

The Augustine Fellowship  
Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous  
Fellowship-Wide Services, Inc.

**Minutes of the General Assemblies**

**2014**

**Annual Business Conference/Meeting**

August 05-08, 2014  
Crowne Plaza Houston Downtown  
Houston, Texas, USA

**Conference Theme: Tradition 12**

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Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, every reminding us to place principles before personalities.

**Abbreviations** you need to know:

ABC/M .....Annual Business Conference/Meeting

aka .....also known as

ARS.....Agenda Review Subcommittee

BFOC .....Board Finance and Operating Committee

BGNC.....Board Governance and Nominating Committee

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BPRC ..... Board Public Relations Committee

BOT ..... Board of Trustees

CSM..... Conference Service Manual

FY ..... fiscal year

GA ..... General Assembly

HP ..... Higher Power

IFD..... Issue for Discussion

YTD..... year to date

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**Conference Committees**

- CAC ..... Conference Anorexia Committee
- CBC ..... Conference By-Laws Committee
- CCAC ..... Conference Concepts Adaptation Committee
- CCC..... Conference Charter Committee
- CDC ..... Conference Diversity Committee
- CFC..... Conference Finance Committee
- CHRC ..... Conference Healthy Relationships Committee
- CICC..... Conference Intergroup Communication Committee
- CIFC..... Conference InterFellowship Committee
- CITC..... Conference Information Technology Committee
- CJC ..... Conference Journal Committee
- CLC ..... Conference Literature Committee
- CMRBOTC ..... Conference Member Relations to the Board and F.W.S. Committee
- CMRC ..... Conference Members Retention Committee
- CPIC..... Conference Public Information Committee
- CPOC..... Conference Prison Outreach Committee
- CSC..... Conference Service Committee
- CSPC..... Conference Sponsorship Committee
- CSTC..... Conference Steps and Traditions Committee
- CTC..... Conference Translation Committee

All dates and times are local to Houston Texas, USA (Central Time)

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**Tuesday, August 05, 2014**

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**General Assembly; Tuesday, August 5, 2014 – 1:02 P.M.**

Facilitator: Jack S, CCC Chair

Assistant Facilitator: Susan G, BOT Chair

Backup Facilitator: Roger R, CFC Chair

Record Keeper for all ABM General Assembly sessions: Andrew H.

Timekeeper: Steve L.

Spiritual Reminder: Not requested

Vote counters: NA

Voting Members registered and seated: not reported for this General Assembly

Voting Members in room: not reported for this General Assembly

Quorum: not reported for this General Assembly

The meeting began with a moment of silence, followed by the Serenity Prayer.

Readings

- Twelve Steps of S.L.A.A. (12-Steps)
- Twelve Traditions of S.L.A.A. (12 Traditions)
- Twelve Concepts for World Service of S.L.A.A. (12 Steps)

Introductions:

- Facilitators: noted above
- General Manager: Pamela Martin
- F.W.S Staff: Beth S, Pamela Tillman, Christina Castillo.
  - F.W.S Staff member not present: Hector Fuentes
- CCC members present at ABM: Anthony P, Gabriel G, Jack S, Andrew H.
- BOT members present at ABM: Steve B, Bob G, Rick B, Susan G.
- Introductions of all those present

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Review of binder and supplemental packet

- Emphasis of the Conference's business format used, which begins on page 21 of the Conference Service Manual (CSM)
- Index of Motions included in the binder
- By-Laws of S.L.A.A. included in the binder
- Forms emphasized
  - Committees
  - Budget
  - Project Progress
  - Reimbursements
- Noted additional forms and printed information distributed for inclusion in the binder

Administrative housekeeping:

- Policy regarding photographs at ABM
- Request to wear name tags
- Silencing of cell phones
- Timeliness of attendance at General Assemblies
- Entrance to General Assembly room: check in with General Manager for confirmation of quorum and voting.
- Agenda located in binder, including two items that contain extensive content, for which the facilitators request reading this material prior to General Assemblies, as the entirety of the items will not be read into the record
  - BOT motion with regard to By-Law changes
  - IFD with regard to safety in meetings
- Identification of voting members
- Speaking at the microphones
- Principles before personalities
- Submission of additional Agenda items must be submitted by 7:00 pm this evening
- BOT elections Friday morning at 8:00 am; must be in the General Assembly room no later than 8:00 am. The doors will be locked until after the results have been determined
- Conference Committee sessions referenced
  - Changes to session meeting locations
- Business processes begin on page 21 of the CSM
  - IFD times determined by the facilitators
  - Motion process, including reading of item without discussion prior to discussion and voting
- Speaker meeting sponsored by Houston Group Tuesday
- Open Mic and Auction Wednesday

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- Hotel check out Friday
- Tradition 12 speaker meeting in the Bayou Ballroom
- Recovery meeting Wednesday Executive Board room adjacent to hospitality suite, 9:00 pm

Announcement: The General Assembly period ended with several announcements

The General Assembly took a break at 1:55 pm, to be continued starting at 2:15 pm.

**Getting to Know the BOT/F.W.S.; Tuesday, August 5, 2014 – 2:15 P.M.**

Facilitator: Roger R.

Assistant Facilitator: Elizabeth B.

Backup Facilitator: Lisa C.

Timekeeper: Not requested

Spiritual Reminder: Not requested

Vote counters: NA

Voting Members registered and seated: not reported for this General Assembly

Voting Members in room: not reported for this General Assembly

Quorum: not reported for this General Assembly

Each BOT member in attendance spoke briefly, followed by a period of comments, questions and answers. One of the Board members presented information about the Board member who was not able to be present at this ABM.

BOT Members present

Susan G.

Steve B.

Rick B.

Bob G.

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BOT Members not present

Chris D.

Rick B: I'm a sex and love addict. I came into the Fellowship at the end of 2008. My life had come pretty much to an end. I chased sex and love addiction to the very gates of Hell, and thought, "Maybe I should try something else, before the very end". So, I thought I would go to AA for a while, and see if that worked. It didn't. So, I googled "sex addiction" and found this program. I'm very blessed to have found S.L.A.A. and that my intergroup is strong. Shortly after I started really engaging in service work at the intergroup level, we had an ABM in my area. And, there was an opportunity to have dinner with some Trustees. And, I went to that. I volunteered at an ABM, and was like, "Wow, this is really awesome. These are the people who really help our Fellowship. And set the policy and help us to figure out all the difficult, the answers to the difficult questions." And, I thought, "Man, this is really cool." I thought it would be awesome to be able to do this. And the next year, I was elected as a Delegate for my intergroup. Our delegate-ship was two years long. So, I went to the ABM the next year. And, it was in the year in between that I was appointed to the Board of Trustees for a partial term that comes to an end this year. So, I was on the Board for two and a half years. And, it's been a wonderful opportunity to be of service. I am very grateful to be able to do that. And, this fellowship means a great deal to me. I'm willing to give at least a little bit of my time, my talent and my treasure.

Steve B: I am a sex and love addict. My home group is the Plantation Wednesday night group outside of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. When you're down in sunny Florida visiting, come and visit us. We'd love to have you. My sobriety date is November, 2007 for purposes of qualifying for this Board. When I say that, it's because I came into S.L.A.A. in 2007. I came with the gift of desperation. I picked up a white chip for my most destructive behaviors at that time. About six or seven months later, I added some bottom lines around internet use. I celebrate, therefore, in July, because I came into the Program and picked up my first white chip on July 03, 2007. It was a real joy for me to be able to pick up my seven year medallion. I did figure out those extra bottom lines kept [a member of the Board of Trustees at an earlier time] off my back about joining the Board for another five months. I had to go with that. I have served first as your BFOC chair for two years. This year, we split the chairmanship of BFOC between two individuals to try and level out the workload some. Board Finance and Operating Committee. I served as your Finance chair for this last year. I have served as your Treasurer for the past three years. So, I will be giving the financial report later today. I look forward to having a wonderful ABM with all of you.

Bob G: My home meeting is in Worcester, Massachusetts. I would like to say that I was sober from the day I came in. But, no, I didn't quite make that happen. However, my sobriety date is June 18, 2007. When I came into the Program, I was literally at the bottom. I was looking at possibly going to jail for activities that I had done. I'm not going to get into them. They were related to this program, however. I have come a long way. I'm going to make a sales pitch more

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for the Board, than I am for anything else. I have grown so much spiritually this past year. My self-esteem has grown tremendously. My ability to stand up for myself has grown. Sorry guys, it's been that way. But, that's irrelevant. I've also grown to love the people I'm working with. This is probably the most collaborative group of people I've ever worked with. I am very fortunate to have worked with all four of them. So, I'm looking forward to my next couple of years. I would suggest that if you have your three years sobriety, and you're willing to put in 35 to 40 hours a month, minimum, think about it. Because, it's important, and we need people. We need them.

Chris D. presented by Susan G: He was a former member of the Board, many years ago. Chris has been sober 20+ years. There is a wonderful CD of him, [one of this year's ABM participants] and my wonderful sponsor speaking, if you ever want to listen to a great share. I highly recommend you get that CD. He has a lot of wisdom and experience on the Board. Unfortunately, he couldn't be here because of business commitments. I truly hope you will consider electing him for the next year on the Board.

Susan G: I am a sex and love addict. I loved the meeting I was at last night. The gal who led the meeting said she hasn't found it necessary to get married again, since she's been in this program. I was thinking, "I haven't found it necessary to get divorced again, since I've been in this program." Some of you know, I've been married eight times. I definitely qualify for this program. I got sober April 18, 2006. I came into the rooms in 2003. S.L.A.A. Online is my home group. I got very actively involved in their intergroup. And, served as Secretary, webmaster, co-chair, treasurer, and then eventually became chair. Then, somebody on this Board said, "Hey, why don't you get involved in Conference service." And, the next thing you know, I ended up chairing the Conference Sponsorship Committee. From there, I ended up on the Board Finance and Operating Committee. And, then from there, it was just a step onto the Board. Lo and behold, a year ago I became Board chair. "Wow, what happened!" I love this program. I have absolutely no doubt I would end up in a mental hospital, dead, because when I came into these rooms, I was on the verge of murder and suicide. I mean, serious, I was going to be a headline. This program saved my life. I say, service is sobering. I love this. I love this program, and I cannot get enough of it. I'm really happy to be here today.

### Questions/Comments from the floor:

Those with questions/comments were asked to address them specifically to one Board member.

- Question/Comment: My question is not for any of the current Board members here. Mine has to do with a point of clarification. As I recall last year, there was somebody from out of the country that was added to the Board. Can you explain why that person is, or is not, available?
- Answer/Response: I'd be happy to address that question. It is in my Board report, if you guys want to look in your binders. Unfortunately, both of our European Delegates had to



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resign from the Board. We were heartbroken. One of them resigned for personal reasons. And, the other one resigned because of work commitments. It just didn't work out, unfortunately. It was an unfortunate circumstance.

- Question/Comment: Could you explain the requirements for becoming a member of the Board?

Answer/Response: The requirements for becoming a Board member are in the CSM. You do have to have three years of sobriety. The CSM is the Conference Service Manual. That's on the website and I do believe it's in the binder. Right? Yeah. You do have to be on the Board. You do have to have served on a Board Committee. However, there also is the process where you can nominate yourself from the floor, I believe, at the ABM, and be voted in as well. Does that answer your question?

- Question/Comment: Each of you, can you tell a little about your work with Conference Committees?

