

**COMBINED WORLD SERVICES
MEETING
October 26, 1991**

The meeting was opened by Barbara J. at 1:10 PM with a moment of silence followed by the Serenity Prayer. Bob McD. read the Twelve Traditions.

WSO BOD:

Bob McD.
Martin C.
Oliver S.
Tim B.
Mary Kay B.
Randy J.
Walter J.

WSC Admin:

Barbara J.
Tom R.
Dave T.

WSB:

Jack B.
Greg P.
Kim J.
Pete C.
Bob McK.
Donna M.
Becky M.
Garth P.
Jamie S-H.
Chuck L.
Stu T.
Danette B.

WSC: Mitch S., Rogan A., and Susan B.

Visitors: John T., Zena L-W.

WSO Staff: Hollie A., George H., Joe G., Anthony E., Freddie A., Andy M., Lee M., and Donna S.

The first topic for discussion was **tax alternatives**, which was presented by Bob McD. He referred to the reports from Don Corliss, the WSO tax attorney, and his recommendation for a group exemption for NA. The attorney's concern is that this may require structural changes. His other recommendation is to incorporate the WSC or form another entity for tax purposes. He feels this discussion needs to focus on tax liability, group exemptions, tax questions, our liability if not exempt, and enforceability of structural changes, if needed.

Tim B. feels there are many problems if the small group/large group exemption is sought. He sees setting up a separate corporation to be the "general" umbrella as a better idea. Then each group could decide if they wanted to be involved or seek their own exemption. This would be a system similar to that used by the Boy Scouts of America.

Considerable discussion then ensued touching on a wide variety of topics related to the issue. Several specific questions were formulated for further discussion with a small group being formed to discuss these questions and develop a recommendation. The questions were:

1. Are there potential Tradition problems, specifically the Fourth and Ninth Traditions?
2. Are there potential liability problems?
3. What is the risk of exposure to the IRS for both our fellowship and other Twelve Step fellowships?
4. Is it possible to form a corporation for such a restricted purpose (filing of taxes only)?
5. What are the practical and clerical considerations if such a corporation is formed?

Barbara made assignments to Tax Alternatives Committee of two World Service Board of Trustees, two World Service Office Board of Directors and one WSC Administrative member, those members being Tim B., Martin C., Stu T., Danette B. and Dave T. Danette was assigned to chair the committee. A report from this committee will be added to the February meetings of both the WSB and the BOD.

The **Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust Document** was the next item on the agenda. Three minor changes in wording as suggested by by Tim B. and Stu T. were accepted. Several questions and concerns were raised, but after the rationale was explained by members who were involved in developing the trust, the concerns were seen as unfounded or unnecessary. Considerable concern was voiced regarding the need for a 3/4 vote of the WSC to move the trust from WSO to some other entity. The explanation was given that this is needed for such an extraordinary action to assure this is the conscience of the conference. A straw poll was taken with only two members in support of changing the needed vote to 2/3, so the 3/4 stays as is.

Some concern was also expressed regarding election of director's pool members directly from the floor of the conference. Some support was given to requiring a 2/3 vote for directors and to also give directors full participation rights at the conference, including voting privileges.

At this point, there was general consensus to present the Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust Document for approval in the CAR. The motion for approval will come from the WSB. Additionally, the document will be mailed out under a separate cover in early December as an informational item. Any input on the document will be discussed during the WSB panel presentation or business session for resolution. If considerable input is received, an RSR working group may be formed during the WSC to develop recommendations or motions.

Bob McD. then presented the **report from the Fellowship Services Evaluation Team**. (The written report was included in WSO Book Three) Two recommendations are being made by this group:

- 1) Designate a group to develop world services protocol.
- 2) Disband the FSET.

There was consensus to disband the FSET and much appreciation was expressed for the work they have done. The formation of a group to determine

world services protocol was then discussed, with general agreement that formation of a new group may not be necessary. Rather, it was felt the Interim Committee could undertake the task since they have the most understanding of the communications problems. Additionally, the WSB Internal Affairs committee and the Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service have tasks which will deal with protocol issues (conference charter and *The Guide To Service*). It was also decided that during the period in which the protocol is developed, the Interim Committee will be the focal point of communications, travel, staffing requests, funding, NA workshop attendance, etc.

The next item discussed was the **relationship between the World Service Office Board of Directors, WSO staff, WSB and WSC Administrative Committee and WSC Committee leadership**. Divergent viewpoints and versions of old business and decisions has contributed to ongoing misunderstandings and communication difficulties. Several members of the world service community have expressed a need to openly share their feelings about some of these issues in an attempt to clear the air of old fears, old history, "secrets" and explanations of events from past meetings. Additionally, it was hoped that misunderstandings and concerns relating to the past Executive Director could be shared and, hopefully, cleared up allowing members to let go of past animosity. It was recognized that being open and sharing feelings or concerns in this group is difficult, as it confronting each other, but members were reminded that they should treat each other in a civil, respectful manner or the discussion would be non-productive. An opportunity was then provided for members to honestly and openly share their feelings. Some of the topics which were discussed included:

1. Financial concerns regarding the handling of WSO funds.
2. The non-renewal of Bob Stone's contract as Executive Director.
3. Keeping the best interest of NA in mind.
4. Problems within the service structure which adds to the separation, such as restrictions in communication between staff, BOT and BOD.

A common theme that seemed to be touched on many members was that it would be helpful if all of world services was unified and supportive of projects undertaken. Many members expressed their appreciation at being given an opportunity to openly discuss issues that had only been talked about in small groups previously.

Joe Gossett then opened discussion on the **WSO Work Plan** which has been developed over this past six months. He feels it is a good start, but not all of the projects were included in the plan. He asked that priority lists be developed by world level trusted servants to staff can be instructed on completing projects. One of the directors requested input on the WSO business plan from the trustees. A suggestions was made that the WSC may want to develop a five year plan for projects such as is being developed for the WSO.

The meeting was closed with the Serenity Prayer at 6:00 PM.