

Families Anonymous
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors
September 16, 2023

INTRODUCTION

1. **Call to Order:** 12:04 pm EDT, by Maria S, Chair
2. **Roll Call:** by Maria S.

<u>Name</u>	<u>WSB Role</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Monthly Report</u>
Maria S	Chair	P	W
Chris Y	Vice Chair	E	W
Cindy C	Treasurer	P	W
Jan B	Secretary	E	W
Ann P	BMAL	E	W
Bob S	BMAL	P	W
Chris Z	BMAL	P	W
Guy B	BMAL	P	W
Helen L	BMAL	A	N
Jeff S	BMAL	P	L
Mike B	BMAL	P	L
Sarah T	BMAL	P	N
Cristina B	BMAL	A	N
Jeff F	BMAL	E	W

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:

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

4. Tradition One:

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

5. Approval of August 2023 WSB Minutes:

- Mike moved to accept the July WSB Minutes, Cindy seconded, voted on and approved. Maria to distribute.

6. Chair's Report: Maria S

- There were no other comments or questions concerning the Chair's Report.

7. Treasurer's Report: Cindy C

- Cindy provided the monthly financial reports for August 2023 as part of her monthly report.
- Mike asked whether we had a good or bad month and if we are still tracking to run out of funds in 3.5 years. Cindy indicated that our month was as expected, and confirmed that ~3.5 years is the timeframe to run out of funds.
- There were no other comments or questions concerning the Treasurer's Report.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee

SC-1 Public Information
SC-2 WSO
SC-3 Literature
SC-4 Serenity Messenger Newsletter
SC-5 Bylaws, Parliamentary
SC-6 International Groups
SC-7 Budget Committee
SC-8 Sponsorship
SC-9 Group Outreach
SC-10 Financial Oversight
SC-11 Technology
SC-12 Long Range Planning

Chair

Jeff S
Maria S
Ann P
Robert S
Maria S (ad interim)
Helen L
Cindy C
Helen L
Chris Z
Chris Z
Chris Y
Mike B

AD-HOC COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee

Chair

AH-1 Convention Liaison	Cindy C
AH-2 Intergroup Support & Development	Jeff F
AH-3 Document Review	Ann P
AH-4 Education	Maria S
AH-5 Literature Access Initiative	Maria S

- There were no other additional updates from the Committee Chairs.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Motion to approve updated version of PPG-08 *Policy to Make and Approve Motions by the Board of Directors* (Maria S)

- **Motion:** Move that the WSB approve the updated version of PPG-08 Policy to Make and Approve Motions by the Board of Directors.
- **Rationale:** This policy was last reviewed / updated in July 18, 2020. It was due for review / update in July 2023. Upon review, some minor edits were needed.
- **Feasibility:** A copy of the document, with the proposed edits, was e-mailed to the WSB Members for their review. WSB Members were given an opportunity to suggest other changes. Their suggestions were incorporated into the final version submitted with the WSB chair's board report.
- **Implementation:** Once approved, the WSO Chair will provide the WSO DMC with:
 - A Word file (with the revisions) to serve as the Golden Master
 - A pdf file (with the revisions) for filing on the website.
- **Cost:** There is no cost associated with this motion.

Motion made by Bob, seconded by Mike, voted on and approved.

2. Motion to approve updates to convention-related documents (Cindy C):

- **Motion:** Move that the Families Anonymous World Service Board (WSB) approve the proposed updates to the following convention-related PPG documents:
 - PPG-14 – *FA World Service Convention Policy*
 - PPG-15 – *Convention Guidelines*
 - PPG-16 – *Convention Emergency Preparedness and Sample Emergency Response Plan*
- **Rationale:** These policies have been reviewed by the Convention Liaison Chair with updates proposed. Next review date is scheduled in 3 years (September, 2026).
- **Feasibility:** Copies of the documents, with proposed updates, have been provided to the WSB.

- **Implementation:** On approval, the Convention Liaison Chair will provide the WSO DMC with:
 - A Word file (with the updates) to serve as Golden Master
 - A pdf file (with the updates) for filing on the website.
- **Cost:** None
- Via email, Ann requested that the Literature Committee, one of the original co-authors of PPG-14 *FA World Service Convention Policy*, be given the opportunity to review it prior to approval. The motion was amended to table approval for PPG-14 until next month.
- The amended motion to approve PPG-15 and PPG-16 was made by Cindy, seconded by Jeff, voted on and approved.