- Answer/Response: When I came onto the Board, I had served almost three years on the Board Finance and Operating Committee. I didn't actually do any Conference committees. This year though, because of the number of Board members that we had, I had quite an experience with I think five, it might even have been six, Conference committees that I was liaison to. One of them was CPOC with you. I think it is probably a bit of a different dynamic because I have to pay attention to what's going on. I have to really say, however, that no problem to CSTC, or any of the other committees, I really grew to love and come to understand the CPOC, the Prison Outreach mission that you guys have. The rest of the committees, I enjoy being on them, but, you make a connection with something, and that's that.

- Answer/Response: Tell me if I am over-answering your question. I'm an attorney by trade. And, I tend to do that. I actually got involved in service on the Fellowship level through Conference Committees. My sponsor came to me one day after I told him I really wanted to do some service other than count the money at the meeting. He said that they were working on a piece of literature in the Anorexia committee. He knew I was interested in Anorexia. He said, "go on this call after you read it, and give them your feedback." Well, I read it, and like an idiot, I went on there and said, "Is there anything else I can do to help?" So, a week later, I was the record keeper for the Anorexia committee. When I took it, I was so green behind the ears, it used to take me an hour and a half to two hours of listening to the recording to make sure I got everything correct. If you don't want to end up on the Board, don't do that. I worked on the Anorexia committee for a while; I joined the Sponsorship committee; I became the Sponsorship chair. I showed up at an ABM. I showed up at a Finance committee meeting, and somehow I became the Finance chair. I'm not sure exactly, but I went to the first meeting, just interested to see what we do for fundraising, and left as the chair. Since then, I have gotten to work with a number of Conference committees over the last three years. I worked with two, very easy to get along, simple

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committees: the CLC and the CCC. I have enjoyed the heck out of it. I do think our role is to both to participate, and facilitate anyway we can, as F.W.S. representatives.

- Answer/Response: I was elected the delegate for the Tampa Bay Intergroup. And they said, "When you go there, you are going to do all these break-out sessions. And you are going to see all these committees. We want you to become a member of two of those committees." Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. I wasn't really paying attention to the last part. I came to my first ABM, and I walked in as, "Oh, the Conference By-Laws Committee. This is really interesting." I left the ABM and went to my intergroup and said, "Wow! I've joined this committee and that committee, and I'm chair of the Conference By-Laws Committee." And they said, no the blah, blah, blah was "Do not become the chair of a committee." "Oh!" I was very blessed that there were some people at that ABM that were interested in the By-Laws Committee that had been around service for long enough that they were able to mentor me and show me what to do. I was like, "I don't know how to make an agenda." "Find an old one and just change the date." "I think I can do that." And, I did. "How do I take minutes?" "This is how you take minutes, ba dup da dup ta dah". "Oh, ok, I'll do that." And, so I became chair of the Conference By-Laws Committee, interacted with a couple of the other Conference committees. Then, I became chair of the Conference Concepts Adaptation Committee. And then at that point, I was asked to become part of a Board committee as a non-BOT member. I was invited to the Board Governance and Nominating Committee. So, I was there for about a year and a little bit more. At that point, they decided because I had three years and a month, that it was long enough. They asked me to be a member of the Board of Trustees. I accepted, filled out the applications. The Board reviewed it. They voted me in unanimously via regular telephone call. I was invited to the Board after that call for that next month. And have been appointed to a term that comes to an end this year. So, I'll be standing for election for a regular three-year term. I think that is about it.
- Answer/Response: I got involved in the Conference Sponsorship Committee. I ended up chairing that committee for about a year. I got involved in a Literature sub-committee, because I love to write. I really enjoyed that work. Then, I became a delegate; I came here as a delegate for a couple of years. And then when I got involved in Board work, I became liaison to several Conference Committees. So, that's pretty much been my work with Conference committees.
- Question/Comment: From what I can see the Fellowship has grown outside the USA and Canada reasonably well. In fact, quiet well. The German delegates just told me there are more than fifty plus meetings just in Germany, alone, which really blew me away. I represent a region that is very, very diverse. We have members in Bali, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Beijing, Shanghai, and Cambodia, now. Each of these groups may only have as little as three members. Some are also lone members. It is also a well-known area for active sex and love addiction, and acting out. It is almost famous for it. I would like to ask the Board members, your thoughts on the possibility of spending time, energy, resources, money, on supporting and developing recovery in an area where there is a huge, huge amount of suffering.

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- Answer/Response: That's a very thoughtful question. Wow! I would absolutely love to be able to jump on a plane and go there and spend some time there, and get to know folks and attend some meetings there and bring resources to that area. One of the things that I have heard, and had the great fortune to go to some other fellowships and see is that they have the resources through their donations and through sales of literature and what not, to actually send their delegates to their annual business meetings on their dime. In other words, they pick up all the costs for the delegates to come. I think that would be so awesome to get to hear the needs of the Fellowships in all the various areas, not just who is here right now, which is largely the United States. It's cost prohibitive for literature and things to be sent to China. We wish there was a way to change that. What we end up finding, is that when we don't send it through the international mail service we have right now, it gets lost. It doesn't end up getting there. We're tearing our hair out trying to figure out a way to get those resources to you. This would be a great thing to put on our Agenda and further develop, for sure. Thank you for that thoughtful question.
- Answer/Response: It brings to mind for me the Fifth Tradition, which is our primary purpose is to help the addict who still suffers. One of the wonderful bits of news from this year that has just passed, is that our Basic Text is now available in e-format. I know India was having a terrible time, because it cost so much money to get one of our Basic Texts, hardbound, sent all the way over there. Now that it is in electronic format, it's less expensive. And, now they are able to access it and hopefully use some of the programs to translate. It is my hope that with some of the things we are doing now, we'll be able to reach those very difficult to reach places, and begin helping the addict who still suffers in the place where sex addiction is rampant, and enculturated.
- Answer/Response: This is a difficult problem. It is our goal is to reach sex and love addicts around the world who are still suffering. The biggest piece of the puzzle that we do have available to us right now, is electronic, web-type presence. We have the seven core documents, now translated in, I think, nineteen different languages on our website, which is a start. It's not a lot of material. I would hate to try to recover on the seven core documents alone. But, what we are finding is that it's very difficult to predict what's going to be successful, and what's not. In 2008-2009, the Fellowship spent quite a bit of money putting together our Spanish pamphlets. And, we had many of our pamphlets translated in Spanish. We put it on the web, and advertised it. We're now giving them away, because nobody was buying them. So, we're literally, "you order them, pay the cost of shipping and we'll send them to you for free", because we can't find people to buy them. We have to be very careful on where we allocate our resources to try to reach the addicts who suffer the best. The worst, not the best. Best for our purpose to reach them. We also depend on these regions to pick up the ball as much as possible; to do translations on their own; get in touch with us. One of the other things we're looking at is simplifying our translation procedures and process, which some translators have complained they find to be a little cumbersome. We do have to protect our assets, of which our most important assets are our copyrights. But, we are trying to simplify that process, the translation process. We're finding translations we don't even know about until they are done, in all sorts of different languages. And, we're finding out about meetings in places we never knew. So, I think a big key is also a web

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presence to bring in those people to help us reach the addicts around them, where we don't have a current F.W.S. presence.

- Answer/Response: I agree. The costs of producing in a foreign language, a piece of literature is expensive. And, we have somewhat limited resources that we have to use. I do believe it's important to reach, not only in the US, but throughout the world, people who have this horrible sickness. And, we can provide, unfortunately, in the languages we do have at this point, the resources on the F.W.S. website. We can also provide some help, things like, "how do you run a meeting" and things like that. The *Basic Text*, I think, for places that have access to English speaking, in the e-file format, is a big deal. And, it's so much cheaper. There is no shipping. It is a straight price. My goal would be to see that we reach every addict. That's kind of foolish. That's pie in the sky. This program saved me. I hope we can reach out and save others. It'll be good. The limited resources, I think, are a problem for us.
- Answer/Response: I just want to add that our resources are very limited. There is so much that we wish we could do. I also wanted to add that our *Journal* is now in an e-format. The *Journal* is like a meeting in print. It cost twice as much as the actual *Journal*, the cost of the *Journal* itself, just to mail it out within the United States. Imagine what it costs to go international. So, it's now available in e-format. Please see the website, if you are interested in subscribing to it in the e-format. That's very exciting. Please let your groups know about that.
- Question/Comment: I have a two part question. On the inverted chart on page 2 of the Conference Service Manual, it shows that the meetings are the most important, and then the intergroup/lone Group. It comes down to the BOT. Can you explain to us what the BOT does? And, what is the difference between the BOT and the F.W.S.?
- Answer/Response: The BOT carries out the mandates of the Conference. So, what's decided here at this Conference, to the best of our ability, within our fiduciary means and within the law, we put into practice. We oversee the F.W.S. Corporation, which is Fellowship-Wide Services. And that includes our office, which is a business. We sell merchandise. We sell literature. We have employees. So, we have fiduciary decisions to make. We have to keep the books. We have to watch the budget. We have a lot of financial things that we have to take care of.
- Answer/Response: I think a better question is, What isn't the BOT? This year we have dealt with a huge number of, what I call, policing items. Groups will send us, "Well, this is happening in my group". That's not really our job. Our job is the business of Fellowship-Wide Services. And, the people at that table, and that table, and Hector, work for us, and ultimately for you. The reason we are at the bottom is because that's what we do. It's an important position, because S.L.A.A. itself isn't a business. But, F.W.S. is. And, we need to make sure that runs effectively, in a cost efficient manner. So, that's my part.
- Answer/Response: The only thing I would add, is that we work within the guidelines of the By-Laws, the Service Manual. But, we also are a corporation. And, we are a non-profit corporation. We get our non-profit status as a 501(c)3, which is a section of the Internal Revenue Code, from the Federal government. And, we are required by law, as the Board of

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Trustees, to assume certain fiduciary responsibilities. Of course, fiduciary is basically a duty to use our utmost care in protecting the office, the assets of this non-profit corporation. So sometimes, we are often stuck between the spiritual principles and the legal, corporate principles that apply to any non-profit board of trustees. That, sometimes, can be a real challenge. If we, as a board, fritter away the assets, we are legally liable, as well as spiritually guilty of hurting the Fellowship. So, there are some decisions that by law, we have to reserve to ourselves. But, we take you all's mandates and we fulfill them, as long as they are consistent with law. We want to hear from you, because as [the person who asked the question] mentions, the groups are at the top. When I considered serving on the Board, I had heard somebody say, "Well, it's a little different on the Board. You're on the inside, looking out." I don't take that attitude. I don't believe that. I am at the bottom looking up. We serve for you.

