

ACA SMR Business Meeting MINUTES

April 17, 2023

Call to Order: Interim Group Conscience Chair, Eddie, opened the meeting at 8:45AM.

ACA Serenity Prayer

General guidelines for this meeting:

- To be called on to speak, please use the Raise Hand function. The GC secretary will call on you.
- Waiting to do your second share until everyone has had an opportunity to share (pg 595 BRB)
- To ensure everyone has an opportunity to speak, shares are limited to two minutes for Trusted Servants giving reports and one minute for questions and discussions.
- We do not interrupt one another and abide by the “no cross talk” rule. (BRB 598)
- We ask that our Inner Children not be brought to a business meeting so that disruptions can be avoided. (BRB 597)

Call for Service:

Jim R - recording secretary

Boaz - timekeeper (45 and 60 minute alerts requested)

Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. ACA Serenity Prayer
3. General Guidelines
4. Call for Service
5. Motion to Adopt the Agenda
6. Reading of Traditions and Commitments to Service
7. Approval of Minutes
8. Reports
9. Old Business
10. New Business
11. Announcements and Next Meeting
12. Adjournment and Closing Prayer

Motion to adopt the Agenda:

Motion to adopt - Krista, seconded - yes. Motion passed by declaration.

Read Traditions: (1 through 12). Birgit, Wendy, Boaz, Vivienne, Staci, +1

Read Commitment to Service: Joy, Krista, +1

Approval of Last Meeting's Minutes:

Wendy - An editorial addition was made to the minutes, should be removed.

Krista - The comment was included to note ambiguities from the minutes of 2 months ago.

W - Asking for a special business session to comb through the records - not to have to look at these issues at this time.

K - As an *elected* Service Team member, I completely disagree. This will be brought up in our report as well. I am comfortable with tabling the approval of the Minutes at this time. And I want to note I am uncomfortable with the use of the word 'mandate' being used repeatedly in an ACA meeting.

Eddie - Can we have a motion to Table the acceptance of the minutes?

Motion: to table the minutes as they are currently printed, Krista. Second, Wendy

Motion carried without objection.

Reports:

Treasurer: Shana and Jim R

Written report given and posted on website. Seeking new treasurer and announcing online and in meetings. We received \$581.01 in donations in March. We disbursed \$435.75 to the WSO General Fund and \$145.25 to the International Literature Scholarship Fund. With the incoming contributions from April, we have in our PayPal account \$596.78, which is well above our prudent reserve of \$350. Currently there is \$573. in our Cash App account which will be transferred to PayPal, from which we conduct our business.

Service Team: Krista and Boaz.

Written report given and posted on website. Service team: Conrad, Pam, Will B.

We facilitate a Service Round Table discussion once a month. In May we will have a non-secretary lead the Round Table discussion. We have trained a new tech host, Staci, who opens the room on Saturdays. We handled some Zoom bomber incidents in the beginning of April.

We were confronted with a safety /service issue being conducted outside of the Group Conscience by an unelected Safety Committee employing a process not decided by Group Conscience. After much discussion Boaz and I decided to include the entire email chain, which we believe is owned by the group. The intent is transparency. (The Big Red Book was quoted.) We emphasize - we were elected by the Group. That is not something that has happened with the Safety Committee, nor have we agreed on their process.

Communications: Joy and Cynthia.

Written report given and posted on website.

Our password changes seasonally. The winter password was Serenity; it changed to Mindful around March 21st. It will change again in summer, around June 21st. There have been no changes to our listing with WSO, and we promote the 7th tradition contributions for WSO funds. There have been no changes to that either. We respond to emails sent to info@acamorning.org MailChimp who sends our emails has changed their free subscription policy. they used to allow for up to 1,000 emails for free they have now changed it to 500. Our workaround to this situation is to archive any email addresses of members who have not opened the last 10 emails from us. We have great 'open' rates.

WSO Representative: Vivienne.

The April and May WSO Monthly Board Teleconferences will be rolled together into one meeting. The report is not ready at this time.

Website: Conrad.

Written report given and posted on website.

