

September 8th Group Care (Ad hoc) Business Meeting

This Ad Hoc Group Care Business meeting is being called to address the ongoing abusive behavior of one specific individual, James from MO.

Chairperson: Krista J

Secretary: Barbara S

Participants at start of meeting: 70

Start Time : 8:45am Eastern Time

AGENDA

Introduction

Serenity Prayer

Reading of Traditions and Safety in Meetings

Establishing Ground Rules

Setting Up the Agenda

Making Decisions

Next Steps

Closing the Meeting and Prayer

MINUTES

Approximately 90min of testimonials/statements by 28 members regarding the inappropriate behavior of James K (Missouri) at the SMR meeting. His behavior in meetings over the past 3+ months, including use of private chat direct messages, were described, in part, as: harassing, targeting, provocative, attacking, threatening, unsafe, annoying, distracting, upsetting, scary, disruptive, confusing, frustrating, inappropriate, predatory, abusive, violation of safety, pervasive, excessive. In addition, his shares included, but were not limited to, explicit and graphic remarks on rape and attacking (violence toward) women....and blaming women for getting kicked out of past meetings.

Note: several participants stated they emailed elected officers of the meeting to report his behavior, and were not satisfied with result; behavior persisted and escalated. A letter was sent

to WSO asking for guidance (no response at time of meeting). Participants expressed desire/need for clarity on how to handle/address safety issues and predatory behavior in the future.

Motion made and seconded: “Remove James K (Missouri) immediately and indefinitely from SMR”

Vote: 31 yes, 6 no, 1 abstain

(Note: 41 participants listed on zoom at this time)

Dissenting comments were heard (did not agree with use of “indefinite”). A revote was necessary, because several members wanted to change their vote. Original motion was amended to reflect the descending comments, as follows:

Amended motion made and seconded: “Remove James K (Missouri) immediately, and for an unspecified amount of time, from our meeting”

Vote: 30 yes, 1 no, 0 abstain

(Note: 36 participants listed on zoom at this time)

Dissenting comment heard (participant stated they “never vote to remove”).

Motion passed.

Following conversation focused on the next action step – notifying James of the group’s decision. According to member, he has no access to text or email, so direct contact via land line/telephone or zoom would be needed. During this conversation, a motion was made and seconded to “Create a policy and procedure committee...” After discussion, motion was withdrawn – it is currently listed as new business on regularly scheduled business meeting, and was outside the a scope of this ad hoc meeting.

Motion was made and seconded: “Decision and action of SMR group conscience be conveyed to James K (Missouri) by Jim R (et al., who Jim decides) within 72 hours.”

Vote: 17 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

(Note: 23 participants listed on zoom at this time)

Motion passed

Brief conversation on possibly changing password to contact list, and explore zoom setting to block James. No motions made.

Motion to close meeting was made and seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

End Time: approx. 11:10am Eastern Time

ADDENDUM

On Friday, September 10th, at about 9:20am, a call was placed to James K. The conference call, arranged by Will B., lasted for approximately 10 minutes. Jim R. spoke for the 4 assembled members which included the input and support of Andrea and Tom B. Over the previous day, we had explored our tasks, exhaustively, through email, texts and phone discussions.

In summary, here are the points we intended to impress upon James:

- we were calling on behalf of the Strengthening My Recovery morning meeting regarding his behavior... not who you are, but how you have acted.
- our main concern was for the health and safety of the group.
- well over 60 members of the morning meeting discussed his behavior and safety concerns for over 2 hours before reaching consensus.
- we asked that he not return to the meeting, nor contact members, generally, though we had no opinion on any relationships he may have established outside the meeting.
- we hoped that he finds the serenity and the recovery that he is seeking.
- the length of this separation is unspecified and will be based on personal recovery, emotional sobriety, and self-restraint.

While we do not have the ability to thoroughly understand how James received this information, he did not display surprise or incredulity. Sadly, James was well resigned to accept the message. He mentioned present personal family challenges, though not in the form of an excuse for his actions. He expressed remorse over displaying disruptive behavior. James also mentioned his admiration for all the members of SMR who offer service, estimating that the characteristics required to perform such service is beyond his capabilities.

This experience was challenging and painful.

Jim R.