- Answer/Response: I used to believe, because I belong to other 12-Step fellowships, that the Treasurer and the Chairperson of the meeting were the bosses of the meeting. But the truth is, the Chairperson and the Treasurer have all the bosses, the people in those meetings. And they say, "We're going to elect an intergroup representative." That intergroup representative has, as a boss, all the people at that meeting. Then they go to the intergroup. The intergroup now has all the bosses being the individual meetings that are associated with them. You are all of our bosses. Not just the meetings. But now, the intergroup reps, and the Delegates are the ones who tell us what to do. That's something that's important for us to remember is that Fellowship-Wide Services is a corporation. That means we are the directors of that corporation, because you have elected us those directors. We get to oversee the office, to help the office function. F.W.S. takes care of all of those things that make the Fifth Tradition possible: helping the addict who still suffers, printing all the literature, making sure we have a website, making sure that we have a web presence, making sure that as much information as possible can be transmitted through that website to all of the individual intergroups. Everything that takes place at meeting level, that you don't even realize, is being taken care of because the F.W.S. is there to fill literature orders, and take care of all those different things. So, you've elected us directors of the corporation. We are the connection between the Conference and that business. So, we have to also be able to focus on balancing financial responsibility with the spiritual responsibility of 12-Step fellowship.
- Question/Comment: Given what you've all just said about the inverse pyramid, and our Traditions, which state that our leaders are but trusted servants, and they don't govern, and that you're here to serve the membership, and that the Conference represents the group conscience of the membership: How do you square that with the strategic plan that you've adopted and presumably all signed, which say that S.L.A.A. is a board-driven organization, and should be a board-driven organization, that uses the word "govern", it says the Board should govern, that says the Board doesn't serve the members, it should serve a set of constituencies, including government agencies, outside agencies and fundraisers? How is

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what you said today square with that strategic plan that you've adopted and continue to state you are putting into effect?

- Answer/Response: The strategic plan: the first six pages of it, were prepared by a consultant who works with non-profit organizations who are not spiritually based. Therefore, he had a little bit of a misconception about our organization. We worked very hard to educate him. But, I think he still didn't quite get it. As we looked a little closer at this thing, after the fact, we realized, "Holy Toledo! We missed this part of it." Where it says "board-driven", we were like, "Oops, that shouldn't be there." It is our plan to remove the first six pages of this document. But, we didn't want to pull it before the ABM because we thought then we would trying to pull something over on you guys. We didn't want to give that impression. So instead, we just wanted to say to you, "Oops, we didn't realize that." And so, those first six pages, we would like for you to disregard. We do not see this as a board-driven fellowship. It is an inverted pyramid. And you guys are what drives this fellowship.
- Answer/Response: As was said, this was prepared as a plan to reorganize the Board, to make the Board more efficient. That's our goal. Our goal is not to suddenly grab power, or to do anything like that. Those first five pages are almost like recitals. I'll be honest, I'm focused on reforming the Board in a more efficient way, so that it can do a better job of reacting to the circumstances and situations that may arise, including working towards that without implementing it immediately, because we simply don't have the Board members that we would need to implement that strategic plan. We lost three board members this year, unexpectedly through resignations for various reasons. Our approach is not to change the way we operate. It's to change the way we reach group conscience. In other words, the ultimate responsibility for every decision that comes out of the Board of Trustees is the Board of Trustees itself. It is not the subcommittees. The Committees and any subcommittees they might have, are designed to do some of the legwork. And, do some of the research. And do some of the preliminary recommendations that comes to the ultimate authority, which is the Board itself. And, that is our goal with strategic plan, is to work in a more efficient manner, to distribute the workloads fairly among board members. And, it is not those first few pages. And, one reason the word "board-driven" came up, was simply a description of things that had gone on in the past. I think it was misinterpreted. We apologize for leaving that impression with that part of the document. What we, as board members though, are interested in finding a more efficient way to operate.
- Answer/Response: I don't know if anybody has gone to a seminar where they are talking about one concept. And, they are talking about it over and over again. And, they have different words and terminologies. After spending several days with the consultant, we all understand what they were saying. I have filters. And, I was able to filter, "I know what he means with this one, and I understand what he means with that one." But, when it came time for us to sign the document, I wasn't paying attention to the words, and how they were going to be interpreted. I think the best way to describe it would be, Conferenced directed, and Board actualized. You guys set the policy, and then we work through that. I really do appreciate that this has been brought up. We have made intentions to change that.
- Answer/Response: I would like to add one more thing. And, that is, what that strategic plan does is it actually expands the Board committees. This is what the plan addresses: Board

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- committees, not Conference Committees. It expands our committees, so that we can work more effectively, and have better coverage of activities that we want to do. But, right now, we're so understaffed, that there is no way we can even achieve this plan. It's kind of a long-distance dream for us. But, like we said, those first six pages were really not well-stated.
- Question/Comment: Can I briefly ask a follow-up.
  - Answer/Response: Yes, but there are other people waiting.
  - Question/Comment: Just to be real brief. Just to point. You don't even have to answer. I've read the document very closely. It isn't just the first six pages. The words about the Board being a governing body don't appear in the six pages. The suggestion that we should promote ourselves, although our Traditions specifically say, don't promote. References to "constituent groups" such as government agencies are throughout the thirty pages. And, there is no mention of the Conference, not one.
  - Answer/Response: Are you asking a question?
  - Question/Comment: Of the thirty pages. So I'm suggesting that you look at more than the six pages.
- 
- Question/Comment: Thank you for your service. And, it's a difficult role. What I'm hearing is balancing responsibilities. I have a few things. Our intergroup was one of the ones that requested some policing action. I know your plate is full. But, it's ok to learn from other fellowships. It's not a mark against us to look at the experience, strength and hope that lies elsewhere. SAA has an Intergroup Guide, that has very specific answers that answers that solves a lot of the policing issues you might find using up your time. Just my own philosophy is that everything is based on carrying the message. What's never been very clear to me, as a forty year old fellowship, people keep thinking we're new. We're not. How do we balance the workload of carrying the message between the Board, which has fiduciary responsibilities, and legal responsibilities, and carrying the message. For instance, it would be nice to have vehicles to let people know that S.L.A.A. exists. AI-Anon has posters. All across the country of Canada, AA has TV commercials. I don't see that the Board has to do these things. But, a little bit of clarification on maybe the Conference being able to do those things. And, get your position on that.
  - Answer/Response: Actually, as part of our strategic plan, we had two sections, two committees that address just those things. One was Outreach and the other was Programs. We tossed around all kinds of ideas, like bus benches, and just all kinds of creative ideas. And of course, this would be up to the committee members to come up with. But, yes, lots of dreams of how this Fellowship might expand.
  - Answer/Response: It turns out that the Conference Public Information Committee is in the process of coming up with a process for coming up with YouTube videos, and procedures for that. So that more people can be reached.
  - Answer/Response: It's one of those things where we want to do what we can. The F.W.S. has some financial resources that are very limited. We try to figure out how best to use our financial resources for outreach. In the past two years, we have had a presence at two separate therapy associations that deal with sex and love addiction. But, we are heavily

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- reliant on the Conference to come up with the ideas, and to come up with the plans. And, to bring the things to the intergroups, because we are a 12-Step fellowship. The best way to carry the message, I believe, is addict to addict. It should be a collaboration. For me the question is, what can we do to increase service within this fellowship, so the Conference has more resources. The Conference's most valuable resource is people. Sometimes we have one person chairing three, four, five Conference committees. I think part of the answer lies in increasing service generally. And, a culture of service.
- Answer/Response: One of the things that was mentioned earlier, we count on you guys, the Conference, to come up with those things. If you direct us to do something, we will. Or, if you guys decide that you want to do it, that's great. I don't believe necessarily that we, right now, have the money to do that. It does take money. If this Conference were to tell us, "let's get park benches", then maybe we need to find a way to do that. We need more service from people. I agree with [another Board member who spoke previously] promotion, it's actually us reaching out individually to addicts who still suffer, and them reaching out to us. It's the way it's supposed to be.
  - Question/Comment: Thank you for your service. I will just say that a careful study of AA's history does not reveal that to be fully the case. Personally, I went to every Alano club in northern Illinois, personally. They have never heard of us, except for two Alano clubs. I mean, these are places that host meetings all day long. They had never heard of S.L.A.A. I just wanted you to have that information. I value your service. I thank you.
  - Answer/Response: Also as a point of clarification, there is also a document called, the suggestions for public outreach, and letting intergroups know what they can do and how they can reach out to different intergroups and non-members. It also gives suggestions for those outreaches. I'm certainly hopeful that document will be on the website soon, so that other intergroups can start taking up those responsibilities.
  - Answer/Response: One quick thing I wanted to add, is I honestly believe we have a website that is second to none, when it comes to 12-Step organizations. We've put a lot of time, a lot of effort, a lot of finances into our website. We have a tremendous webmaster. That's an important piece of the puzzle. We understand it's not the whole story. But, we're very, very proud of it.
  - Answer/Response: Yes, and I can't wait for that presentation tomorrow.
  
  - Question/Comment: I going to change track. You are looking for three Board members. Or two. Or four? Four. What are their job descriptions?
  - Answer/Response: That's a good question. I believe it's in the CSM, which is on the website and in your book. It's to show up to meetings. To put in your input. To listen. To be a part of. To be willing to be of service. There is a recommended number of hours. I believe it's twenty-five to forty hours a month. To be willing to be a part of a group of other Board members. To be able to participate. Regularly show up regularly. Be a part of Board meetings. That type of thing.



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- Answer/Response: I had that same question when I was asked to be on a Board committee as a non-BOT member. Willingness to serve. An attitude of being willing to get out of my comfort zone and do whatever is necessary.
- Question/Comment: I'm just going to interrupt. So, I get that. But, if you are going to have somebody sit on the finance committee, they better know finance. And, if I'm going to have somebody talk to the lawyers, they better know law. And, if I'm going to have somebody market, they better know how to market. So, can we drill down into that?
- Answer/Response: The point that you are trying to make is, what specifics do we need? By my trade for the last twenty-eight years, I'm a cake decorator. None of those skills really come in handy. Patience, I got more from my recovery work than from my job. It's about willingness to serve. It's about willingness to put in the time. It's about, "Hey, you know what? I learned how to do minutes by going to Conference Committees." I did minutes for my Board committee, when I was a non-BOT member. It's about coming up with ideas. It's about going outside of the box. It's about doing whatever it is I could. Whatever training I needed, I got while I was on the job.
- Question/Comment: I appreciate that, thanks.
- Answer/Response: On our finance committee, we have two accountants, two lawyers and the Board Chair. So, we have tried to do that. Can you imagine, though, if somebody wants to provide service and can't learn on the job, that we just eliminate that person as a possibility? One of the things I have had to learn on the Board, is to collaboratively talk to one another. Never close your mind and say, "I don't believe that. That's the end of it." Listen. I think that is probably the biggest requirement, is that you can listen and keep your mouth shut until you understand what you're hearing. And then, go from there. I will admit that is one of the things I had to learn this year was, "ok. It's ok to have an opinion. But, don't etch it in stone and never be willing to listen to what other people say." Because, sometimes you hear things, that believe it, or not, I didn't think of. I know that's hard to believe. One of my sponsees sent me a little picture this morning of Albert Einstein. It says, "The 12 Steps" at the top, "Why didn't I think of that!" So, you can be Einstein and not understand. I think those are far more important sometimes than the actual, "Ok, I have a MBA. I have a doctorate in this." Sometimes we need people who can think. That's much more important.
- Answer/Response: I really don't have much to add, other than to say, yes, as an attorney it has been helpful. It has been helpful dealing with a number of issues that have come up with our incorporation in Massachusetts, which has required us to begin a process of reincorporating in Texas, which you all, as a Conference, approved last year. It certainly makes it easier for me to be the point of contact with the legal counsel in Massachusetts, who has to go through a somewhat, in my opinion, antiquated process to close out that corporation. There is no doubt, it's helpful to have people with an accounting background. It's helpful to have people with legal background. It's helpful to have people with business backgrounds. But, it's also crucial to have spiritual people. It's crucial to have people who are imaginative, and people who can see the big picture, without having to get caught up in the legalities. Sometimes, I'm the "but, but" guy, "but, but wait ...", because I'm the lawyer. I think that way. So, it's very important to have a good mix. So, we don't go out saying, we

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want lawyers! We want accountants! We want emotionally sober people, and bring to us what talents you can. Hopefully, we can find all the talents that best serve you and the addict who still suffers.