In March there were 7,592 views of the website, slightly more than double the number in February. The Homepage, Script and Slides, and Family Album were popular. The website continues to be a resource for our members. We had 1,409 unique visitors in March, from 30 different countries. I will be stepping down from this position, which was mentioned last month. This will be my last report. I will still be around and able to help with the website a bit. Thank you for the opportunity, it's been fun.

Wendy - Can you remind me, was this an elected position? Do we need to elect someone this time or do we just find someone who knows how to use WordPress?

Conrad - The position wasn't elected, though I think it should be.

Staci - I want to thank you Conrad for your service. I enjoy the website.

Safety Committee: Lisa M, with Wendy C, Vivienne, Jim R, Maria

Written report given and posted on website.

The report has three sections. The first section shows how we were formed. We were formed as a result of meetings at the beginning of the year, around issues of safety. There were two breakout meetings in February, and lists of problems and solutions were compiled. Those lists and reports were forwarded to me, The Group Conscience Secretary (Chair) asked me to facilitate a committee to form policy and process, and to bring that to the Group Conscience for review and approval. That happened in February and we have been meeting throughout the month of March and into April.

The second section looks at how we are doing the work we are doing. The working documents will likely be available for review by next month. When we finish this work we will have a series of round tables, where we will discuss the recommended policies and processes. There will be a revision process and an editing process, as determined by the fellowship. The final report will come here to the Business Meeting for voting and approval.

The third section, and the cause of a lot of divisiveness, concerns a safety issue that arose. That safety issue had to do with predatory behavior. The concern was brought to the outgoing Group Conscience Secretary who forwarded the complaint to both the Service Secretaries and the Safety Committee. Because of the division amongst us, we are asking for a Group Care/ Group Conscience meeting to happen in about 2 weeks - with plenty of announcements to the general Fellowship so that we can address this predatory behavior issue and derive what we want to do about this type of issue as a group, which will then become our policy. At that same meeting we will discuss the directive of this group to even be able to form policy.

Eddie - Thank you for your report. Are there any questions?

Krista: I have a correction to make. because I included all of the emails that are in our possession between the Safety Committee and Service, Our position was very clear from the beginning, Boaz mentioned on March 23rd that she was okay with Lisa and Vivienne talking to Jane Doe. I questioned the validity of the Safety Committee. I have concerns of triangulating

behavior occurring. And on March 24th I wrote an email expressing my concerns. I have maintained the same position throughout - that this should not be handled...

Jim R. Excuse me, excuse me, Is there a question about the report in this statement?

K: That [the report] is incorrect, is what I'm saying. It says we authorized an investigation, which we don't have the authority to do! We are trusted servants, not authority figures, so this is patently incorrect.

J: Thank you.

Clara T: I would like to offer a reminder to keep centered on our spiritual principals, please.

E: Krista can you fashion your comment in the form of a question?

K: I would like the Safety Committee to edit the report to reflect what was actually communicated by the Service Team Co-Secretaries.

E: Uh, Safety Committee, clear enough question?

Lisa: I think I'm clear, and let me repeat back to make sure I understand... Boaz agreed, but you did not agree. That is the correction you would like to make. Is that correct?

K: I feel you could copy and paste the emails I included... At no point did we agree to an investigation of another service member.

E: So you are asking them to change that in their report.

L: The sentence should potentially say, "Boaz agreed to the initial conversation, but Krista did not." Would that suffice there?

Boaz: I would also like you to add that I offered to speak with the alleged predator and was ignored. And no one spoke to the predator.

L: So, "you had offered to speak to the alleged predator." Those two sentences.

B: Thank you.

E: We are over the minute... Anymore questions about the report? Clara, I think you're next...

C: My question is, "Was the Safety Committee something that was voted by a Group Conscience?"

L: To my understanding, the Safety Committee was formed at the request of the Group Conscience Secretary as the result of someone at the Group Conscience meeting in February asking for that to be the next step. I do not know if that was voted on or not - the record log for that is missing. So I don't know.

C: So there was no vote to create a Safety Group in the first place.

