

Families Anonymous
Preliminary (version 1) Minutes of the Annual Business Meeting
June 12, 2021

I. Call to order:

- Call to order made at 2:03 pm EDT, by Barbara S (Group #1345) World Service Board (WSB) Chair.

II. Welcome - Barbara S:

- Barbara welcomed the Board members, Delegates, and all the attendees.
- She thanked the WSB members who work hard to make FA the best it can be.
- She also thanked Howard P and Dennis R for all their help over the years with the Financial Oversight Committee.
- Barbara reviewed the rules for today's virtual meeting.

III. Report from the Credentials Committee Chair - Maria S (Group #2056):

- A copy of the Credentials Committee Chair's Report is included as Appendix 1 and the contents were reviewed at the meeting.
- The Credentials Chair certified that all quorums were met for the 2021 ABM.

IV. Old Business

- **Approval of 2020 ABM Minutes:** Marcia C (Group #494) moved to approve; Matt B (Group #3001) seconded; voted on and approved.
- **Approval of Final FY2021 Financial Reports:**
 - Cindy C, Treasurer (Group #1906) presented the FY2021 financial statements.
 - Cindy reported that there were no issues found by the Financial Oversight Committee and the Independent Certified Public Account (CPA).
 - The Balance Sheet shows as of April 30, 2021 (i.e., the final day of our fiscal year):
 - Total assets are ~\$151K.
 - Our liabilities are ~\$13K.
 - We are in a good financial position at this time (April 30). The bulk of our assets are in cash; this is a very healthy position to be in.
 - We received \$10K in funds as a Paycheck Protection Program Loan under the COVID relief package. We expect it to be fully forgiven this year.
 - The Income Statements show:
 - A net loss of \$13K this year.
 - There was a large decrease in literature sales: 39% from last year. The primary reason for the extreme drop in literature sales is due to the pandemic. Literature sales had been declining on average 7% over the last 5 years.
 - Donations more than doubled from the prior year. Even through the pandemic, some groups were able to donate. Individual donations were \$10K more than usual; many appear to be year-end donations. \$20 K is from estate donations from one couple. The WSB very much appreciates the generosity of our fellowship members, especially in this difficult year.
 - Expenses total a little under last year's, and were also a little under budget. We worked hard to rein in expenses. Contracts were renegotiated and new, less expensive vendors were found.
 - The WSB has a strategy committee looking to increase awareness and grow membership, which is the key to improving our finances.
 - Matt B (Group #3001) asked about 1) the higher cost of supplies, and 2) the decrease in internet expenses, compared to the prior year. Cindy replied that a computer printer was purchased for the WSO. There were also higher toner and paper

costs due to the larger number of small literature orders. Regarding the decline in internet expenses, in the prior year we had switched website vendors, and there was a cost associated with getting the new website up and running.

- **Motion to approve the FY2021 Financial Statements and Oversight Committee's Annual Report:** motion made by by Maria S (Group #2056), seconded by Pat (Group #1972), voted on and approved.

V. New Business

- **Call for Volunteers**
 - Barbara indicated that we could use volunteers to serve on the Board. We are in need of a Recording Secretary, and someone to serve as Chair of the Technology Committee.
- **New Website**
 - The new website is up and running and is a vast improvement from the old one.
- **Call for 2021 Convention Bid**
 - Because of the COVID pandemic, no convention was held in 2020.
 - Matt B (Group #3001) asked whether Louisville was still planning on running the next convention. Barbara indicated that we had been expecting Louisville, KY to put in a bid for the 2021 convention, pending resolution of COVID. (The cancellation insurance would not cover COVID.) We will send out an email blast once it is confirmed that Louisville has submitted their bid and it is approved. Matt indicated that the Chicagoland Intergroup had previously discussed possibly hosting a convention; he will bring this up with their board again.
 - If anyone else is interested in hosting a future convention, they should reach out to Barbara.
 - Because the WSB plans on holding future ABMs virtually, there is more flexibility in the timing of the convention.

VI. Report of the Nominating Committee- Maria S, Credentials Committee Chair

- **Nominees on Ballot for Officers for 2021/2022 term:**
 - Chair - Maria S (Group #2056)
 - Vice Chair - Marcia C (Group #494)
- **Nominees on Ballot for Board Members at Large for the 2021/2022 term:**
 - Barbara S (Group #1345); previous WSB Chair
 - Helen L (Group #1985); renewal of term
 - Robert S (Group #2056); renewal of term
- **Nominations from the Floor for Board Members at Large for the 2021/2022 term:**
 - Chris Z (Group #252); new to the Board
 - Greg C (Group #2056); new to the Board
 - Sara L (Group Sin Fronteras, Spain); new to the Board

Motion to nominate from the floor the above three individuals was made by Maria S, seconded by Chris Y, voted on approved.
Delegates also voted to approve the Officers and BMLs on the ballot.
- **Motions on Ballot**
 - Motion P-01 (to modify the FA Articles of Incorporation) and Motion P-02 to (Modify the FA Bylaws) had been withdrawn.

