

Families Anonymous
Minutes of the Annual Business Meeting
June 10, 2023

I. Call to order:

- Call to order made at 2:02 pm EDT, by Maria S (Group #2056) World Service Board (WSB) Chair.

II. Welcome and Introduction of Board Members - Maria S:

- Maria first reviewed the house rules for the ABM.
- She then introduced the WSB members present at the meeting, and thanked the 3 WSB members who will be leaving the WSB: Clive W, Marcia C, and Barbara S.
- Maria presented the ABM agenda.

III. Election (Credentials Chair) - Marcia C (Group #494):

- **Report from the Credentials Committee (CC):**

As of May 1, 2023: 134 groups met deadline to re-register and were eligible for voting

As of June 9, the CC Chair has collected:

- 28 FAvote emails and mailed-in ballots
- 2 Proxies for the CC Chair to vote; 1 for the ABM Chair to vote.

for a total of 31 votes collected prior to today's meeting.

- Number of delegates eligible to vote at today's meeting: 1
- According to FA By-Laws:
 - 13 votes needed to meet quorum to do Business (10%)
 - 20 votes needed to meet quorum for election of Officers and WSB members (15%)
 - All quorums met for 2023 Annual Business Meeting

- **Report of the Nominating Committee**

Review of the Ballot

Officers

Code	Office	Name	Check for "yes"
O-1	Chair	Maria S	
O-2	Vice Chair	Chris Y	

Board Members At Large

Code	Name	Check for "yes"
B-1	Bob S	
B-2	Chris Z	
B-3	Cristina B	
B-4	Helen L	
B-5	Write-in:	

Voting

- Vote by Delegate(s) and Proxies for candidates on the ballot
- Vote for nominations from the floor (WSB Members, Delegates, Proxies)

Bob S nominated Guy W (UK) as a Board Member At Large, motion was seconded by Ann P.

Election Results

All nominations were voted on by delegates and proxies as well as WSB members for the nomination from the floor and were voted in.

IV. Old Business

- **Approval of 2022 ABM Minutes:** Jan B (Group #976) moved to approve; Marcia (Group #494) seconded; voted on and approved. Jan will finalize and will be posted on FA website.

V. New Business

- **Treasurer's Report: Cindy C (Group #1906)**
 - Cindy presented the Balance Sheet and Income Statement for the fiscal year ending April 30, 2023. Both the internal Financial Oversight Committee, which looks at the finances on a quarterly basis, and the outside CPA firm, that annually compiles the financial statements, have given their blessing to the Balance Sheet and the Income Statement.
 - Most concerning is that FA had an almost \$9000 loss in income this year, despite an increase in donations, both from groups and individuals. Literature sales are significantly down probably due to virtual meetings, office staff were given well deserved raises and internet and website expenses have increased to provide better service and bring us more up to date.
 - Last year we received a PPP loan from the Federal government related to Covid, which does not need to be paid back. So without that money, 2022 would also have been at about the same level of loss despite the income from donations from the virtual Convention. 2021 and 2020 were also years of income loss, so at this rate, if nothing changes, FA will be out of funds in 4 years.
 - Question: Sarah T asked what are the most promising ways to reverse this worrisome trend? Cindy stated that the answer to this will be addressed in the upcoming presentations.
 - **Motion to approve the FY2023 Financial Statements and Oversight Committee's Annual Report:** Motion made by Cindy C (Group #1906), seconded by MaryBeth (Group #1096), voted on and approved.
 - Report of Financial Oversight Committee can be found in **Appendix 1**.

- **Status of 2023 Convention:**
- The Chicagoland Intergroup will be hosting a one-day convention.
 - **Date:** Saturday November 4th, 2023
 - **Place:** Gloria Dei Lutheran Church
 - **Address:** 4501 Main Street, Downers Grove, Illinois (about 19 miles from O'Hare Airport)
 - **Time:** 8 am - 3 pm

Stay-tuned for a “Save the Date” announcement and more information.