K: Clara there was no vote to create a Safety Committee. There was no Group Conscience to elect a Safety Committee to act on behalf of SMR.

C: Thank you for answering. And regarding this, ACA WSO has it's own Safety Committee, so we should go by the guidelines of the WSO, unless there is a Group Conscience and something is voted. Let Go and Let God. When we have predatory behavior meetings, and this is my humble opinion, we don't start engaging in a drama triangle dynamics. That's not recovery. I don't even know why we have something like this in a report. It's not asked from the group.

L: If you would like me to respond, really quickly, it was asked for by someone in the Group, where safety was discussed. But it may not have been elected by group conscience. We did go back to the Safety Resources Committee for some direction. It is possible for groups to do work by the method that unfolded - direction that came without an election. We are asking now, that it be revisited. That there actually be a motion and a vote. And that is what we are asking for in

the upcoming Group Conscience, because it has become such a flashpoint. So that's what we're asking for in the next couple of weeks.

Eddie: Ok, Brian, do you have a question?

Brian: Yes. Is it up to the Group, or any of us to determine if someone is predatorial in nature? We're not authorities. And we're not authority figures. I have a question - Is the predatory observation still a threat, and if it's not a threat, I would make a motion to disband any committee that has been inappropriately formed.

Pam: Second that.

L: I'll go ahead and address that. I think there are 2 separate issues - I think the first issue of the predatory behavior is unresolved; I think the second issue of the committees involved in that - in retrospect - we should not have been pulled into it and we should not have decided to act. I am in somewhat of an agreement with you, the issue still does need to be resolved.

B: So the predatory behavior is still a threat?

L: It has not been resolved, correct.

B: Thank you.

E: Thank you, Brian. Staci, you have a question?

Staci: Please time me so I don't go over a minute. I go to a Traditions meeting, and we just went through all of this... If I could bring everyone back to the Big Red Book... While a committee on safety may sound like a reasonable idea, it takes away the power from each group member, it slips us back into our family of origin where we can't trust each other. And that's what this is all about. Our members can be trusted to keep their word and to take care of themselves. And a Safety Committee is just a bunch of adult children doing what they've always done. And it's frustrating to see this in a meeting. I see it in my home and I hear about it at work. So I think a Safety Committee is a bad idea.

L: If I may respond to that, the Safety Committee is only developing policy and process to bring to the fellowship. Many times members are assigned work so that they may bring it to the fellowship, for them to vote on it. And that's all that's happening.

S: It sounds as though someone was targeted and expelled, which is what your report says, which is beyond your scope of practice, or any power that you may have received, that the committee gives you.

L: I agree with you Staci that the Safety Committee should not have been drawn into that predatory action, and once we realised that happened there should have been a Group Care meeting called immediately to handle it. So I do believe that was an error.

E: I just want to clarify one thing, before we go on to a second round of questions. The Safety Committee was a topic that was brought up in February due to someone on Zoom - not a bomber - someone pressing their lifestyle, forcefully. Which is a safety issue. The person was, in terms of the traditions, asked to step aside and to talk quietly because that person was being disruptive. That person chose not to participate. When we had the meeting, a lot of people came in upset that the person hadn't been invited to attend the business meeting. Everyone is invited to attend. So that raised the question, "Were our current safety practices enough?" That's why there is a Safety Committee. And you are not elected. There was never an election, for any of you. I went back through my notes. People thought, we have enough things in place now, we don't need to do that. I just wanted to clarify that.

E: Krista?

L: May I clarify and respond to your comment as well?

E: I wasn't asking a question.

L: There were some things that were not my memory, as well.

E: Lisa, I'm going to ask you not to do that, okay?

L: Sure.

E: What I was doing was clarifying how this committee came about because some people don't understand how it was formed. There was no election, ever. And I'm going to say, I don't like how you are using the phrase, "Drawn into all of this..." I know it was put forward by somebody that it had to get addressed, but when people were raising their hand in the chain of emails, that "Hey, maybe we are going down the road too quickly..." The response that came back... was troubling, to say the least, troubling. So, I'm not going to have a response on that. I'm just clarifying that there was no election, there is no committee, it was just to discuss some ideas and bring them forward. Much like what I'm doing with the business meeting format. It's just a conversation.