- Question/Comment: In our community we have principal people. How do you handle with the terms you serve? You have a restricted number of years? You can you serve as much as you want? I can share my concern: if you have a number of years that you are on the Board, then you are in your comfort zone, because you're always there. So, how do you handle that?
- Answer/Response: As the Chair of the Board Governance and Nominating Committee, I do have information on this. It turns out that you can serve two terms as a trustee. That means, two three-year terms, which is six altogether. You're also given a freebie. If you are appointed, you are allowed to serve out an appointed term, before the two terms you can be elected to. So, it could be up to eight years. After the two terms in which you have been elected as a trustee, you must take time off before you can stand for election again. So, there is a process of rotation. As it stands, rotating out of service on the Board of Trustees is not a problem. It's keeping our trustees that is the problem.
  
- Question/Comment: Want to hear an update on the investigation of our past Office Manager. What's going on with that?
- Answer/Response: The previous detective that we had has retired. We have a new detective on the case, who is wonderful. He is being very diligent with the case. Things are moving along. We are not at liberty to give out any information, because it might compromise the investigation. We have provided a bunch of documents to them. So, they have everything.
  
- Question/Comment: I don't know if that is all you can say, that's great. But, I actually don't know about that topic. I am very new to all of this. So, if there is even just a sentence you can give about what happened, that would be great. If not, that's fine. I'm also wondering, just because I'm being introduced to the structure of it, out of curiosity, since it is a non-profit corporation: Are there salaried positions that are happening? Which are those? I'm just curious about the structure of it, as a corporate entity.
- Answer/Response: None of the Board members are paid anything. We are all volunteers. We are all in the Program. Our General Manager is paid. Our staff people are paid, that you've seen here. Our Webmaster is paid. We have various contractors that work for us, that are paid, like our desktop publisher, and things like that. Our printers, that print out the literature, and things like that. That's it in terms of corporate.
- Answer/Response: We are a bit hamstrung because there is an ongoing criminal investigation. At the 2009 ABM, it was discovered by the Board of Trustees, that there were not sufficient funds in the operating accounts to pay for the ABM. That set forth a cascade of events, which eventually ended in November of .... I'm sorry, in 2010, not 2009. At the

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2010 ABM. That began a cascade of events and investigations by Board members which resulted in November of 2011 (later noted to be 2010), the General Manager being summarily dismissed, as well as the rest of staff. There were all kinds of concerns. One of the concerns was that legal filings were not being made, or could not be made, in a timely fashion, due to her delinquencies. That was the grounds stated for the termination. We then closed the office for a couple of weeks, and operated the office on a volunteer basis for almost nine months. We then hired staff very slowly, and very carefully. We learned a lot from the experience. It was part of the reason we hired a consultant, was to make sure that this never happens again. We are putting all kinds of policies and procedures .... I have spent three years, and I am up to here with policies and procedures; and I am a lawyer. We have been spending a lot of .... Honestly, is a lot of where our efforts have had to, unfortunately, go over the last several years, is into these management type policies and procedures and safeguards. Things that, unfortunately, don't directly carry the message the way we want to get to doing it. I'm happy to report that it's better. We now have three employees of F.W.S.. We have a General Manager, who we are very excited about. We're slowly handing over certain financial responsibilities with safeguards that weren't in place before. That's what happened in a nutshell.

Information provided by the Board Chair that was not prompted by a Questions/Comment.

- It occurs to me to let you know. Some of you may notice this is a different General Manager than from last year. I want you to know that last year's General Manager was Lisa McGrath. You may remember her. She was only with us a couple of months. Her father took ill. She had to leave to take care of him. We were very blessed to immediately be able to hire Pam. Pam has been with us for a year now. She's been awesome. Pam has been instrumental in putting this whole thing together.
- Question/Comment: Just want to thank you so much for your service. Already I am so grateful that I am here. This is high stakes, actually, because we have a disease that can kill. I'm getting it. I'm getting it. Just kind of a wonky corporate question: I looked at the 990 return. All I know about looking at a 990 tax return is that if your assets are greater than your liabilities, you're in good shape. I'm just curious, because the liabilities are 128, our assets are in six figures. I'm curious what our assets and liabilities are.
- Answer/Response: Hold on. We will go into that in great detail with the financial report.

Announcement: The General Assembly period ended with several announcements

The General Assembly took a break at 3:32 pm, to be continued starting at 3:45 pm.

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**BOT Financial Report; Tuesday, August 5, 2014 – 3:47 P.M.**

Facilitator: Roger R.

Assistant Facilitator: Elizabeth B.

Backup Facilitator: Lisa C.

Timekeeper: Not requested

Spiritual Reminder: Not requested

Vote counters: NA

Voting Members registered and seated: not reported for this General Assembly

Voting Members in room: not reported for this General Assembly

Quorum: not reported for this General Assembly

**Financial Report of S.L.A.A. Fellowship Wide Services Inc.**

Presented by Steve B, Board member

- Reference was made that some comments about the financial reports were made during the previous session, *Getting to know the BOT/F.W.S.*
- The power point presentation made was distributed electronically to the Conference. It was a mass email, so may have ended up in some members' spam folder(s).
- The presentation included general information about the role of the Board and F.W.S. as well as financial information.
- Revenue (Income) was noted to come from donations and product sales (e.g., literature).
- F.W.S. operates on a fiscal year (October 01 to September 30) vs. Calendar year (January 01 to December 31) for tax and financial reports.
  
- The presentation focused on two reports utilized by the Board to manage the Fellowship's assets. There are additional reports used by the Board.
  - *Balance Sheet*, aka *Statement of Position*;
  - *Profit and Loss*, aka *Statement of Activities*
- This year's financial information reported is through the end of June, end of the third quarter of the fiscal year.
- Finance reports generally appear in the F.W.S News(letter), for reporting to the Fellowship.
- For the last two years, F.W.S' books have been audited. The last two audits have been clean. The audits were published in the Spring 2014 F.W.S News(letter).

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- These are consolidated reports.
  - The State of incorporation changed from Massachusetts to Texas, in accordance with decisions made at the 2013 ABM.
  - Due to the timing and legal processes of the two states, and F.W.S operating as one entity, incorporated in the State of Texas, though there are assets and business operations that are being phased out in Massachusetts. F.W.S accountant recommended a consolidated report.
  - There are two Prudent Reserves and two Operating accounts while the transition from Massachusetts to Texas is being completed.
  - There are changes to Prudent Reserve and Operating accounts, relative to 2013. There are changes also to the inventory (e.g., literature, medallions). These changes do not indicate an improvement to the financial position. The differences indicate differences in timing of financial recording.
- Assets: Assets include prudent reserve accounts in Massachusetts, and Texas, as well as literature.
- Liabilities: There are few liabilities in the form of debt. Debts reported are typically accounts payable, which are purchases made where, due to accounting, the payments have not carried through the financial records.
- Profit and Loss Reports are reviewed monthly by the Board Finance Committee. There is a non-board accountant on the committee. Donations for FY 2012, FY 2013, and FY 2014 (YTD) reported. 2014 donations are consistent with 2012 and 2013. This leads to a question about what we can do to increase donations. Fellowship's prudent reserve is in a low risk investment. The Board looked at what AA did, to help them with their decisions.
- Sales include new line items for electronic products. The income from electronic products have a higher profit margin than hard copy documents. Amazon and iTunes are the sales platforms. They take 30% of sales revenue, leaving 70% for the Fellowship.
- Cost of Goods Sold (COGS) explained as reducing gross income. Revenue from sales has increased over last year by approximately \$40,000 (sales of items shipped from F.W.S).
- Board expenses are less than 2013. The F.W.S office is more stable, change in philosophy on Board travel, and financial reporting tools and metrics exist to manage F.W.S office operations without being present in office. Board member corporate officers travelled to office in the last fiscal year. Less board travel.
- Contract services expenses are higher this year over last year, handling the dissolution of the Massachusetts Corporation and transfer to the Texas Corporation. Legal expenses have increased. Labor expenses have decreased, with staff being F.W.S employees, rather than employees of a staffing agency.
- A 10 year lease through 2016. The lease cost stair step increases stopped in 2012. F.W.S office may benefit from real estate market changes, keeping costs stable.
- Other operating costs referenced including Insurance. The accountant suggested changes to the chart of accounts, which shows changes in the chart of accounts that don't necessarily reflect real financial changes.
  - Changes in accounts which moves expenses to different categories than prior years.

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- Effectively, our YTD expenses are increasing, as well as revenue increases.
- 2013 – 2014 Budget appears in the ABM binder. The Board assigns a budget amount to the Conference Committees. The Conference Finance Committee works with that money, allocating the budget to the various Conference Committees. Historically, the Conference Committees spend about one-third of the money allocated by the Board. The Conference Literature Committee now has a paid employee to help with the Literature development process.
- Contact information included in the power point presentation.

### Questions/Comments from the floor:

- Question/Comment: Ok. So, you raise questions. Can we offer a little bit of answer?
- Question/Comment: First of all, magnificent. Does everybody agree? Unbelievable. Transparent. And, you're an outstanding professional and a trusted servant. I look at a budget as a representation of reality. You say, how do we grow the sales and the income by carrying the message and having recovery take place. If my life's been saved, it's no effort to give back. If I haven't received anything, then it's a question mark. One of the ways, of course, is for you all to either authorize the outreach, or come up with a solid plan about carrying the message. We have the website. We have free conference call. We have our personal efforts. But, \$350,000 is roughly the total operating budget? I'm not great at math. But, outreach was \$100, less than \$200. That represents 0.18%. Our purpose, of course, is to carry the message. It's not a criticism. I just think it's important to notice that. I'd love to hear back about the Board's vision. And, in a more precise way, what are we planning, with excess funds? You define prudent reserve at six months. You'd like to see it a year. Totally get it. But, as we grow our way, with the available resources, is there something dedicated to either, move money over to our Conference (which I think would be appropriate)? Or if the Board is going to take on the responsibilities and create the pieces themselves?
- Answer/Response: I don't want to answer for the whole Board or for future boards. We are now at the end of a Conference year. What I will say is this: We are a board of five people right now. We are busy keeping track of money. We are keeping track of elections for Board offices. We're doing those functions that the Board members have to do every year. We ended up with, after a loss of three Board members, with a BPRC (Board Public Relations Committee) of two members. We were surprised with that. What we would like is more help from the Conference in finding us more service opportunities. That worked well a year ago, when the New York Intergroup said they found out about a group of sex therapists, and people who do treatment of people with sexual disorders (SASH), had a big convention. So we spent money. We sent books. We gave out a bunch of pamphlets to people. Remember, this may be part of the thing, is yes, we want to help with this. But, I do think the Conference needs, also, to play a more active role. I'm not blaming the Conference. I'm not saying that you guys aren't doing your job. I'm saying we all need to collaborate