There is nothing like being together for a weekend of FAmily, so if any group or groups are interested in hosting the next in-person convention, please contact:

Barbara S: Email: barbaras@familiesanonymous.org

or

- ▶ **Maria S:** Email: wsb_chair@familiesanonymous.org

or

- ▶ Call the **World Service Office:** 1 (800) 736-9805

State of the Fellowship: Maria S, Chair - World Service Board

The WSB currently has 15 members: 12 from the US, 1 from Greece, 1 from Portugal and one from the UK.

The World Service Office staff is run by 2 part-time workers: Office Manager Angel R and Data Manager Nicole G, and is located in Des Plaines, IL.

Current Statistics

- FA groups are based in 35 of the 50 states; in 15 countries; on 6 continents.
- US Groups: 165
- International Groups: 177
- Intergroups (US and Int'l): 5
- National Service Boards: 4
- Within the past year, 14 active new groups were formed.

As of June 2, 2023, 151 groups have registered, 75 have not (30 in the US and 45 International). The Group Outreach committee is following up with groups in the US; WSO is reaching out to the unregistered International groups.

Since Covid, many groups are maintaining an online presence:

Virtual-only groups - 34

In-Person only groups - 133

Hybrid groups - 56

As mentioned in the Treasurer's Report, our **critical area of focus is financial. If current trends continue, we run out of funds in 4 years.** Our biggest opportunities to turn this around are by **increasing awareness of the Fellowship and growing membership, both in number of groups and individual members.**

The following committee presentations are representative of some of the efforts the WSB is pursuing to address this concerning issue.

Literature Access Initiative (LAI) (Chris Y, Group #2056)

Members: Chris Y, Cindy C, Christina B, Jeff S, Maria C (Chair)

The LAI was formed in October, 2022 as an Ad-Hoc committee with the objectives of increasing the visibility of, and access to, FA literature by using e-commerce and e-technology, as well as raising awareness of FA in order to grow the Fellowship.

E-brochures are created from existing, free, downloadable materials using ISSUU (an electronic publishing platform). These e-brochures contain active links to the FA website, e-store and meeting directory, and are accessible from the FA website home page by clicking on the Literature tab and scrolling down to E-Resources.

Fourteen E-brochures have been published so far:

7014E - *Are You at Your Wits' End?*

5003-1AE - *Introduction to Families Anonymous*

5003-6E - *Helping*

6003E - *To the Concerned Family Member*

7003E - *Families Anonymous - For Me?*

7009E - *Are You Torn Apart?*

7012E - *FA Fact Sheet*

7010E - *Families Anonymous and the Professional Community* (7 in total)

- Behavioral Health
- Faith Leaders
- Community Leaders
- Healthcare
- Educators
- Law Enforcement
- Employers

There are many ways you, as an FA member, can help, and as has been stated, FA needs your help!

- Go to the website and share the e-brochures with members of the recovery community and appropriate agencies.
- Share them with people who can use the help of the FA Fellowship.
- Inform members of your group about the existence of these e-documents.
- Consider joining the LAI, we need expertise in:
 - Development of a subscription-based library
 - Assistance with outreach to the recovery community
 - Methodology to maximize exposure in various media.

A big thank you goes to Cindy C who created these documents on ISSUU and to the Literature Co. and the WSB who reviewed the documents.

Question to the LAI from Christina B (Portugal): How to tell the difference between the E-resources and the free downloads? Perhaps they should be highlighted somehow?

Maria S: E-resources are more interactive and an e-blast will be sent out as well as Education sessions highlighting the E-resources.

Bob S (Group #2056): There will also be a push in the Serenity Messenger.

Public Information Committee (PI) (Jeff S, Roswell, GA)

Members: Cindy C, Sarah T, Jeff S (Chair)

The PI committee started the FaceBook page in order to tell people about who we are in FA, raise awareness, as a way to diminish the stigma associated with substance abuse disorder, and to reach as many audiences as possible. In the last 28 days, the page has reached 2,000 people and 500 people have engaged with the page. 5-600 people follow the FB page.

Jeff got the idea of this new PI campaign of video vignettes from the AI Anon site. This is a way to raise awareness of FA and by reaching as many audiences as possible, could have a profound impact on the Fellowship.