Boaz: We are at 9:30.

E: Thank you so much.

Krista: Just to clarify for Clara, in the past, when positions were being formulated we had a Positions Description Committee that would report on their progress. In a similar fashion, with this email chain, I asked the Safety Committee to report on what they were doing, what they were discussing. Which is why, I felt it wasn't important to include all these emails in our service report. I feel like all of this needs to be added because this is what the Traditions warn us about. How this all unfolded. which is why I specifically asked for a report from the Safety Committee. Not what they were investigating with an individual, but what they were sourcing what they had learned. That was my question, not how are you investigating individual members of SMR. I just wanted to make that clear.

E: Thank you Krista

Boaz: I do have a question for Lisa and I'm going to give a bit of background first. When we were first all notified about the complaint the first thing I said was we need to talk to the person who's being complained about. In a second email I said go ahead and talk to the accuser may I talk to the person who's being complained about? No response. Then I heard from the person who was being complained about, a beloved long serving member of this meeting. He was asked to remove himself from service and to refrain from putting references to other meetings in the chat. It's all in the emails, it's all there. No one had spoken to him yet. He spoke to Krista and I first and said, Hey, what is happening? He had blocked the person who was stalking him, and she was angry and put in a complaint. My question is, Lisa, why was this person asked to step down from service before anyone heard his side of the story? Why was he targeted and punished before anyone asked him one question? Please clarify that for me.

Lisa: Thank you Boaz. I'm uncomfortable answering some of the questions, but not all of them. So I think we should defer this conversation to the Group Care, because we'll be discussing this particular comment that you've made at great length, and the attempts of Trusted Servants to actually follow the process that was recommended by the ACA WSO. I defer the rest of these comments to that meeting, please.

B: So you're on record that you're not going to answer my question, thank you.

E: Thank you Boaz, up next is Wendy.

Wendy: I'd just like to mention that the Big Red Book which has all the Traditions and information about the Safety Committee was written in 2006. 17 years ago when we didn't have online meetings of 300 people; that had completely different safety issues. In our committee, which was one of the most thoughtful, conscious and caring for both the Accused and the Accuser - I've never been in the committee that was so thoughtful and kind - we wanted this to be a space of healing. We did the best we could. I'd also like to say that we followed more recent ACA materials. The most recent OPPM (Operating Policy and Procedures Manual) of The World Service Organization has a whole appendix about predatory behavior. The predatory tent card is now on our website. There are many meetings on the WSO website that have safety policies. The committee we formed was to come up with policy. Perhaps we overstepped, but there was never a cabal of people intending to hurt anyone.

E: Thank you Wendy, Clara you're next.

C: I just want to remind us of the drama triangle dynamic, which leads to completing the cycle of violence. There was a victim, there was a persecutor, and someone steps in and tries to rescue. This is what's happening. This was never elected by the group conscience and I have to ask Eddie to bring order to the meeting because there was a motion, that was seconded, to erase this Safety Committee so this needs to be voted now please, thank you

E: Point of order - There is no Safety Committee. I know this term keeps getting used and I am not ignoring the motion, but there's nothing to disband. We had two people, I believe it was Vivienne and Lisa who offered service to talk about the safety issue. Thank you again for offering that. The other people came on after, as part of discussions. So right now there is no committee elected, disbanded - this is a group of meeting members discussing issues. So we don't need to disband anything. I am going to refer one thing. I know this meeting has challenges because we're an online meeting so there are a lot of things in the source material which aren't really relevant because we aren't a face to face brick and mortar meeting. Our meeting begins at 7:30 it ends at 8:30. If it didn't happen within that time period, it's outside the meeting. The parking lot is not the meeting, newcomer session - not the meeting. The meeting ended at 8:30. if it didn't happen during our meeting why are we talking about it? That would be my question. It's not whether people had good intentions or not. I believe in people's good intentions, I do, I see it all over here.