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- together to do more. I'm hoping the resources continue to increase, so we can do more. It's just very difficult for a board of this size to do everything.
- Question/Comment: Very quick. To respond to that. I couldn't agree more. To me, there is no separation. Hopefully, we're in the citadel of "We". This should be the "We". The strongest "We" that we're ever going to get. I believe the Board should, perhaps, consider that there are fifty people here. Along with responsibility comes money. It can't all be controlled. It can't all be done. I keep hearing the message over and over again: "We are few. We can't do it all." Perhaps, rebalancing what the Conference does. I did chair the Conference Finance Committee for two years. The money is never used. My own personal summation of why, is because Conference Committees do not feel they can go forward and do certain things. This is, please don't take this as a criticism, but I do believe we are a little bit Board driven. If that can be balanced, more can happen. Those funds can then be spent. There needs to be mission. Authority needs to be given. SASH, you brought up SASH. It's great for us to send books. SASH is driven by people. Having booths on the floor. Making connections with the therapists. That has to be budgeted. You have to let people with the willingness and the time. And, it does not have to be the Board. Don't do that. So, I'd also like to ask as a follow-up question. I know I gave you a lot of philosophy. But, planned expenses. Are there any planned expenses to allow the trusted servants that are willing and able to come to Houston, with our archives/record resolution project, that's been discussed? I'm done. Somebody else. Come on.
  - Answer/Response: That's under discussion. The 2014 – 2015 budget, of course, is just not in our heads. And it will be taken into account. One thing I will say, is that that number I showed you on Board of Trustee expenses, shows you how expensive it is to fly people to San Antonio, and put them up for a number of days to do work. It is a high expense. We are looking at it. We take your concerns very seriously. We'll see what we can budget. The thing I do also want to mention is we can budget \$18,000 to the Conference committees. But, if you guys don't spend it, then that money sits in that little bucket, waiting to be spent. We don't have it to spend for other things. I really do want to encourage a collaborative effort. The SASH thing, we didn't take that out of the Conference budget. The New York Intergroup got involved. But we paid for the books and everything else out through outreach. It's just the Board, we can't do it alone. We have a very small office. So, we want your help. And, we do want to spend the money on outreach.
  - Question/Comment: As I understand, the Conference committees asked for about \$11,000 in the current year out of the \$350,000 budget. And, the Board saw fit to allocate under \$4,000, about \$3,800. About one percent of the budget. So that outreach example, of getting \$200, when it asked for more. Am I to take what you're saying is the only reason you refused that other \$8,000 that was asked for by the Conference, is because you didn't think we were going to spend it?
  - Answer/Response: What I would say is that we look at expenditures over the long term. When I started as Treasurer, we were allocating \$1,000 - \$1,500 a year to the Conference expenses. So, we raised it up to \$5,000 to see what would happen the following year. And, no more money was spent. So, what I'm suggesting is, if you have a plan to do something,

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- and it takes money, bring it to us. Bring it to us, even if you say, well we don't have that budget this year. But, if you have a plan, bring it to us. The budget isn't written in stone. But, I don't like the idea of taking a large sum of money, setting it aside, just so it sits there. We have to make that hard decisions.
- Question/Comment: This Friday, the committees are going to put those budget requests in. Isn't that supposed to be the process? My question is, what is your advice to Conference committees in filling out that budget request form this week? If they think they have ideas. And, we'll find ways to constructively spend that money for our mission, if allocated to them. Is it your advice that they should ask for it? And, you're going to be open to it? Or, is it your advice to come back later in the year, when they have specific, concrete plans and proposals?
  - Answer/Response: My advice is, if you have an idea that you believe that you can actually implement, ask for the money up front. Let us know that that expenditure is a possibility. We'll do what we can, within our budget, to see that we help you out. I can't make promises, because, again, a budget process is very difficult. But, definitely ask for it up front, and we'll look at it. And, again, if it comes later, or it comes out that it's more expensive, don't be afraid to contact us. Keep us informed in what you want to do.
  - Question/Comment: You're telling us there is money there that is not being spent. I've only been in service about a year and a half, but as a chair of two very active committees, I kind of get the impression that you have to ask for more than you want, just to get what you want. And, that there is no money in the budget for anything else. I'm getting mixed messages here. On one hand, you're saying we're not using it all. But, on the other hand, we're being told that you're not going to get what you want.
  - Answer/Response: I'm not sure how you got the message that you're not going to get what you want. We are in a very tight budget. We try to accommodate to the best we can. The problem we also have to look at is, and this is what I would also suggest, is at the beginning of the year, the Conference Finance Committee announced that these are the allocations. But, we know it's never been spent this way. So, if you need money, start with us. That's what I would suggest is that you go first to the Conference Finance Committee, so that we know that money is going to be spent before we start bringing money out of other places that we've put it.
  - Question/Comment: One follow-up on that. So, can we do away with these rumors, and ask to set up a program where each committee puts in exactly what they need?
  - Answer/Response: No. And let me tell you why. We end up with Conference committees with brand new chairs who've never served in any position before. They have no clue exactly what they need. We understand that some committees have greater needs than others, but we also want to be fair to all the committees. What I would suggest is that you ask for what you want, and we'll try to address it to the best of our ability. But, remember, we have to make sure the office runs first. That's what you've elected the Trustees to do, is to make sure the office runs first. We have had very small leftover money at the end of the year that's either gone to try to repay the prudent reserve, which was part of the decision in 2010, was that we will take this money out on the condition we repay it. And, as of last



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year's extra money, it was paid back. It's a very difficult process. We are all non-employed people. We are all volunteers. We are doing the best we can, remembering, also, that we have limited time to sit down and figure out ways to do everything. We are doing the best we can with that. Let us know what you think you need. We'll try to accommodate you. But, we won't promise you that we can give you everything you ask for.

- Question/Comment: Thank you for your service. Just want to ask about part of your presentation, there was point where you were talking about having received a generous contribution of \$25,000 in the Texas fund. This is also one of our motions. My question is related to this. With the motion being increase the annual contribution limitation from \$12,000 to \$20,000, from your perspective, what is being asked for?
- Answer/Response: That's a very good question, and I'm glad I get a chance to address that. Rephrasing the question: If we have a cap on donations, which we are talking about raising this year, and that cap is less than \$25,000, how did we receive a \$25,000 contribution? That is an excellent question. And the answer is, is that cap is to our General Operating Funds. When they created the prudent reserve, about a dozen years ago, the Endowment Fund it was called at the time, the decision was that those funds that we receive into the prudent reserve are not capped. Now, the prudent reserve itself is capped at a year's worth of income. But, the donations to prudent reserve are not capped. If the Fellowship were concerned about that, they could, or could have, capped that. But the money that is capped is the money that goes to the operating fund. That's just the way it's been decided in the past. The motion is about money that we can receive directly into the operating fund. Those are monies we can spend when we get it. The money that goes into prudent reserve, according to prior motions, we can only spend in an emergency.

Announcement: There were no announcements at the end of this General Assembly period.

The General Assembly took a break at 4:43 pm, to be continued starting at 5:00 pm.

### **General Assembly; Tuesday, August 5, 2014 – 5:04 P.M.**

Facilitator: Rick B.

Assistant Facilitator: NA

Backup Facilitator: NA

Timekeeper: Not requested

Spiritual Reminder: Not requested

Vote counters: NA

Voting Members registered and seated: not reported for this General Assembly

Voting Members in room: not reported for this General Assembly

Quorum: not reported for this General Assembly

### **Concepts Presentation:**

Presenter: Rick B, BPRC Chair

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The presenter noted the Supplemental packet received at registration included two AA pamphlets, one on the Traditions and a second on the Concepts. Participants were asked to refer to the AA Concepts pamphlet.

- 12 Concepts for World Service introduced:  
The presenter introduced the 12 Concepts, noting that S.L.A.A. recently adapted the 12 Concepts of World Service for our Fellowship.
- Three Legacies:  
The presenter noted that every –twelve step fellowship has to stand on something, a three legged tripod: Unity, Recovery and Service, also known as “legacies”.
  - Recovery (for the individuals) – The 12 Steps, experience, strength and hope
  - Unity (for the meetings) – the individual identifies as a member
  - Service – using experience, strength and hope

The presenter commented that the 12 Concepts of World Service are an awesome idea. Every 12 Step fellowship has to stand on something. Standing on one leg is possible for a certain amount of time. A table doesn't stand well on two legs. So, as a 12 Step fellowship, we need to stand on three legs: Recovery, Unity and Service. This idea came from AA, the originator of the 12 step program. AA talks about their three legacies: legacy of Recovery, legacy of Unity and legacy of Service.

The presenter spoke of the source of the three legacies. Bill W. came up with the wonderful idea of Experience, Strength and Hope. Reference was made that Bill W. was influenced by his participation in the Oxford groups. Everything he did was a culmination of Experience, Strength and Hope. Bill W. had learned it is easier to stay away from the drink when he helped other people.

- Overview of the Steps, Traditions and Concepts:  
The presenter described how the purpose of the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts were explained to him.
  - Steps: The Steps keep us from suicide.
  - Traditions: The Traditions keep us from homicide.
  - Concepts: The Concepts keep us from genocide

### Twelve Steps:

The presenter noted the founders of AA, Bill W. and Dr. Bob, tried this and that, and eventually came up with a program of six steps. The six steps worked for most people. But, addicts being who they are, people looked for loopholes, and found lots of them. So, Bill W. and Dr. Bob tried to close up loopholes. Bill W. came up with 12 Steps, representing their experience, strength and hope, and steering clear of the things that didn't work. The 12 Steps help us stay sober. They bring us to sobriety.

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### Twelve Traditions:

As meetings sprang up, the meetings were having difficulties with who should be a member, who should be allowed in. Bill W. asked the groups to submit their experience, strength and hope conducting their meetings. When Bill W. reviewed all of these ideas, it became clear that if all of these ideas were implemented, no one would get in doors of AA. From this, Bill W. realized, you're a member if you say you are. The Traditions were developed for each of us to have a safe place, for interactions with people, especially at the group level.

### The Twelve Concepts:

When the Foundation (that became AA's World Service's office) was created, AA members looked at how they put their experience, strength and hope into something that worked for the Foundation. After Dr. Bob passed, Bill W. realized that once he was gone, there would be no one else to pass on the experience, strength and hope. So, Bill W. put together information to help the fellowship, the office structure, to work effectively.

One of wonderful ways the Steps, Traditions and Concepts were explained to the presenter is that the Steps keep him from suicide, the Traditions keep him from homicide, and the Concepts keep him from genocide. The presenter noted that without the Steps, "I'm done; I'm finished". The presenter noted that all in attendance have probably been to intergroup meetings, because they are delegates. If it weren't for the Traditions, there would definitely be some homicide. As for the Concepts, without them, the Fellowship would eventually sicken and lose its spiritual focus, and unfortunately, would be lost to us.

- World service:

The presenter noted in talking about the 12 Concepts for World Service, it is important to know what world service is for S.L.A.A. World service is the Fellowship-Wide Services office (F.W.S.). The presenter poses the question, "What does F.W.S. do?"

- Literature: the *Basic Text*, the pamphlets. F.W.S. arranges for the literature to be printed. F.W.S. stores the printed material, then ships it out when it is ordered. The F.W.S. office helps with *the Journal*, the CDs, and now MP3s.
- Public Information: F.W.S. provides the website, free downloads. Everything that we in S.L.A.A. have codified can be found on the website.
- Service Information: F.W.S. helps new groups form, provides meeting information, and helps us share our experience, strength and hope.

- 12 Concepts of World Service:

The Concepts are the codification of our experience, strength and hope that helps the Fellowship stay on path. The presenter spoke of Concept 1, Concept 2, and Concept 3.

- Concept 1: Ultimate responsibility and authority for S.L.A.A. world services always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

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- The principle of Concept 1 is Unity.
- The presenter noted that the principle of Unity is also found in Tradition 2.

