

**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 13 -14, 1989 MEETING OF THE
INTERNAL/EXTERNAL COMMITTEE OF THE
WORLD SERVICE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Session One: October 13, 2 p.m.

Present were: Kim J., Stretch G., Mario T., and Greg P., Trustees, Barbara J., WSC H&I Committee Chairperson, Pete C., WSC H&I Committee Vice Chairperson, Steve R., WSC P.I. Committee Chairperson, Carrie R. WSC P.I. Committee Vice Chairperson, Hollie Arnold, Vandy Andersen, George Hollahan and Steve Lantos, WSO staff.

- I. Kim J. opened the meeting at 2:20 p.m. with a moment of silence, followed by the Serenity Prayer.
- II. First item of business was the two motions referred by WSC '89 to the BOT. The first motion, from the Chicagoland Region, requested changing the 5/3/81 motion in the TWGSS (1988 edition) on page 24, regarding the use of the NA symbol on flyers. The requested change involved changing the word "can" to "should" in the second sentence of the motion. After some discussion, the I/E Committee decided to not recommend the adoption of this motion. The primary reason cited for this decision was local autonomy, which may be affected if the wording would be changed from "can" to "should". The Committee further recommends that a letter be written to the originator of the motion stating the decision of the Board. The second motion was from New England Region, and referred to a perceived religious endorsement within service related material. Staff surveyed all existing service material and found the word "prayer" throughout the material in reference to opening and closing prayers at service committee meetings or meetings conducted by service committees. There was considerable discussion regarding the merits of various proposals, including an alternate motion to be forwarded by the BOT, and/or an article, generated by the BOT, regarding the practice of prayer to open and close service and regular meetings, in particular to the types utilized, etc. This item was tabled for further discussion until the meeting with the Conference Committee leadership was concluded during the following day.
- III. The next item addressed was long range planning in regards to N.A.'s image in society. Kim outlined her hopes for the discussion regarding this topic, and the Committee moved to discuss item one: "What is our current Public Relations Policy?" Various headings for topics were listed on the blackboard during this discussion, including P.I. Policy; Philosophy; Internal Policy; and, External Policy. (See Attachment One for topics under these various headings.)

There was a lengthy discussion regarding the various topics under each heading, including the need for some External P.I. efforts to contact various agencies and organizations in order to ascertain how we (N.A.) are being perceived by these agencies and organizations. One suggestion included a survey asking specific questions regarding their perceptions of us. Some concerns were expressed regarding the negative image the public may have due to isolated instances that are widely reported in the media involving members. Some concerns were expressed regarding the ability of local fellowships to respond

adequately to a significant upsurge in requests for services when they are so over burdened already. There was some discussion regarding the history of cooperation between H&I and P.I. committees. Final point made during this part of the discussion was the concern that there is a considerable number of divergent opinions within the Fellowship about who we are, what we do, and how we do it. One example cited was the listing in "The Fact Is...", published by the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information, Rockville, Maryland, in which the description of N.A. paraphrased a statement from our literature that we are a program of complete abstinence from all drugs. While this is a statement in our literature, there is a considerable question regarding members on medication, etc. In finishing his statement, the speaker made the statement that prior to and/or in addition to a concerted effort to raise the public image of N.A., that there may need to be an effort made to obtain a consensus of opinion within the Fellowship regarding our philosophy and views regarding a variety of topics ranging from our understanding of the Traditions to members on medication and being responsible, productive members of what society. At this point the Committee took a short break.

After the break, the Committee reconvened and the topic "What is N.A.'s image within N.A.?" as contained within our literature, printed materials and within our Fellowship, was addressed. Once again a variety of topics were listed under the heading "How we see ourselves". (See Attachment Two for specific topics or items under this heading.) During this section a speaker requested that the topics: how do we explain the disease of addiction and how do we explain the concept "God" to non-members, be addressed. A member raised that these perceptions of N.A. by members of N.A., listed under this heading, are mirror reflections of social issues. At one point, the topics listed also started including what members of N.A. perceive to be the public's image of us. During the discussion, the following were goals to be addressed:

- *N.A. should be perceived as being part of instead of being separate from society--integrated. N.A. is represents a cross-section of society instead of just one segment.