The end product would be a series of two-to-three minute vignettes, each comprised of a parent or couple who has a loved one suffering from substance abuse disorder (SUD). Their identities would be anonymized, but they would be speaking honestly and intimately about one aspect of their recovery journey, such as powerlessness, codependency, enabling, setting boundaries, etc.

The target audiences are:

- Family members who are steeped in their struggle but have never heard of FA.
- FA members who are seeking more support and tools to use between meetings.
- Family members and friends who know of another person with a loved one struggling with SUD and are seeking a supportive community and program.
- Mental health providers, treatment centers and others who may be seeking resources for their patients, family members and loved ones.
- Non-profits associated with supporting youths and family members dealing with SUD.

Once created, the vignettes will be posted on the FA website and on the FA social media accounts (Facebook, Instagram and YouTube). We will pursue other avenues to distribute the videos digitally on other platforms as well.

The WSB is currently developing a pilot vignette of a father professing, with startling candor, his financial enabling and how he began to let go. The title is “Don’t Do It Alone”. We are awaiting funding to complete one last piece of the project.

The PI committee can use your help in the following ways:

- Allow the PI committee to create a vignette based on one aspect of your road to recovery.
- Professionals with experience in video production can provide their expertise in every aspect of the production process.
- FA members can participate in screenings and focus groups on drafts of the vignettes.

The pilot project needs \$2500-3000 funding to get off the ground. We are lucky to have a WSB member, Sarah, who is a documentary film maker by profession, who has volunteered her services.

If interested in participating in the program, or if you have questions, please contact:

Jeff S at jeff.Schultz27@gmail.com or

Sarah T at saraht@familiesanonmous.org

Comments:

Guy W (UK) understands the financial concerns and sees the project as a way forward, but is concerned about “aggressively attracting” which might lead more to promotion, rather than attraction as is stated in our Traditions. He also wonders if the project needs to be so professional or could it be more do-it-yourself.

Loretta (Group#1314) feels that this project might be important so that FA does not become extinct.

Maria S stated that when we use the term “aggressive attraction”, she sees it in relative terms to how we used to only rely on grass roots to get the word out about FA.

Jeff S said that he prefers the term “proactive” and thinks that FA would be going in this direction regardless of whether we were having financial problems or not.

Christina B (Portugal) expressed her view that the videos need to be professional like our literature is but the least expensive possible.

Finally there was a discussion of the importance to the Fellowship of having literature on audio which Maria will follow up on with the WSB.

Education Committee (EC) (Kim G Group #279)

Members: Barbara S, Donna D, Kim G, Maria S, Marcia C (Chair)

The EC has held monthly 12 Step Workshops throughout 2022. Additionally this committee has created and recorded eight other educational sessions which, together with the 12 Step workshops, are all available on the FA website. They are:

- Hybrid Meetings (Sep 24)
- Growing the FA Fellowship and Your Group (Oct 29)
- Dealing with the Holidays (Dec 15)
- Setting Boundaries/Enabling vs Helping (Jan 14)
- Borderline Personality Disorder/Emotion Dysregulation (Mar 11)
- Assessing Your Progress in FA (Apr 1)
- Family Culture (May 6)
- Creating Personal Balance and Achieving Emotional Freedom (Jun 3)

The Education Co. collects surveys after each session that are used to improve future offerings. The suggestions for future offerings are:

- Sponsorship
- Perspective of Someone with Substance Abuse Disorder
- Other Co-Morbidities
- Communication
- Setting Boundaries
- Dealing with Grief
- Relapse
- New Publications in *Helping Series*

Serenity Messenger (Maria S)

Editorial Team: Elizabeth S, Bob S, Nicole G, Ann P, Chris Y, Marcia C

The Fellowship is grateful to the team for their outstanding publications every other month and also to the members of the Fellowship who have submitted articles and pieces of artwork. Please keep them coming!

