

MINUTES SMR Business Meeting Study

Wednesday, June 5th, 2024

Attendees: 6 - incl, Cori, Clara T, Birgit, Eric, Lisa, Jim

01. Call to Order [09:05]

Call for the meeting of the Business Meeting Study Group, on the SMR Zoom account.

We open with the Serenity Prayer.

02. Call to Service (*The following attendees offered to be of service*)

- Meeting Chairperson - Jim R
- Recording Secretary - Jim R
- Timekeeper - Clara T
- Other (*optional*) -

(Record the meeting) **Not Recorded**

03. Statement of Purpose - read by Cori

04. Compartment Agreements - read by Eric,

05. Approval of the Minutes -

The minutes of the **June 2nd** meeting are being screen shared.

Motion to approve of the May 8th Minutes - Cori; 2nd - Eric; unopposed

06. Adoption of the Agenda - Motion to adopt - Eric; 2nd - Birgit;

1. Research of consensus decision making models - Eric
2. Review the Script, to date

07. Open issues (*Old Business*)

Consensus Decision Making Models

We are open to exploring alternative methods of conducting business. We may also look at the material that Clara T has developed and envision how it may be incorporated into what we have produced so far.

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1axhKYjHLe4bpZS5qjlhsYG-lc8ygeou2?usp=sharing>

Eric - Looked at Narcotics Anonymous material for their decision making information. They use a consensus building model.

Doesn't replace agendas and minutes and such - it replaces the decision making process. 2nd Tradition is very important. Robert's Rules can be used to derail a meeting - not always best. Can also leave the minority out. First utilized by the Quakers. NA has some good instructional videos available. Note: Consensus building may be hard on the facilitator. It takes skill, patience and where-withall.

The Process:

1. Proposal arrives... quick poll.
 - a. With around 80% support, they look for the minority opinion; then see if more discussion is needed. (Most minority opinions just want to be heard)
 - b. With less than 80% the group may ask for a postponement; that the issue go to a committee, or more discussion.

Main point: members are asked, "Can you live with this proposal?" If the answer is no, it returns to discussion. Also, the objective is to meet together, a business outcome is secondary.

Sometimes items have a tight time constraint or may have a sense of emergency and would need a decision.

Links:

Q: Eric, do you have a sense of the number of issues that might be addressed in a meeting of an hour or an hour and a half, with this process?

A: I haven't asked that question, but they seem to move at a faster pace. Partly it has to do with the NA personalities as opposed to ACA. What's more, ACA participants are not well versed in Robert's Rules. The members of NA are encouraged to understand the consensus method.

Q: You have seen our online Proposal Process, how does it compare or contrast?

A: Not totally in alignment. Our online process certainly allows for greater participation, but presently it's a little rigid. It allows for more participation and for getting things done. Whether it serves for more unity is questionable.

Clara T.: I first created a draft document example based on Robert's Rules - which doesn't foster unity. This has been evidenced in our fellowship. To move, as in rowing a boat, we have to have the biggest majority.

The ACA WSO Literature Committee decided to have a $\frac{3}{4}$ (75%) majority to move ahead on motions. Upon achieving that level there would then be a minority opinion, a possible revote and if the numbers stand, the motion passes.

The polling on our website seems to be a lot of work, mechanical, and does not allow for the presence of a loving God.

I suggest we keep things simple. The business meeting would open with a Serenity Prayer, and some of our readings. Then we would have reports. Then, when we open the floor for issues, my suggestion is to:

1. Set up a topic - introduce the issue in 2 minutes
2. Open the floor for discussion. Listen to everyone's perspective for up to 20 minutes - timed shares, with priority for new speakers
3. Pause, as needed, for up to a minute, to clear our thoughts
4. Chair asks, is anyone ready to make a motion? If not the discussion could be tabled for a later time.
5. Note: A simple vote would be taken prior to discussion to see if this is a topic the group would like to address. (70%)

With all members on board with this process, the Chair may have an easier time of conducting our business.

The links above are open for additional comments.

Comment: I just want to note the alignment with the process that Eric described. We could find some common ground. Jim

C: Yes, I was looking over the Checklist... Eric. Online polling may not be the best way to make decisions, but it may be a great way to identify and refine proposals. Everyone could have a voice, and we could have rank choice as to the order of the proposals.

C: I like the online voting because it allows members to participate, and I also like the Town Halls which promotes discussion... Lisa. Is the Town Hall the place or is the Business Meeting the place?

C: A Town Hall provides focus and time to delve into a topic... Jim.

C: And people bring a discussion attitude into a Town Hall... Lisa

The meeting came to an abrupt halt due to obligations.

The participants were agreeable to possibly meeting sooner than in 4 weeks.

Communication would happen in emails.

NOTE: The Meeting ended here.

Review the Script, to date

Look at the script with the idea of proposing a 'try out' at the July Business Meeting. Consider incorporating ideas from Eric and Clara T. We were unable to look at the Script...

08. Adjournment [10:18]

Motion to Adjourn: , Seconded:

Closing prayer

Next meeting: Sunday, July 5th

Minutes submitted by:

If you have comments about the Business Meeting Study or our general SMR business practices, or would like to add to the agenda, please write to:

*Jim at 12steps4jimr@gmail.com, subject line: **Biz Mtg Study**.*