Wendy, do your hand is back up

W: Yes just to speak to that question, if it happens outside the meeting... The WSO material is very clear, If it's adjacent to the meeting, as in if it happens in the parking lot, or in our business meeting, or any fellowship meetings that we have - if it is a direct result of that, then we are involved. Then we do have an issue that needs to be addressed.

E: Jim go ahead

J: I would just add too that our website is technically our meeting, as well as anything that is mentioned in the chat.

E: Krista

K: I just want to make a point that the World Service Organization does not override the Traditions and each meeting is autonomous to be run in a way that the membership sees fit. And that is decided by Group Conscience. It is not decided by a small, self-appointed group of people. I hear the overwhelming sentiment in this business meeting saying, follow the Traditions. And I would have to disagree - I think if you read the emails through, I don't read

gentle, I read authoritative. That is troubling to me. And I hear pushback. We are not authority figures, we are but trusted servants. If we're not coming from a place of love, then we need to step back, and discover what our motivation is - not as a Service co-secretary, as an adult child. What Clara said resonated with me I see addiction to excitement from start to end in those emails. Our meeting is not unsafe to 300 people because one person made a complaint about one person. I feel it is a complete overreaction. I also want to say the mixed message having a contact list and a newcomer greeter session - maybe we need to have a little self-reflection.

B: 2 more minutes to :45.

E: Thank you, Boaz.

W: We do not agree completely, that's why we have called a Group Conscience, so that we can sit together as people who care about each other and come to some resolution.

E: Vivienne?

V: I just wanted to mention that this complaint of predatory behavior is not an isolated incident. and that's all I'm going to say about it, I think this needs to be discussed in a group conscience.

Old Business:

E: Okay, don't see any further hands. Do we have any old business? I know we have old business, that's something we're going to have to work on.

New Business:

E: New business, I know Clara had a point to bring up. Clara are you still here?

C: My motion was... we have this feelings list that we share on one of our days in our meeting. My suggestion would be to use the list of feelings and needs from the Loving Parent Guidebook. It would be ACA literature. I could show you... (Screen shared) The feelings are the same, it's just that it would be a reference to ACA literature. I also heard that people are looking for a script for the Group Conscience and guidelines and I actually have that from the Experience Strength and Hope meeting and I'd like to share that with you. I'll share that link in the chat.

E: So a Motion... You'd like us to use Appendix D, from the Loving Parent Guidebook.

E: Can we get a second on the Motion?

W: Can I get clarification, for our Friday slide? Okay, thank you.

B: I second, Boaz.

E: All those in favor, please say "Aye".

J: Are we going to have any discussion?

E: Well, I was just going to have us vote, "yes or no" first, but Jim, if you have a question...

J: I'm wondering if Clara can put that into a slide format, and bring it to us next month to approve. To be honest, the print seems really small to me. I don't know how it's going to fly with someone who may be on their phone. It may be hard to read. Can it be reformatted so that it's clearer?

C: Yes it can be formatted in any format you need.

J: Can you do that for us?

C: Yes. Just let me know what you need.

E: Thank you Jim, Maria, I see your hand.

Maria: I've attended many many business meetings through the years and I've never heard of decisions being made by just one business meeting, without it being announced throughout the week, or whatever it is, so that members which this business meeting is representing, members at large, can have a say and vote in the decision making. So I'm a little confused by this process right now.

E: Okay thank you Maria, Krista?

K: Each group is autonomous and we conduct our business as we see fit.

M: Who is "we see fit" that's what I'm confused by? It sounds like there's a very domineering kind of environment I'm hearing, that's all. I just needed to say that, thank you.

K: Well, I've been to many GC meetings in this meeting and we always have the same number of participants and I think if folks want to be included in the GC... #1 they either attend this GC meeting or #2 they call a group conscience to change the day of our GC meeting. I don't come here to reparent other people or to gain consensus.

E: Okay so, that's a great point you brought up. This is the reason why I formed a committee to sit around and talk about these things. To kick around ideas see what's working what's not working. Typically what we've always been doing is, we vote on something if we like the idea, we send it out to be looked at, announced, to be brought up next month. No decision is being made today, is what I'm trying to say.