- *Need to do more affirmative types of activities. Some concerns raised were: how to and what steps should be taken.

- *Gear presentations including literature and service material to audience it is intended for, including different experience/education levels, i.e.: H&I and P.I. Handbooks.

- *Discussion about having a survey, as previously mentioned, being conducted by an outside agency.

At this point, the discussion was focused on formulating a five-year plan on a national level regarding our image-in the public, then possibly turning to a regional level to find out what our image is within their community, and provide some suggestions as to what they may be able to do to improve upon it. A concern was raised that the discussion should be geared towards the needs of the world-wide fellowship instead of limiting it to local concerns. After further discussion about the various aspects of such a plan including utilizing resources, inside and outside of the Fellowship, the Chairperson requested that the Committee adjourn.

IV. Committee adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Session Two: October 14, 8:50 a.m.

All previous members were again present. Also present were Bob McD., BOD V-Chair, with Stu T., BOD Chair and Bob S., WSO Manager arriving late.

- I. Committee reconvened by Kim with a moment of silence followed by the Serenity Prayer.
- II. Kim led a recap of yesterday's proceedings--Image of N.A. both inside and outside of the Fellowship. Stretch passed out copies of yesterday's minutes.
- III. N.A.'s image inside the Fellowship was the first item discussed. Several suggestions were presented to c an accurate assessment of our internal image. These included:
 - *Look at literature for the image projected in there. How do we present ourselves?
 - *Develop articles to print to improve image.
 - *There is a need to identify target issues.
 - *Discussion of the possibility of national issues.
 - *Consciousness raising within the fellowship at large.
 - *Discussion topics for workshop/conventions.
 - *N.A.'s image within the fellowship, possibly utilizing the P.I. survey.
 - *Keep focus on traditions, principles, certain themes inherent in recovery.
- IV. N.A.'s image outside the fellowship was discussed. The main focus centered on exploring the cost/feasibility of a survey of professionals, with this survey to be seen as a measuring device for future efforts, and may be repeated after certain efforts are exerted, for before and after results for comparison. May need to hire a professional survey company to assist us in this endeavor.
 - *Need seen for accurate information on how we are seen by professional community.
 - *Target audience: psychiatrists, social workers, clergy, school counselors, CPS, doctors, nurses
 - *Need to develop literature/pamphlets that accurately describe N.A. to outside organizations, making certain that anything written for professional speaks to them in language they understand, not N.A. speak.
 - *Need to make plans of how to use the survey results prior to putting effort into making a survey.
 - *Suggestion made to focus efforts of survey on areas outside of treatment community as these people already have a generally favorable view of N.A.
 - *Suggestion made to write several organizations prior to doing a survey to ask them what, if anything, their present attitude is towards N.A. as this could provide very valuable information.
 - *Need to remember that focus should be international, not just within the U.S.
- V. General consensus is that a survey of attitudes within the membership is not necessary at this time. Feeling was that most of the attitudes within the membership have already been discussed and that we need to focus our efforts on providing positive direction for the fellowship.
- VI. Suggestion made to create a checklist of questions of what we want to know from the professionals, as well as what they want/need from N.A..

VII. Possible use of the *N.A. Way* or *Newsline* to produce articles/questions based on the 12 Traditions or group inventory or the 12th Step. contact convention committees to have them possibly get on the program issues concerning the internal image of N.A.

ONGOING PROCESS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

Barbara is willing to write an article for the *N.A. Way* concerning "What is N.A.?" based on the 1st Step and 8th Tradition.

Barbara, Vandy and George will read our literature to see what image is presented there. What direction do the handbooks give?

Hollie and Kim will have someone come talk to the next meeting about how to gather information on our public image.

Stretch and Greg will work on topics for conventions or in the Fellowship through articles, learning days etc.

Pete, Carrie and Vandy will see who we should target, and how we might work with them.

Exchange of information checklist will be worked on by Steve R. and Mario. What do we want an organization or group to know about us?