The presenter asked, "Why is F.W.S. so important to us?" One of the participants responded that we are all autonomous. F.W.S. becomes our meeting point from which to exchange ideas.

The presenter noted that F.W.S. is the center of the hub that allows us to interact and communicate with each other. F.W.S. allows all the stuff that is important for our Fellowship to exist to go on unseen, without a problem.

The presenter referenced Tradition 5, that our primary purpose is to help the addict who is still suffering. F.W.S. takes care of the background stuff, e.g., communications, phone line, literature and website, so that we get to keep doing our primary purpose

- Concept 2: The Annual Business Conference, by delegation, is the voice and conscience for our world services and of S.L.A.A. as a whole.
  - The principle of Concept 2 is conscience (e.g., Higher Power, groups).
  - The presenter referenced that for our group purpose there is one ultimate authority, a loving Higher Power as this may be expressed through our group conscience.
  - Concept 2 is how we begin to work that realistically.
  - Concept 1 states we have we have ultimate authority through our group conscience. This is how we begin to work that realistically. This is how we can reach group conscience. This is how we can take care of the responsibilities given to all of the groups. By delegating, we can reach the still suffering addict. This allows for greater group conscience. Groups delegate someone to represent the groups to intergroups, and intergroups send delegates to the Annual Business Conference.
- Concept 3: To insure effective leadership, each element of S.L.A.A. - the Conference, the Board of Trustees, staff, and committees - all possess the "Right of Decision."
  - The principle of Concept 3 is spirituality and trust.
  - The presenter noted this is one of three Concepts that talk about rights: the right of decision, the right of participation, and the right of appeal. No matter what happens, we have a choice. It means no matter what our Intergroup says, if we hear something that changes our mind, we get to vote that way. If we're being dictated, we can't be that voice of Higher Power, because we'd be stifled. We have to have the ability to choose as we think we should choose.  
This Concept, our conscience, keeps the focus that the Fellowship comes first, not my intergroup, not my state, not my own stuff, so we can focus on stuff of importance.  
This Concept specifically is aimed at spirituality. We each have a right of decision, the right to decide which topics are discussed, what is sent from our subcommittee to our committee, from one committee to another committee, or from the board.

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But the right to decide is not the only thing. Further in the Concepts, while we may have the right to decide, there have to be boundaries. Concept 10 talks about those boundaries, things we should do and shouldn't do.

Why these concepts?

The importance of the Concepts is we have to have a company and organization that always remains spiritual. Bill W. called this idea as a spiritualized society, characterized by enough enlightenment, enough responsibility and enough love of man and god to ensure that our democracy of world service will work. These are the steps that guide this fellowship on the journey through time to help the next generation of addict who still suffers.

The Concepts were developed as sign posts, a compass, we need to remember it is about spirituality. It is not easy binding a business with spirituality. The Concepts help us find that. We can have sign posts and directions to remain a corporation with enough spirit and heart to our Higher Power interested and keep us going. All of these are provided so that we have safety, we have a way out. The Concepts allow us to keep our corporations alive and healthy until there aren't any more addicts.

Presenter called for questions and comments from the participants of the General Assembly.

Presenter made additional comments relating to the presentation of the Concepts adapted and adopted by this Fellowship.

Year before last, there was a Concepts presentation. Someone asked why insure rather than ensure. Actually reason was Person who wrote them wanted insurance. Person who wrote them wanted insurance that everything would work, and that we would have the things we needed.

The presenter expressed the desire to remind everyone why he was given time for this presentation at this ABM. He spoke of the Concepts as being vitally important to our Fellowship. It took the Fellowship years to adapt AA's Twelve Concepts for World Service to S.L.A.A. and then more time for the Fellowship to adopt them.

They are the tripod that keeps the Fellowship standing and sure and strong. Especially at this level of service, they are important. He noted the importance of using the Traditions at the intergroup level, and on Conference Committee calls. But, here at the ABM it is important to use the Concepts to keep everything flowing and working correctly, in a healthy and spiritual way.

### Questions/Comments from the floor:

The Answer/Response is by the Presenter unless noted otherwise.

- Question/Comment: This is a great program that works all over the place. I am thankful I found it many years ago. Concept 2 does not really say anything about location. Have you

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- considered organizing a business conference somewhere else outside the United States, because then you go close to other people and there is a lot of community and we all profit from that? And at the end of the day, here is the source. It is a very difficult question because it has to do with the money and the organization. But at the end of the day, I think we are very thankful for this, and most of us are in better shape now.
- Answer/Response (from someone other than the Presenter): Experience, Strength and Hope. A Board member other than the presenter provided a response to the comment and question. The Board member noted the Fellowship holds ABMs wherever groups submit to host. Every year, or every other year when there is an IRC, intergroups will submit a bid to host ABM and to host IRCs. The Board Public Relations Committee looks at the bids, asks a lot of questions, and gathers a lot of information. The BPRC look at lots of factors, which includes costs in that city, and the strength of intergroup to support the function. Then, they select the intergroup best suited for the ABM that year. For example, for this year and next, Houston was chosen. Interestingly, year before last, the UK (Intergroup) submitted a bid to host the ABM and the IRC, and they were in running, but then they withdrew their bid.
  - Answer/Response: The presenter referenced the earlier presentation about Fellowship finances. We bring in some \$40,000 for ABM, and it cost us \$52,000 last year. So, there is always a deficit. There is a concern. But, put in a bid.
  - Question/Comment: I just read something that bothered me about the third Concept. The right to decide how they will interpret and apply their own authority and responsibility to each particular problem or situation as it arises. We go by group conscience. Is that what they are talking about here, or are we looking at something different than we would?
  - Answer/Response: Group conscience won't work if we all have to think the same thing. Right of decision allows us to make choices that are based on us, instead of what everybody else is thinking. But, I do want to let you know that further on in the Concepts, it tells you about how we keep balance with that whole Right of Decision. The presenter referenced Concept 10, the last of the spiritual ones. Presenter paraphrased Concept 10 as an explanation of what keeps us balanced with that whole Right of Decision.
  - Question/Comment: I have a comment and a question. One is regarding the Right of decision. My understanding is it is a group conscience because the group conscience elects our trusted servants. And if we trust the servants, then in fact, they have to have the right of decision. My question is about the recovery convention. Is that a fund raiser or is that an expense?
  - Answer/Response: In past it has been fund raiser. The last recovery convention brought in quite a bit of money for us. And that is a source of income that we have been without since 2009. It raises money.
  - Question/Comment: It's kind of a comment and also an invitation. We spent a while listing to a previous presentation (on finances). And people are asking, what are we spending on outreach? And, here in Concept 1, on one of the slides it talked about outreach, but also the

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internet. I don't know how many of you know this, there are free downloads. That really does help with providing services, and uniform literature. And that literature is free. I don't know what you're doing in your intergroups, but I invite you to look at the free downloads. I personally, for our intergroup, send those out. Our goal for intergroup is to send out twenty six information packets, letters to the professional, what is S.L.A.A.? It never occurred to me to solicit money. But, I know I can do that, because that resource is there. So, I just wanted to make that invitation and connection.

- Question/Comment: To piggy back on that. As our intergroup figures out our budget, we make sure we supply all our beginners groups, anybody who has more people coming in, picking up those pamphlets. We give our pamphlets out for free. We supply them, forever. Eventually, we don't need to supply them. But all of our beginners groups get free literature from us, as well as new group starts up, they get five of the top ten pamphlets and two books. It's a paltry amount, \$300 a year. But we have tremendous results. I think we've started six new meetings, women's groups, specifically for sex offender's group, so it allows them to get up and running free. It works for us.
- Question/Comment: Great job. My issue that has been floating around in various ways is about Concept 3 and Concept 10. Concept 3 sets the stage for this to work by having well-defined relationship, working relationship, between the groups, the Conference, the Board. In Concept 10, again what you brought, it says specific job, or appropriate charter and the by-laws, the scope of authority. Authority has come up. My question, let's give an example: We have a public outreach Conference committee, and we have the Board public relations and information committee. If they're both doing the same thing, it could be that without the right level of authority, some Conference committee may not feel empowered to take on their mission, or to spend the money that doesn't get spent. Can you use that one example of where the Board does what, the Conference does what, and our most important mission, which is carrying the message.
- Answer/Response: Turns out idea of PSAs, public service announcements, has been floating around for a while, and the BPRC, the Board Public Relations Committee, has looked at trying to create a guideline to help people create YouTube videos, things like that, to reach the addict who still suffering. Well, the BPRC could create a policy and send it out, but then it's the Board telling the Conference what to do. So, the BPRC has asked that the public outreach committee, CPIC to begin developing those guidelines, so they could take ownership and they could do something with it. The BPRC, the Board Public Relations Committee, deals with the media, movies that want to put S.L.A.A. literature in it, when news agencies want to have interviews with people, and things like that, that's not at the local level, they come to the F.W.S. for that. So the BPRC, which deals specifically with interactions and communications from the Fellowship to the outside, and interactions of information within the Fellowship, comes through the BPRC. But, it's the Conference gets to do the stuff. The Conference who has the primary purpose, who has the opportunity to interact with the addict who still suffers. You know, and be able to interact with people that are necessary to be able to take care of this.

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- Question/Comment: Person asking question: You said both within and without the Fellowship, which pretty much covers all communication. But, you are saying that conference committee gets to actually do it. So are you saying that when they provide, here's what we'd like to do to address the addict who still suffers who is not in our rooms. Once this policy has been formed, which you are asking that conference committee to provide, general idea and then you all will address according to our Concepts and Traditions, or whatever.
- Answer/Response: According to law and legal stuff
- Question/Comment: Well, law of course. But that goes without saying. But, at that point they can then proceed with the necessary authority, and finances to create an outreach piece, be it electronic, or printed or some other method?
- Answer/Response: Absolutely.
- Question/Comment: Ok. That's clear. That was pretty clear for me. That requires money apparently at some point. Ok. Thank you.
  
- Question/Comment: Thank you so much. This is really good. I love this, actually. For those of you who don't know, (asks Presenter to help with this), we started how long ago adopting the Concepts for S.L.A.A.?
- Answer/Response: A long time ago.
- Question/Comment: Long time ago. Good work being done by the Concepts ... Originally the Concepts Committee... And I can tell you personally, we have started (in the speaker's area) a Concepts study in our intergroup. We take about five to ten minutes each month as our intergroup meets and we do a Concepts study. We take one. We also do Traditions study. And then we also follow it up with some questions if you search online for the Concepts questions, there're some questions to think about. And we have a round-robin, comments and discussions and questions which is really enlightening. We've also started the same thing on the CCC, so that we understand and know what our primary purpose is, and why we do service. And the heart of it all. So I thank you for this. This is so rich. Thank you.
- Answer/Response: My pleasure. Thank you.

Announcement: The General Assembly period ended with several announcements

General Assembly adjourned for the day at 6:00 pm. The next General Assembly was scheduled for August 06, 2014 at 8:00 am.

### **Wednesday, August 06, 2014**

#### **General Assembly; Wednesday, August 06, 2014 – 8:01 A.M.**

Facilitator: Jack S.

Assistant Facilitator: Gabriel G.

Backup Facilitator: Kelly H.

The Augustine Fellowship

Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous

Fellowship-Wide Services, Inc.



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Timekeeper: Madeline S.  
Spiritual Reminder: Wil C.  
Vote Counters: Mark W., Stephanie S.