VII. 2020/ 2021 State of the Fellowship Report - Barbara S

- **Opening Remarks**

- Once again this past fiscal year has been very difficult for FA.
 - No face-to-face meetings meant no passing of the baskets.
 - No meetings also meant no literature being displayed, resulting in a decrease in literature sales.
 - There was no convention this past year.
 These three items represent our primary sources of income.
- The saving grace this year has been a legacy gift from a long-time FA couple who each left FA \$10K. Even with this remarkable gift, FA still fell short by more than \$13K.
- Almost all of our expenses are fixed, such as the rent for the World Service Office (WSO), the phones, our FA website, and the salary of our 2 employees.
- Our Treasurer, Cindy C, took it upon herself to renegotiate most of our contracts to save us money. She is also working to renegotiate our WSO lease which expires in September.
- The World Service Board has been trying our utmost to keep FA's head above water.
- **Our Present Statistics**
 - With the new website now functional, the online registration was running smoother this year. But once again, registrations are lagging behind because of COVID. It is hard to tell just how many groups are completely closed or not responding because of a lack of communication. Hopefully with states fully opening up and people getting the vaccine we will start feeling safer and be able to open up our face-to-face meetings once again. This is a decision to be made independently by each group.
 - Our statistics as of June 8:
 - Total number of US Groups: 185
 - Total number of International Groups (worldwide): 225
 - The number of National Service Boards (NSBs) that have been set up in other countries: 5.
 - Total number of Intergroups worldwide: 5.
 - Total number of groups that have registered with the WSO: 206
 - Total number of groups not registered: 58.
 - Some groups have found a way to meet virtually, while others have not, making both registrations and returning their ballots difficult. We decided to accept any registrations and votes that have come in right up until the date of the ABM.
- **World Service Board (WSB)**
 - Families Anonymous has been blessed by the dedicated, hardworking men and women of the WSB.
 - Such things as the wonderful literature you love to read, the website you use, the World Service Office, the Group Outreach, and *The Serenity Messenger*, just to name a few, are all overseen by the WSB.
 - I would like to thank all of the WSB for all the time and hard work that they put into keeping FA strong.
 - Two of our longest standing members are retiring as of this ABM. We sadly say good bye to George R and David M who have both served the fellowship and the WSB for over 10 years. They have been two of our strongest, most important members that have led our board with their wisdom and knowledge of our Traditions and Bylaws. They will be missed. We thank them for their service.
 - Gratefully we welcome 3 new members: Chris Z from NJ, Greg C from Florida, and Sara L from Madrid, Spain.
 - We are always looking for new members to serve on the WSB, to give service to the fellowship that has helped them. Please go back to your groups, and ask if anyone has interest and is willing to serve. We are especially looking for a Recording Secretary and for someone to help with our Technology Committee. Interested individuals can write to us at wsb_chair@familiesanonymous.org, or just contact our WSO.

- **World Service Office (WSO) Staff**
 - Our WSO has our only 2 paid employees: Angel (our office manager) and Nicole (our data management coordinator). They do their jobs well and FA would be at a loss without them.
- **FA Newsletter**
 - *The Serenity Messenger* is FA's bimonthly newsletter and can be found on the FamiliesAnonymous.org website.
 - Elizabeth S from India has been doing much of the editing, along with Bob S, and his committee members.
 - The Serenity Messenger is now, in my opinion, better than ever and has been coming out regularly in a bimonthly manner.
 - A way you can help is to write an article, a story, or a poem related to FA and email it to newsletter@familiesanonymous.org. Please remind the people in your groups of this.
- **World Service Summary**
 - Finances
 - ▶ Our Traditions tell us that we are to be a member supported organization, declining outside donations.
 - ▶ It is difficult to run an international organization with the declining donations and loss of literature sales, which are most of our income.
 - ▶ Please encourage your groups to send donations into the WSO as often as possible.
 - ▶ A Zelle account has been set up to make it easier for your treasurers to send in money and for individual donations. Use donate@familiesanonymous.org as the email address for sending the funds.
 - ▶ Another easy way for individuals to donate is to go onto the FA website.
 - Click on the Donate button at the top of the Home screen. Your computer will walk you through the process from there.
 - There is even a check box to make your donation a monthly recurring one.
 - ▶ Even a small gift of \$10 a month goes a long way to help us keep FA strong, to continue our growth and to get our message out to the people who need us.
 - Growing the Fellowship
 - ▶ We need to grow our membership in order to survive.
 - ▶ Each group needs to step up its Public Information campaigns.
 - ▶ Take our professional packs found at our literature store on the FA Website to your clergy, to your doctors, to local rehab centers, and schools.
 - ▶ Post information about your local meetings on your supermarket's bulletin boards.
 - ▶ Let us help others in need to find us. Most people have no idea we exist. This has got to change for FA to survive.
- **Closing Remarks**
 - I would like to thank the Fellowship for the honor of serving as your chair for the past 4 years. It has been an experience that I will treasure for the rest of my life.
 - Thank you delegates for your service today. Thank all of you for attending this meeting, for your input, and kind your attention.
- **Comments From the Floor**
 - Matt B (Group 3001) wanted to thank Cindy C for her input in helping to get Zoom accounts for the 23 locations in Chicagoland. He also mentioned that they have instituted speaker series, usually every 6 to 8 weeks; they average about 70 to 100 attendees. Those interested in joining can go to their website at fachicago.org; information about their speaker series is under "News."

