particular item / substance, might turn people away. Bob agreed; he suggested we could say “a relative or friend’s addiction, and related behavioral problems”.

- Ann suggested that if we wanted to be less specific we could say substance abuse and related behavioral problems, rather than list everything.
- The board agreed to wait until next month to allow more time to consider alternate wording for the A of I. Bob will send out the updated proposed language versions (including any additional ones proposed by board members) prior to the meeting.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### **1. MOTION LC-1 (June 2021):**

- **Motion:** The Literature Committee moves that the WSB approve the attached revision of #5013 Avoiding Four Destructive Forces.
- **Rationale:**
  - At the November 2020 WSB meeting, the WSB ...
    - approved the LC’s revision of #5013, which was formatted for hard-copy publication; but ...
    - did not approve the LC’s motion to print #5013 at that time because of financial considerations; and then ...
    - approved removing #5013 from the literature catalog because the existing inventory was obsolete.
  - The LC feels strongly that #5013 is an important tool for helping groups stay true to FA’s Traditions and avoid actions that can undermine group unity and integrity. For this reason, the LC undertook a further revision of #5013 and formatted it specifically for download only.
  - Being free of the space constraints inherent in a printed piece, the LC was able to expand the content even further to make the attached revision more complete and useful than the prior revision.
  - Publishing #5013 as a free download is now the only way to make its valuable information available to the fellowship.
- **Feasibility:**
  - The WSB has already had an opportunity to review and make comments on the revised piece.
  - Any comments offered by board members were considered prior to creating the attached revision.
  - The current revision is formatted for accurate, easy download.
  - The final PDF is attached to this motion.
  - There is no financial cost associated with board approval of this motion.
- **Implementation:** Upon approval of this motion, the Literature Committee shall:

- send the approved PDF to the website manager for uploading to the website
- add #5013 to the literature catalog, placing it in a SPOTLIGHT box
- prepare an announcement of this revision to be sent to the membership
- **Motion made by Ann, seconded by Bob, voted on and approved.**

## **2. MOTION LC-2 (June 2021):**

- **Motion:** The Literature Committee moves that the WSB approve the attached revision of #7010 *Families Anonymous and the Professional Community*.
- **Rationale:**
  - The Literature Committee determined that revision of this piece was required.
  - This revision was undertaken in a timely manner, with only a few copies of this piece left in inventory.
  - #7010 is a unique component of FA's literature offerings, being the only piece geared directly to professionals who interact with families dealing with a loved one's drug or alcohol abuse and related behavioral problems.
  - Although its sales history does not warrant printing #7010 at this time, the LC feels it is imperative that we offer the information contained in #7010 in the form of a free download.
  - #7010 is an ideal tool for use by the Public Information Committee and others when reaching out to resource-related contacts and providing them with information about FA and how FA can become a valuable part of their armamentarium.
  - This piece can be readily modified as information changes, and a new edition can be easily uploaded to the website as needed.
- **Feasibility:**
  - The WSB has already had an opportunity to review and make comments on the revised piece.
  - Any comments offered by board members were considered prior to creating the attached revision.
  - The current revision is formatted for accurate, easy download.
  - The final PDF is attached to this motion.
  - There is no financial cost associated with board approval of this motion.
- **Implementation:** Upon approval of this motion, the Literature Committee shall:
  - send the approved PDF to the website manager for uploading to the website
  - move #7010 from a standard listing to a SPOTLIGHT box in the literature catalog
  - prepare an announcement of this revision to be sent to the membership
- **Motion made by Ann, seconded by Chris Y, voted on and approved.**

## **3. Follow-up from ABM**

- Maria is in the process of finalizing the WSB Roster and the Committee Roster. The latter will be posted on the webpage. Drafts had been sent to the board for review.
- Based on the current focus of the board, she asked them to consider whether the current set of ad-hoc committees are appropriate for the work to be done. For example, Cindy had suggested it might be more efficient to combine the AH-5 Revenue Growth Task Force with AH-4 Long Range Planning.
- At the ABM, Matt B from Chicagoland shared how their area has put together a Speaker Series. It was suggested that we broadcast this in the Serenity Messenger (Bob will do this) and also in an e-mail blast to the general membership (Maria will do). Bob will reach out to Matt B and draft something.
- Because of the success of Donna D's 12-Step workshop (i.e., member participation, positive feedback, associated literature sales), and the Speaker Series by Chicagoland, Maria suggested we may want to have an ad hoc committee specifically focused on educational opportunities. Bob agreed that this would be a worthwhile endeavor. The board discussed whether oversight for this could fall under an existing Committee such as the Literature Committee (LC) or Group Outreach (GO). Ann will talk to the LC about this and report back; Maria will follow up with Marcia (GO Chair) and do the same. Maria asked board members to let her know if they would like to get involved, even if they are unable to chair it.

**TABLED ITEMS:** None

**CLOSING**

**1. Announcements and Other Items:**

- None.

**2. Adjournment**

- Motion to adjourn was made by Maria, seconded by Ann, voted on and passed (3:22 pm EDT).

**3. Closed with the Serenity Prayer**