3. Virtual Day of Sharing (Maria S)

- The Virtual Day of Sharing with other 12-Step recovery organizations is scheduled for Thursday, October 19, from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm ET. Each organization is allowed to have two members participate. Two years ago, Jeff S and Maria S attended; last year Cindy C and Maria S attended.
- Maria asked for a volunteer to join her for this year's meeting. Chris Z and Sarah T volunteered. A decision regarding attendance will be made once the agenda is finalized; Maria will keep the WSB informed.
- Agenda topics suggested by the board include:
 - Which efforts have been most effective in terms of growing the membership.
 - How to measure the effectiveness of public outreach / awareness campaigns.
- Sarah asked whether it would be the appropriate venue to discuss the vignettes project and public information. Cindy indicated that a similar topic, with a demonstration by Al-Anon, was on the agenda last year, so it is unlikely that it would be accepted as an agenda item for this year. Maria will send Sarah a copy of last year's minutes with that information. Maria will reach out to the person who presented the information and copy Sarah as an introduction.
- Maria asked board members to email her regarding other potential topics.

4. Opportunities to raise awareness at national and local levels (Bob S)

- Via email, Jeff had informed the board of local activities he was participating in for National Recovery month. Bob suggested it would be helpful to systematically identify these opportunities and alert the fellowship of them so that the groups could participate in their communities.
- Bob has recently reviewed back issues of the 12 Step Rag from the 1990's and early 2000's. In some of those issues, there was a "Suggested Calendar for Coordinated Monthly Community Outreach"; an example was provided with his board report. The calendar lists outreach targets (such as schools, hospitals, etc.) and relevant material / literature to send them or bring to events.

- Jeff agreed it would be helpful to plan ahead and have a coordinated effort. Events would vary from state to state, or city to city. We could periodically email the fellowship with ideas / suggestions. They could be relatively simple ideas, but if everyone does them, they would be impactful. Information could be placed on Social Media. We would be reliant on group secretaries to help implement the suggestions.
- One example, prior to next September (i.e., National Recovery Month) we could ask local groups to reach out to their state's Department of Health and Human Services, find out what local recovery activities will be taking place, and encourage them to attend. We could facilitate by providing a list of e-resources / free downloads they could bring to those events.
- The purpose would be to raise awareness of the family disease of substance use disorder, and share information about FA.
- We will target to have a calendar for 2024 developed by the end of this year. Each bi-monthly issue of the Serenity Messenger could focus on suggested activities for the following two months.
- Bob volunteered to help write the articles for the Serenity Messenger, email blasts, etc., with the suggestions on how to carry out the specific outreach efforts. For example: if the outreach is to hospitals, this is who you would contact, these are suggested materials you can send, these are activities you could ask to participate in. Maria indicated that some of this is available in existing literature and presentations, and could be pulled from there.
- In addition to board members, Mike suggested that we identify individuals in groups who would be interested in (and good at) speaking in public / media events, and sharing their story.
- We need to let groups feel like raising awareness is one of their obligations to support FA. Local groups are best positioned to reach out locally. It is the WSB's responsibility to help them with that.
- Mike suggested we encourage groups to use some of their funds to reproduce materials (available on our website) where they can add their meeting information and leave it at appropriate venues (such as drug stores, libraries, etc.).
- Guy emphasized the need to be mindful of our traditions as we develop our awareness campaigns. He suggested having a group conscience meeting if needed.
- Guy shared his experience raising awareness with the prison service in the UK, based on attraction rather than promotion. During recovery month, they will do a radio interview on prison radio which reaches across a large number of prisons in the UK.
- Chris Z indicated that she will try to contact each group secretary on a quarterly basis to share with them board activities. This would complement the WSB's

- twice-yearly call to group secretaries. Bob suggested that Chris Z share the information she communicated for publication in the Serenity Messenger.
- Mike feels that the strategy has been “we hope by word of mouth” that people will hear about FA. This strategy has not served us. We need to be more proactive in raising awareness. The WSB agrees.
 - There was a discussion about which committee could take the lead in organizing this. Suggestions were Group Outreach or Public Information. Jeff suggested that the whole board be involved. Maria volunteered to put together a table in Google Drive, begin populating it with suggestions, and ask the board to contribute their ideas.