Voting Members registered and seated: 40  
Voting Members in room: 39  
Quorum: 32

Moment of Silence

Serenity Prayer

Readings

- Twelve Steps of S.L.A.A. (12-Steps)
- Twelve Traditions of S.L.A.A. (12 Traditions)

Website Presentation

Presenter: Beth S, S.L.A.A. website webmaster, F.W.S staff member.

Introduction of webmaster: Fellowship member, contractor/vendor providing web design and maintenance, and so much more since 2006; self-taught web design skills.

Presenter expressed her gratitude for the program, Fellowship, and the opportunity to attend the ABM.

Where we were (web presence as of 2006)?

Where we are now?

How is it working?

- Where were we (2006)?
  - 2006 was presenter's first experience with website
  - Simple webpage, in line with other organizations.
  - Presenter commented that many organizations were just recognizing web presence and just getting started with it.
- Where are we now (2014)?
  - Digital Publications and Tools, Outreach and Communication
    - Digitizing literature, surveys, contributions and payments
    - Developing device capability – e.g., mobile phones, tablets
    - Outreach and communication
      - Information available in nineteen languages
    - Website content is developed from information provided by the conference committees and Fellowship members
    - The F.W.S. office fields about 100 emails/month
    - There are 560 registered S.L.A.A. groups.
    - There are 73 registered intergroups

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- Rephrasing web content and the program information to appeal to those unfamiliar with S.L.A.A. program
- How is it working?
  - 5 year comparison: 2008 vs 2013
    - Visitors: 50% increase.
      - 2008: 249,812 visitors;
      - 2013: 373,556 visitors.
    - Web visit country of origin: 31% increase.
      - 2008: Visitors came from 156 countries.
      - 2013: Visitors came from 205 countries, increase of 49 countries.
        - #1: USA;
        - #2 China;
        - #3 Saudi Arabia.
    - External links: Internet web pages that contain links to the F.W.S. website.
      - Links are important, used by search engines to determine relevance of information.
        - 2008: 5,683 links on internet sites.
        - 2013: 6,146 links on internet sites.
      - S.L.A.A. group and intergroup sites' have links to the S.L.A.A. website.
      - There are links from counseling practices, hospitals, universities and addiction treatment centers.
        - S.L.A.A. is often the only S fellowship referenced.
        - S.L.A.A. has links where people act:
          - Message boards;
          - Blogs;
          - Websites.
      - The S.L.A.A. website has been referenced in newspapers, news sites and television programs.
    - The S.L.A.A. website is a work in progress.
      - The presenter seeks input from Fellowship members.
        - Suggestions.
        - Critiques.
        - Ease of use.
      - The presenter provided a handout with contact information.

**Questions/Comments from the floor:**

The Answer/Response is by the Presenter unless noted otherwise.

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- Question/Comment: Thank you very much for all the stuff that you do. And, really appreciate you being an employee for us and not one of the other 12-Step fellowships. An awesome job with that. Thank you.
- Question/Comment: A couple of questions. Just one question. Now the links: is each link within a website distinct and unique, or is it one URL? Well, they're all different URLs.
- Answer/Response: It's one URL. So one page can have several URLs. But, the system we use will count that page as one page. So, if one page has three links, it's still one page.
- Question/Comment: I really like the web page. I like the way it's laid out. But, there's no easy transition from the regular webpage to the one that signs us up for this meeting. And, when I google the webpage, I get the regular webpage. And, that's fine. But, then it takes me forever to get to the meeting webpage. Is that something you can address and fix?
- Answer/Response: Are you talking about the ABM registration?
- Question/Comment: Yes
- Answer/Response: Or are you talking about finding meetings
- Question/Comment: No ABM.
- Answer/Response: The ABM.
- Question/Comment: No, the finding meetings is not a problem. That is very easy, slick, no problem. It's the ABM meeting. It's like you want to hide it away from everybody. And, is that your goal, is to hide it from everybody?
- Answer/Response: Oh, gosh, no.
- Question/Comment: Because, I google it, and it gives me all these other S.L.A.A. sites. I try to go at the top at the URL sign, and it sends me all kinds of crazy places. Finally, I, by trial and error, get to it. So if you can do something about that, it would be really helpful.
- Answer/Response: I sure can.
- Question/Comment: But, thank you very much otherwise for a very fine job.
- Answer/Response: Thank you.
- Question/Comment: I was really excited to meet you. And, I think you're the best. I love the Journal page on the website. And, I love everything you do. So, thank you. I had a question about at our intergroup, we have a problem with the PayPal click. And, it's turned into this big thing that we're discussing. But, I wanted to know about the e-check, that's on the website. What is that? And, can we use it on our intergroup's website.
- Answer/Response: Are you talking about the contributions to F.W.S.page?
- Question/Comment: Yes.
- Answer/Response: We use a service called Qgiv. It's Qgiv.com. They were the best service that we found. They actually handle our ABM registrations, as well. There fees are really reasonable. It's one of the reasons we picked them. And, we were also able to get white label service through them at a pretty low cost. Meaning that their name isn't plastered all over the page. Our logo is. So, I hope that helps.

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- Question/Comment: Thank you. I want to thank you for all your service to the Fellowship. It just occurred to me that we have about 15 meetings (in person's area), and we have about 5 meetings, but I'm pretty sure they are not registered. So, in keeping with your desire to have more groups register. So, we would go on the website, and there is there a way just to get them registered through the website?
- Answer/Response: Yes. It's [Slaafws.org/register](http://Slaafws.org/register).
- Question/Comment: We have a lot of groups, but they only last a few months, sometimes. So, I'm thinking we probably should have a little flushing out period before we send them to register, maybe if you have any ideas about a term, maybe six months. If they've been around for maybe six months, have them register with you guys?
- Answer/Response: That's one of my big pains, is that we don't get the communication from the groups. We have groups that are listed on the directory that haven't registered with us since 2010. So, we don't know if they exist anymore. We don't know if their contact information is current. But, the question is, do we take them off the website, even though they haven't contacted us? We've had members email us and say, I went to this meeting and no one was there. And, that pains me. It really does. We do ask groups to have three meetings before they register. A lot of groups haven't even had a meeting yet when they are trying to register. So, I added a field to the registration form online that says, has your group met three times? And, if they say, no, it pops up, and it says, please wait until you meet three times before you register. Just to try and weed those out, because a lot of groups, before they even have a meeting, they just never even form. And, so, we have a date on each listing that says "last updated". And, that lets the people know long it's been since that group contacted us. So, we do the best we can. In a perfect world, every group would contact us, every group would give us updates, and hey, our meeting location changed. But, it's just kind of a balance. Do you take those groups off? If they still exist?
- Question/Comment: I'll send you an updated list. Maybe we can coordinate
- Answer/Response: Sounds good.
- Question/Comment: I've seen that you have a lot of languages on the website. How does it work with the content? Because there's also local website down in the local language. Is that coordinated? How do you get the material?
- Answer/Response: The Conference Translation Committee (a specific member's name was stated). He is like the translation master. He has done a lot of work. It comes from the intergroups, mostly. A letter was drafted basically that said, welcome to S.L.A.A. This is how you get sober. Here are the 12-Steps, the 12-Traditions, the Preamble, the 40 Questions, All of these documents. And, the intergroups translate them into their language. And, they send them back. And, we have a disclaimer on the page, because we don't know nineteen languages. So, it says, if you have a correction to this information, please send it. So, it's the intergroups. But, that comes from the intergroups.
- Question/Comment: You connect it to the local websites as well?
- Answer/Response: Yes. Yes, because we connect it to all the websites. The Spanish page, in particular, has links to all the Spanish pamphlets. We have a flyer. There's a link to the

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Spanish website. We're doing everything that we can do to get the message out there in as many languages as we can.

- Question/Comment: You're talking about registering groups, and they contact F.W.S. to register. My thinking is that are the intergroups not the most reliable source of that information? If groups are registering themselves, and then intergroups aren't either aware of those registrations, or they're maybe registering some informal way with intergroups, then not coming to F.W.S., and then these groups drop off. The intergroups probably know. The closed meeting isn't going to come and de-register itself probably, that it's closed. So, is there some way of coordinating the intergroup communication with F.W.S. so there is that sort of catch? And, our delegates may be able to be that liaison between the registrations. Or somehow intergroup has to be involved in that process, I would think.
- Answer/Response: That's a good question. It happens both ways, actually. We get groups that register with F.W.S. that don't have any idea what an intergroup is. And, we also have groups that register with their intergroup and don't know that they have to register with F.W.S. So, it happens both ways. And, I would definitely like to see more communication between the intergroups and myself, just so that I'm in the loop. I've had requests from intergroups that have wanted to take over the registrations for their groups, because the groups forget to register. They forget to update their information. They forget to contact us. And, the intergroups are saying, hey why can't we do that. And, they can. And, I encourage that. So, as far as the intergroups go, I would love to hear from you, hey we had two groups close this month. Or, we had one new group. And, encourage your groups to register. Whether the intergroup wants to take that over, or whether the intergroup wants to encourage the groups to that for themselves, that's up to the intergroup. But, yes, I would love to hear from the intergroups.
- Question/Comment: What mechanism are you using to measure your statistics?
- Answer/Response: We actually have AW Stats.
- Question/Comment: AW Stats. Is there a charge for that?
- Answer/Response: No, it is included in our hosting plan.
- Question/Comment: They don't charge you for that, right?
- Answer/Response: No.
- Question/Comment: The unique visitors that you have: is that on a daily basis? A monthly basis?
- Answer/Response: It is pretty granular. So, I can make it monthly. I don't think they give you weeks. But, I can do it on a monthly basis, or I can ask it for an entire year. It goes by IP address. So, it looks at how many unique visitors, how many unique IP addresses, have visited the website in that year.
- Question/Comment: The directory you referred to that shows the last date updated: do we have access to that? Like as an intergroup we could go through that and see which groups are not registered?

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- Answer/Response: The directory shows intergroups and it shows lone groups. It doesn't show registered intergroup member groups because those are listed on the intergroup meeting list. And, that's what we link to. So, the best thing that I would say to do is you could send me an email. You could email me. I could actually just send you the list like in a spreadsheet or just send you a list of hey these are the groups we have, and then you could compare that against your list.

### Administrative housekeeping

- Following the Website presentation, the facilitator asked for the volunteers and quorum information noted above (at the beginning of the session)

### Reports:

#### General Manager (GM):

Presented by Pamela Martin

- My report is just going to be recapping a lot of what you have already heard from the Board.
- As our General Manager, I am happy to report the F.W.S office in San Antonio has had a great year.
- Following the departure of your previous General Manager, Lisa McGrath, I was pleased to accept the position of General Manager in January 2014. (Note: Lisa McGrath left unexpectedly, due to a family emergency. Pamela Martin was hired in September 2013 as Office Manager, and promoted to General Manager in January 2014).
- Other staff changes in the past year in the office include hiring Office Assistant, Christina Castillo, a F.W.S. employee. Christina has been with the F.W.S. office since May of 2013 as a temp. But now, she's a F.W.S. employee. Christina has proven to be a true asset around the office, as well as to callers with whom she has daily contact. And, if you've ever called into the F.W.S. office in San Antonio, chances are you know Christina's voice, she is your first point of contact. And, she's wonderful.
- During 2014, F.W.S Copyright Desk Associate, Amanda Alaniz, was laid off due to budgetary concerns. Her duties have been realigned among our remaining staff members.
- The office this past year has also assisted in helping to bring all of our audio products up to date, in terms of audio quality and descriptions of each share.
- MP3 products are now available with the *Basic Text*, past issues of *the Journal* and the sponsorship teleseries.
- The F.W.S. office has also been instrumental in helping to get the new eJournal off the ground and running;
- Of course, the most exciting new product we have this year is the *Basic Text* in eBook format. After months and months of research and planning, and meetings and more planning, and more research and testing, the printed text was converted into both epub and mobi formats by Sheridan Books. Sheridan Books is also the publisher that does the printed version of the *Basic Text*. Our ebook is now for sale on both Amazon and

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iTunes. Initial sales have been great. And, the ebook paid for itself within the first month.