- Matt B added that as a nonprofit, we want to do well. Even though we lost money during this difficult year, we provide a great service to the community. He appreciates all that the WSB does, especially during this difficult time.
- Jeff added that he agrees our primary objective should be service and outreach. He asked Matt if the speaker series occur during their regular meetings or on another night. Matt indicated that they occur on a night (Thursdays at 7:00 pm CT) when their groups do not meet.
- Michael B commented that during times of prosperity, it is easier to lead an organization. It takes a special person to lead through tough times. He acknowledged the fantastic job that Barbara did during a very difficult time, and the fellowship is grateful for all that she did.

VIII. Election Results Report - Maria S, Credentials Committee Chair

- There were 46 votes tallied before the meeting. Twelve groups appointed Delegates to the ABM and were eligible to vote for items on the ballot.
- Total number of votes cast for items on the ballot: 58.
- Out of 58 eligible votes:
 - All voted “yes” to approve the following Officers:
 - Maria S as Chair (Group 2056)
 - Marcia C as Vice-Chair (Group 494)
 - All voted “yes” to approve the following Board Members at Large (BMLs): Barbara S (Group 1345), Helen L (Group 1985), and Robert S (group 2056).
- Those eligible to vote today unanimously approved the following nominations from the floor for BMLs:
 - Sara L (Group Sin Fronteras, Spain)
 - Greg C (Group 2056)
 - Chris Z (Group 252)
- As a result of the election, the slate of Officers and BMLs are all approved.

IX. Adjournment:

- Maria S thanked everyone for their attendance. She acknowledged all the great work that Barbara did during her terms as Chair. She also thanked George R and David M for their service on the board. She looks forward to serving the fellowship as the new Chair. She is grateful to be part of an organization that has helped so many families, including her own.
- Moving forward, technology will play an increasingly important role as we reach out to those in need. The work Jeff S is doing with his Public Information Committee, and Michael B with the Long Range Planning Committee, will be critical to the growth of FA. It’s also an opportunity to give visibility to the great work that the groups are doing (such as the Chicagoland Speaker Series). Barbara added that our email blast system can also be used by groups.
- Maria S thanked the attendees for their participation and for all they do behind the scenes for the fellowship.
- Motion to adjourn was made by Barbara S; seconded by Bob S, voted on, and approved. Meeting adjourned at 2:49 pm EDT, following recitation of the Serenity Prayer.

Appendix 1

1st Credentials Committee Chair's report For ABM June 12, 2021

As of June 1, 2021: 204 groups have met the deadline to re-register and were eligible for voting.

As the Credentials Committee Chair, I collected:

23 FA Vote emails

21 Mailed-in Ballots

2 Proxies for the Credentials Committee Chair to vote

46 collected votes (prior to ABM)

+ 12 groups appointed Delegates eligible to vote on all items, bringing the **total potential votes** for items on the ballot to **58 votes**.

Two groups (which also sent in completed ballots) appointed 2 Delegates.

One group (which also sent in a completed ballot) appointed a Proxy.

The above three individuals are eligible to vote for items not on the ballot.

According to the FA By-Laws:

- 20 votes needed to meet the quorum to do Business (10%) at the ABM.
- 30 votes needed to meet the quorum to make the election of Officers and WSB Members valid (15%).

I hereby Certify that all quorums are met for the 2021 Annual Business Meeting.

Maria S.

2021 Credentials Committee Chair