For submission: newsletter@familiesanonymous.org

FA Website (Maria S)

In response to feedback from the Fellowship, the Technology Committee continues to make improvements to the website. They are working with a new, cost efficient vendor: bpnWebtech. The committee is:

- refreshing/modernizing website appearance over time
- ensuring our plug-ins are up to date
- installing a more user-friendly donation system and e-store
- adding recordings and other e-resources

Any volunteers with tech experience would be greatly appreciated!
Contact the Technology Chair: chrisy@familiesanonymous.org

Literature Committee (Ann P Group #1301)

Members: Jan B, Jeanne M, JoAnne M, Julie S, Christina B, Sylvia S, Juliette M, Ann P (Chair)

Ann provided an update on what the LC has been working on and what new literature will soon be published. See below:

- Helping Series:
 - Edited and updated the first two booklets in the series,
Negatives to Positives: #1 in the Helping Series (#2003-1)
Fear to Faith: #2 in the Helping Series (#2003-2)
 - Created and published the third booklet in the series:
Contempt to Respect: #3 in the Helping Series (#2003-3)
 - Created and will soon publish the ALL-NEW fourth and fifth booklets in the series:
Hostility to Understanding: #4 in the Helping Series (2003-4)
Manipulation or Overprotectiveness to Release with Love: #5 in the Helping Series (#2003-5)
- Coming Soon: a new literature piece dealing with **Guilt** that has been several years in the making. Watch for the announcement!
- The LC together with Nicole in the office have produced new *Meeting Location Signs* (#5015) that are available as a free download.

- The LC has been editing and updating FA literature to make the terminology consistent with current standards in the recovery, medical and psychological communities. The following have all been updated:

- *About Substance Abuse Disorder* (#2010) [formally *About Drug Abuse*]
- *Gifts of the Spirit* (#1025)
- *Are You Torn Apart?* (#7009)
- *A Guide for Families Struggling With Substance Use Disorder* (#1002) [formally titled *A Guide for the Family of the Drug Abuser*]
- *Alternative to Enabling* (#1005)
- *Families Anonymous – For Me?* (#7003)
- *“But She’s Too Young! (Isn’t She?)”* (#1021) [formally titled *“But She’s Too Young to Be an Alcoholic”*]
- *Setting Boundaries: A Very Loving Thing to Do* (#1028)
- *Our Son Is in Recovery and Coming Home: One Family’s Story* (#1013) [formally *A Recovering Addict Comes Home: One Family’s Story*]
- *Tough Love – For whom?* (#1029)
- *The Twelve Promises of Families Anonymous* (#2011)
- *The Three Cs x 2* (#1033) and *The Three Cs x 2: An Overview* (#1033X)

- The LC has also been editing and updating literature to make it relevant and meaningful to all groups, regardless of whether they are holding traditional in-person meetings or newer virtual or hybrid meetings. The following have been updated for this purpose:

- *FA Fact Sheet* (#7012)
- *Group Inventory* (#5002)
- *Group Secretary’s Handbook* (WSOF-14)
- *Introduction and Welcome to an FA Meeting* (#7016)
- *My Part in the Group* (#5012)
- *Starting a New FA Group* (#8004)

- Other literature updates include *Permission to Translate & Publish* (WSOF-22) [formally *Request to Translate*] and *The Twelve Traditions in Action* (#5010). The LC has redesigned the Literature Catalogue and also added a page to the e-store on the website of WSOFs (World Service Office Forms) and PPGs (Policies, Procedures and Guidelines) for easy access to these free downloads.

- The Literature Committee has submitted at least one “Spotlight on Literature” article to the **Serenity Messenger** for each issue. This year’s articles spotlighted:

- *The Bookmark Collections* (#2000BC-1, -2, -3)
- *The Broken Vase / El jarrón dañado* (#2016 / #2016S)
- *Dealing with Denial* (#1030)
- *Five Faces of Anonymity* (#5014)
- *Full Literature Pack* (#8001) / *Paquete completo de literatura* (#8001S)
- *Group Secretary’s Handbook* (WSOF-14)
- *Meeting Location Signs* (#5015)
- *Our Son Is in Recovery and Coming Home: One Family’s Story* (#1013) [formerly *A Recovering Addict Comes Home: One Family’s Story*]
- *Serenity Medallion* (#3051-A)
- *Today A Better Way*, printed and e-book versions (#1015 & #1015E), with customer reviews

- The LC also submitted an article to the **Serenity Messenger** titled “God and Gender in FA Literature” explaining FA’s history of, and current approach to, higher-power and gender-neutral terminology. The Chair of the LC reviews and edits **Serenity Messenger** articles prepublication.