5. Long-Range Planning Committee Update (Mike B)

- Mike provided an update from the Long-Range Planning Committee, reviewing the attached document (see Attachment A).
- Mike also mentioned the following during his review:
 - The Boca Raton Group holds very effective meetings; they typically have 30 to 40 attendees, with younger members in attendance. It would be good to understand the basis of their success.
 - At one of the group meetings he regularly attends, members recently lost two loved ones due to suicide within one week. He was asked if FA could provide a session / information concerning suicide.
 - The strategy is to survive and then thrive. Need to help groups grow from their 8 to 10 members, to 10 to 20 members.
- Mike suggested the board have a discussion on how much revenue would be appropriate to have in reserves. Currently, the board feels we are unable to pursue some activities because of a lack of sufficient revenue.
- Guy suggested we use the word “proactive” rather “aggressive” when describing our awareness campaign. Also...Step 12 supports our strategy to carry the message of FA to others, and to help others in doing so as well. Guy also agrees that social media is an effective way to raise awareness.
- Chris Z would love to hear more about what happens in our individual groups and meetings; it might help us figure out how best to help others.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

TABLED ITEMS: None

CLOSING

1. Announcements/items forgotten to mention:

- Sarah asked for approval for the watercolor effect that she used to anonymize the subject in the pilot vignette. Rotoscoping is out of the question now because of cost. After discussion, Sarah will move forward with the watercolor effect, but amplify it to further anonymize the subject. In future recordings, Sarah could also further anonymize the subject by darkening the eyes. Sarah will have a good rough cut for the next meeting.

2. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn was made by Bob, seconded by Cindy, voted on and adjourned (1:36 pm ET).

3. Closed with the Serenity Prayer

Attachment A - Update from the Long-Range Planning Committee

World Service Board Families Anonymous Long Range Planning September

Approximately two(2) years ago, a decision was made organically that the first fifty (50) years of Families Anonymous did **not** anticipate all the issues that would arise in the next fifty years.

The crisis of survival and sustainability revealed itself as the cloud of the COVID-19 pandemic began to lift. Simply stated, **the expenses at a WSB level outstripped the revenues significantly**. In order to scale this crisis, a Health Index (HI) which indicated how long the organization could continue without moving into the red (unsustainable financial position).

This Health index currently varies between 3.0-4.0, typically settling in the 3.5 year range.

Overall Goal:

Increase FA membership ——> leading to increased revenue (literature sales, donations)

After much discussion and effort, the following was determined:

Operational Initiatives:

- Increase awareness of Families Anonymous

Struggle in respect to promotion

- Increase value generated by World Service Board

Majority of members cannot state WSB contribution to their recovery

- Increase the ease and opportunity for donations to FA (regionally and globally)

WSB has a donation tool that can be listed IF groups are defined as 4013c

- Increase the energy of the FA organization (ideation/membership of WSB)

This does suggest recruiting younger people

- Modernize/Enhance the methods and resources (website/tools) inherent in FA
- Refresh FA literature with current terminology, topic content
- ***E.g. Suicide - Increase in threat and attempts (sponsor education sessions)***

**World Service Board
Families Anonymous
Long Range Planning
July 2023**

Philosophical Struggles:

- *An organization binding itself to “no promotion” may counteract the need to increase its own awareness*
- *An organization unwilling to accept unconditional donations may be hastening its own demise*
- *A failure to anticipate, research, plan and implement how future members want to consume its message/product restricts its own growth.*
- *The best messengers (evangelists?) of FA are existing members - whose story we encourage to remain anonymous ?!*

Partial List of Progressive Initiatives

1. Refreshed Literature - titles, content, delivery method (electronic), Language
2. Modernized Website - Meeting search by day, Improved donation tool, cost efficient support and developer contracted, Video presentation Library access
3. Expanded Education delivery - increase in topics, presenters and on demand availability
4. Increased WSB presence in regional FA meetings
5. Endorsement of Virtual meetings (responsive to membership preference)
6. Housekeeping efforts (optimize office space, sell off slow moving stock, improve reorder process for literature)
7. Recruitment of contributing authors for *Serenity Messenger*
8. Establish Social Media presence (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)

**World Service Board
Families Anonymous
Long Range Planning
July 2023**

Discussed/Unresolved Issues:

- Funding for PSA initiatives

***Define Cost of PSA initiatives and go to groups and announce that we want to increase awareness with these efforts and are trying to raise \$x,xxx
Encourage FA Evangelism on Public Service Radio***

- Fully defined and approved “Promotional Awareness” Strategy and Delivery

Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films

- “Advertising “ strategy for underutilized literature titles
- ***List new titles and order link on homepage***
- “Mining” of membership sources