Discussion then moved to *Behind The Walls* project.

- *Problems with the approval process were voiced by several members.

- *Barbara explained the original motion presented and passed at WSC '89 and the development of the motion with the assistance of the WSC Lit. and P.I. chairs.

- *Concern was expressed regarding whether "Will this piece of literature make the incarcerated addict feel different or apart from the mainstream of recovery?"

- *Concern expressed about the phrase "Not to be used in N.A. meetings" stamped on the front of the literature as several members feel this is definitely a piece of recovery literature, not just service committee literature.

- *Process approved at WSC '89 may be applied to the Starter Kit and the Treasurer's Handbook as this motion is pertinent to these projects.

- *A suggestion was made that this project be printed as a special issue of *Reaching Out*, which would not have to go through the normal literature approval process. The main concern expressed by H&I chair and v-chair is that this material will not make it through the WSC lit. process in any sort of reasonable time-frame.

- *The meeting in St. Louis will determine whether this piece is ready for publication or if it will need revision.

Kim thanked the members of H&I and P.I. who were in attendance. A short break was taken after closing this portion of the meeting with the Serenity Prayer.

Reconvened at 11:40. All members of the Trustee I/E committee were present as were Bob S., George S., Bob H., Stu T., Bob McD., Steve L., and Hollie A.

I. Additional needs advisory panel discussion was discussed.

- *Members will be part of I/E but it is not necessary for them to attend meetings.

- *These members will be responsible to report to BOT about the additional needs priorities within the fellowship.

- *After discussion of the proposed members on the list prepared by Steve S., it was M/S/C to appoint Gordon P. (S. CA), Harry M. (NV), and Jay V. (GA) as members with Jay serving as the alternate if needed.

- *Need seen to expand the scope beyond physical handicaps to issues such as single parenting, learning disabilities, and psychiatric disorders.

- *Proposed length of term is until WSC 1991 or until removed in the event of non-participation.

II. Consensus reached to allow the As Hoc on the Traditions to make the final determination of the audience for *It Works*.

III. Next focus was on the seeming increase in embezzlement of funds in the fellowship.

- *Positive directions seen in the focus of workshop topics on 7th Tradition and funding of the fellowship.

- *Need seen to remind members of their responsibility in electing members who are responsible. Also recommend that members not be afraid to ask questions of those members they elect to take care of the financial aspects of meetings, groups, conventions, etc. Also need to remind members of the proper accounting procedures as recommended in the Treasurers Workbook.

Meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

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(ATTACHMENT ONE)

P.I. Policy

- Service to Society and the addict
- Respond/react rather than initiate
- Advertising not promotion
- P.R. vs P.I.
- Tools for P.R. and P.I.
- Growth of fellowship
- Community resource
- H&I cooperation with administrators
- Anonymity/secretcy
- Non- affiliation

Internal Policy

- Primarily self-help
- Reaching out to other addicts
- Open membership/non-discriminating
- Self supporting
- Non-cooperation
- Anonymity
- Addiction - definition

Philosophy

- We are the only way
- Responsible, productive member of society - implied
- Not separate from humanity

External Policy

- Identification of who to contact
- Uncertain product
- Negative public image
- Minimal communication
- Lack of statistical information
- Validation through outside recognition

HOW WE SEE OURSELVES
HOW WE PERCEIVE OTHERS SEEING US
(ATTACHMENT TWO)

- * Place to talk about drug use
- * Anti-intellectualism (less educated)
- * Totally different from A.A. (better/worse)
- * Terminal uniqueness - only way
- * Only way to recover (or do we?)
- * Young group/immature fellowship
- * Fun/more active socially
- * Cult mentality
- * Phobias about anything non-N.A.
- * Delusions of grandeur
- * Better than/worse than
- * Not therapy
- * Spiritual vs. religious
- * N.A. concept of God
- * Tough - outcast
- * Disease - lack of understanding
- * Deviant outcast within N.A. - Prejudice/sexual/racial/lifestyle/AIDS
- * Burden on society
- * N.A. speak - recovery literature/service material
- * International concerns/world-wide fellowship

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