- The Literature Co. has processed multiple translation requests from Portugal and Italy. Reviewed their translations and granted permission to publish. Additionally, the LC responded to a request for clarification on the issue of anonymity, particularly its relevance to complying with governmental regulatory requirements in Italy.

- Finally, the LC has been participating in the WSB's recent efforts to increase public awareness of FA by reviewing and editing the LAI's electronic adaptations of public-information materials that were previously created by the Literature Committee.

Adjournment:

Maria thanked everyone for attending. She emphasized that FA needs everyone's support to be able to continue and asked FA members to consider joining the WSB or a committee as a way of giving back to the Fellowship. The WSB is grateful to all members who do share feedback, and participate in our committees and we look forward to seeing you at an Educational session or a Convention.

Chris Y made a motion to adjourn, Ann P seconded the motion.
Adjournment at 3:43 PM EST

APPENDIX 1

Kevin Currid & Associates, Inc.
328 Carpenter Drive
Palatine, IL 60067
Tel. (847) 502-6604 Fax (847) 574-7588

To the Board of Directors of Families Anonymous, Inc.
Des Plaines, IL

Management is responsible for the accompanying financial statements of Families Anonymous, Inc. which comprise the balance sheets as of April 30, 2023 and 2022 and the related statements of income for the years then ended. We have performed the compilation in accordance with Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services promulgated by the Accounting and Review Services Committee of the AICPA. We did not audit or review the financial statements nor were we required to perform any procedures to verify the accuracy or completeness of the information provided by management. We do not express an opinion, a conclusion, nor provide any assurance on these financial statements.

Management has elected to omit substantially all the disclosures and the display of comprehensive income required by accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. If the omitted disclosures and the display of comprehensive income were included in the financial statements, they might influence the user's conclusions about the company's financial position, results of operations, and cash flows. Accordingly, the financial statements are not designed for those who are not informed about such matters.

KEVIN CURRID & ASSOCIATES, INC.

Kevin Currid & Associates, Inc.

May 19, 2023

**Families Anonymous, Inc.
Balance Sheet**

	April 30,	
	2023	2022
Assets:		
Current assets:		
Cash & cash equivalents	124,922	130,414
Inventory, net of reserve	3,828	7,284
Prepaid expenses & other current assets	2,963	2,838
Total current assets	131,713	140,536
Property & equipment		
Furniture, fixtures, & equipment	37,419	37,419
Less accumulated depreciation	(37,419)	(37,419)
Total property & equipment	0	0
Total assets	131,713	140,536
Liabilities:		
Current liabilities:		
Accounts payable	242	164
Convention payable	1,726	1,726
Payroll taxes payable	1,117	1,138
Sales tax payable	129	124
Total current liabilities	3,214	3,152
Net Assets:		
Total unrestricted net assets	128,499	137,384
Total liabilities & net assets	131,713	140,536

Families Anonymous, Inc. Income Statement

	For the years ended April 30,	
	2023	2022
Revenues:		
Literature sales	28,156	31,881
Contributions	55,387	48,984
Shipping & handling income	5,195	6,577
Rental Income	2,448	2,546
PPP Loan Forgiveness Income	0	10,072
Other Income	0	6
Interest Income	22	22
	91,208	100,089
Cost of sales	6,907	9,449
Gross profit	84,301	90,640
Expenses:		
Payroll expense	54,386	51,492
Rent & utilities	17,683	20,886
Postage & delivery	5,946	6,138
Bank charges & e-store fees	4,211	4,243
Insurance	3,639	3,582
Internet & website expense	3,771	1,547
Professional fees	1,533	1,438
Supplies	1,123	1,122
Other expenses	895	443
	93,186	90,891
Net Income	(8,885)	(251)