Wendy, your hand is next.

W: Yes, because it did sound like we were voting and that we were going to do this. I'd also like to say that when we used our website to poll people - whether to have an Anniversary speaker during the meeting or after, we had 80-some people weigh in on that; we had over 100 people weigh in on what our meditation slide would look like. So that is a resource we can turn to to say "do you like this or do you like that".

E: Thank you Wendy, Bonnie Lee...

BL: I know there is a committee being formed on the group conscience. That's my dilemma in recovery, if the group, as a whole, doesn't know what we're doing in the business meeting how are they being represented? I'm trying to stay spiritually connected and not be upset. Part of that is my own recovery and part of that is because I would be one of the first to raise a hand about traditions and autonomy because that's very important for a meeting but again the autonomy is the group and we all have our own opinions we try to follow whatever is designated by ACA literature and World Service and I know that I haven't been coming to this meeting for a very long time but I think this is as important to me, as it is to someone who has been coming here for three years. Thank you.

E: Thank you Bonnie Lee. I have to apologize we are a few minutes over already. Can I get a motion... do we want to extend?

Brian: I make a motion that we extend the meeting for time that you see fit.

Boaz: Second.

E: Can we say the time, 10:00?

Br: 10:00.

Bo: Second

E: Brian you're next

Br: Thank you for Eddie you're doing a good job of helping me stay calm. Yes it did sound like we were passing a motion. If we were to bring this up as an agenda item, I'm a little confused on

that myself. It was announced for like a month on the 2-minute meditation slide, and this is significantly different. and I would suggest that this be tabled and Clara come back with a slide a month from now. Is this emotion to use a slide for one day of the week or is this emotion to bring the slide to the attention of the group?

E: Okay so I'm just going to clarify... What we do when we typically bring up emotion we vote on whether or not we're going to vote on it next month. I didn't phrase it that way I apologize. So Clara is going to make up a slide: we're going to announce it until May 15th; and then we are going to vote on it. And that's usually how we do it.

Clara: I would like to share my experience on this... (worksheet displayed) and maybe this is another motion. I'm just sharing my experience. and this is what we do... (worksheet explained)

E: Thank you Clara. Please come and talk to us on the committee; that's what we're here to talk about. Birgit...

Birgit: Yes thank you so much Eddie. I'm just supporting what Clara is saying. sometimes people are too busy to come to business meetings. This way would be very transparent if you can't come to the meeting you can read and be on board.

Bo: We are at one minute to 10

E: Can someone make the motion?

C: I could use help. there's already a slide format in place and I don't know who made that. So the motion is...

Motion: to change the Friday feelings slide to the feelings and needs chart from the appendix in the Loving Parent Guidebook.

E: Can I get a second please with the restated motion?

Nancy: If it's going to be presented at the meeting, I second the motion.

E: All those in favor please say Aye. Anyone opposed, please say No (silence).

Motion carried without objection.

Okay, so we will be announcing the upcoming decision - to change the slide. Thank you Clara. Any other new business?

Announcements and Next Meeting:

Okay, announcements? Please let me know if you're interested in joining the committee (GC study). We are just going to have a conversation. We'll make it after a meeting in a breakout room, so a majority of members can attend. Does anybody have any other announcements?

The next meeting is May 15th after the newcomer session of the meeting.

Adjournment and Closing Prayer:

Can someone make a motion to adjourn the meeting?

Krista: I make a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Vivienne: I second. Call

E: All those in favor please say Aye. Anyone opposed to closing the meeting now? (silence).

Clara: I was just thinking about, in order for us to have a more productive group conscience, would it be possible for us just to at least look at the Group Conscience Guidelines of Order so that maybe we could approve that in the near future, so that we can have a more structured business meeting?

E: Which is exactly why we're having the meeting to discuss the format of the business meeting. If you have any ideas please jot them down and bring them to our group. We need them because we are struggling.

The meeting is now adjourned. Please join me in a moment of silence followed by the ACA Serenity Prayer.

Meeting adjourned at 10:05 AM. Approx.

Minutes by Jim R.