- As sales for these new items continue to grow, shipments of our physical products from the office have stayed very strong, as well. Our monthly shipment totals in 2014 exceed totals for the same months in 2012 and 2013.
- Our bronze medallions continue to be a customer favorite. But, of course, the *Basic Text* is the staple of our web store. We have large orders from a major recovery bookstore and that involves shrink wrapping pallets of books and they leave on a tractor trailer.
- We look forward to the coming year, and we stand ready to be of service to all of you worldwide.

### Board Reports

*Board Finance and Operating (BFOC):* The BFOC has functioned as two subcommittees, one focused on Finance, the second on Operations.

- *BFOC Finance:* presented by Steve B.
  - Identified committee members and expressed gratitude for their service this past year:
    - Rich K. (non BOT), an accountant;
    - Tom R (non BOT), an attorney;
    - Pam M (non BOT), S.L.A.A. F.W.S. General Manager;
    - Susan G. (BOT Chair);
    - Bob G. (BOT BFOC Operations Chair).
  - Committee met monthly to review financial records.
- *BFOC Operations:* presented by Bob G.
  - Identified other members and expressed gratitude for their service:
    - Curtis B (non BOT);
    - Chris D. (BOT);
    - Steve B. (BOT);
    - Susan G. (BOT Chair).
  - Activities have included:
    - Whistle Blower Policy in place as required by law;
    - list of common questions asked, and answers for use by F.W.S. office staff;
    - new employee handbook under development;
  - The committee met monthly.

*Board Governance and Nominating Committee (BGNC):*

Presented by Rick B.

- Identified committee members and expressed gratitude for their service this past year:
  - Chris D. (BOT);
  - Jay G. (from PA) (non BOT);
  - Jack S. (non BOT).

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- The committee sought nominees to be of service both as BOT members and as non BOT participants on BOT committees;
  - There were five recommendations for non-BOT members. Invitations were sent out to all five candidates. None was able to be of service.
  - There were two recommendations for BOT positions. Applications were sent out. None was available for service due to time constraints.
  - Committee activities included:
    - Updated Board election process document
    - Updated oral interview description document
    - Created a last year trustee letter to Board members in their last year of service to identify areas of interest and willingness to continue in service
    - Started a BGNC Standard Operating Procedures Manual
    - Elected chairs to BGNC subcommittees:
      - Nominating Committee, deals with nominations throughout the year;
      - ABM Nominating Committee, where a BGNC member is standing for confirmation/re-election to the BOT.

### *Board Public Relations Committee (BPRC):*

Presented by Rick B.

- Identified the committee members and others who helped with BPRC activities, and expressed gratitude for their service:
  - Deb W. (non BOT);
  - Beth S. (non BOT) S.L.A.A. F.W.S. webmaster;
  - Pam M. (non BOT) S.L.A.A. F.W.S. General Manager
- This committee deals with media requests that come to F.W.S. A written report was distributed during the General Assembly. Media requests included:
  - A novelist author wanting to know about S.L.A.A. and requesting to reference S.L.A.A. in a novel;
  - Students looking to interview members;
  - Use of S.L.A.A. logo in another country;
  - Fox News;
  - A request from the Czech republic;
  - A request to obtain some associated worksheets from a CD from speaker series.
- Other committee activities during the year included:
  - Developed a membership survey;
  - Report of membership survey results;
  - BPRC Standard Operating Procedures manual;
  - Developing a speakers bureau;
  - Discussed research findings from GM about social media apps.
- BPRC Subcommittees are:
  - Call Squad;
  - F.W.S. Newsletter.



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Conference Committee Reports:

*Conference Anorexia Committee (CAC)*

- Committee report was included in the binder;
- Committee's mission statement was read aloud;
- Committee meets monthly the fourth Sunday;
- Projects include:
  - draft of Anorexia 4-5-6-7;
  - collecting member stories;
  - draft of recovery tools literature for feedback; "What is Anorexia?" document repurposed;
  - CAC webpage with resources and links;
  - flow chart and best practices for first responders;
  - starting on Anorexia 8 – 12 booklet, soliciting content.
- Committee does not have a budget;
- CAC meets from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm (local time) in Gulf Coast A (for Wednesday and Thursday Committee break-out sessions).

*Conference By-Laws Committee (CBC):*

- no report

*Conference Charter Committee (CCC)*

- Committee's mission statement was read aloud;
- Committee meets monthly the first Sunday;
- CCC has submitted an IFD regarding deadlines;
- CCC has worked with the Conference Committee chairs for ways to consolidate Conference committees. Gratitude was expressed for work of Committee chairs;
- CCC's CSM workgroup had no activity this year;
- CCC's ARS members were recognized (Andrew H; Barry B; Fredrik L; Jay G. from OH; Kelly H.).

*Conference Diversity Committee (CDC):*

- Committee's mission statement was read aloud;
- Committee members recognized;
- Committee meets the first Sunday of every month;
- CDC has submitted an IFD regarding a Diversity Statement
- Projects include:
  - Diversity Statement IFD;
  - Diversity Awareness questionnaire (17 question series)
  - Diversity pamphlet.

*Conference Finance Committee (CFC)*

- Committee members were recognized;
- Committee report was included in binder;
- CFC has one motion on Agenda about increasing contributions;
- Committee meets monthly on the second Thursday;

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- CFC meets in Room 1218, during Session One (for Wednesday and Thursday Committee break-out sessions).

### *Conference Healthy Relationships Committee (CHRC):*

- CHRC has not been active due to a lack of attendance;
- ABM participants are going to try again to work on several good projects:
  - healthy relationships checklist;
  - dating plan;
  - healthy relationship stories;
- The committee meets the first Sunday of the month.

### *Conference InterFellowship Committee (CIFC):*

- no report

### *Conference Intergroup Communication Committee (CICC):*

- Committee's mission statement read aloud;
- Committee members were recognized;
- Committee meets monthly on the third Sunday;
- Projects include:
  - Group contact list;
  - Welcome/resource packet for intergroups;
  - Working with Call Squad and webmaster to update information for intergroups worldwide;
  - Intergroup communications Google group;
- Committee has submitted an IFD for consideration by this year's Conference;
- Committee was reactivated in 2013;
- CICC meets in room 1218, during Session Two (for Wednesday and Thursday Committee break-out sessions).

### *Conference Information and Technology Committee (CITC):*

- This committee has been merged with the CPIC.

### *Conference Journal Committee (CJC):*

- Committee's purpose and mission statement were read aloud;
- Committee members were recognized
- Committee meets monthly
- Appreciation expressed for all those who have contributed:
  - Many contributors of writing and photographs;
  - F.W.S. webmaster;
  - Board members
  - Production Team;
  - Proof readers;
  - CJC Chair;
  - Art director;
  - Outreach director;
  - Assistant Editor;
  - F.W.S. staff;
  - Audio readers.

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- Committee and Production Team projects include:
    - Production Team report;
    - Six issues produced, meeting all internal and external deadlines;
    - Calendar project;
    - Meditation book project;
    - Journal poetry book;
    - eJournal digital format;
    - *the Journal* webpage on F.W.S. website;
    - Inspiration line transcription;
    - Audio recordings;
    - Policies and procedures;
    - Focus issues archive, such as stories on:
      - Step 6
      - Healthy relationships
      - Diversity
  - Upcoming themes identified in binder
  - Request for ABM participants to contribute to *the Journal*
- Conference Literature Committee (CLC):*
- Committee's purpose described:
    - Assist any Fellowship member to move proposed literature through the Conference Approved Literature process;
      - Ownership of material remains with originator group or committee, not CLC;
    - Assist with content development;
    - Electronic document repository.
  - Invited contributions;
  - Committee organization described:
    - Sixty one committee members;
    - Eight friends of the CLC:
      - Review drafts;
      - Provide feedback;
      - Don't participate in all CLC activities.
    - Subcommittees;
    - Writing groups;
    - Partner service bodies:
      - Conference Anorexia Committee;
      - Conference Journal Committee;
      - Prison Outreach Committee.
  - About a dozen projects (not specified) in the works;
  - About a dozen projects (not specified) are inactive, waiting for participants.
- Conference Member Relations to the Board/F.W.S. Committee (CMRBOTC):*
- No report.
- Conference Member Retention Committee (CMRC):*

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- Committee looking for support:
  - Meeting irregularly;
  - Small number of participants;
- Lots of good ideas and information sought from Fellowship, such as:
  - Sponsorship;
    - Sponsoring others through the Twelve Steps;
    - Being sponsored through the Twelve Steps.
  - Struggles with decisions to stay in the Program;
  - Stories about staying in the Program or not;
  - Developed long list of why people leave.
- Looking at ways to address long list of reasons why people leave;
  - Available on Google drive;
- Legacy group in Seattle referenced:
  - Focuses on issues (about staying);
  - Members have been through the 10th Step;
  - Communicates to carry on the message;
  - Communicating with newcomers;
  - Making newcomers feel safe.

Conference Committee reports were stopped for the remainder of this General Assembly, to allow fifteen minutes for Board nominations. Conference Committee reports continued in the afternoon General Assembly

BOT floor nominations:

BGNC volunteer handling nominations, as the BGNC chair is one of those on the ballot.

Current Board members, who are up for election:

Susan G. standing for one year term;

Rick B. standing for three year term;

Chris D. standing for one year term.

No nominations from the floor

Nominations period closed.

Announcement: There were several announcements at the end of this General Assembly period.

The General Assembly took a break at 9:30 am for Committee break-out sessions and lunch, to be continued starting at 2:15 pm.

**General Assembly; Wednesday, August 06, 2014 – 2:18 P.M.**

Facilitator: Gabriel G.

Assistant Facilitator: Pam M.

Backup Facilitator: Juanita J.

Timekeeper: Madeline S.

Spiritual Reminder: not requested.

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Vote Counters: Mark W., Stephanie S.

Voting Members registered and seated: 40

Voting Members in room: 40

Initially 39 at start of session

Additional voting member entered room prior to the first vote on first item

Quorum: 32

2014 Agenda Fourth Version distributed

Conference Committee Reports: continued

*Conference Prison Outreach Committee (CPOC):*

- Committee's mission statement was read aloud;
- Eight new committee members in break out committee session immediately before this General Assembly session;
- Seeking nominations for Committee Chair;
- Proposed committee meeting time following the ABM:
  - Fourth Saturday of month;
  - 12:00 pm Pacific time.
- Seeking nominations for Responder position:
  - Male only due to those being served.

*Conference Public Information Committee (CPIC)*

- Report distributed previously;
- Committee's mission statement was read aloud;
- CPIC is merging with CITC:
  - Committee will retain the CPIC name;
  - Merger approved by both committees;
- Contact CPIC through committee link on F.W.S. website;
- Projects:
  - Suggestions for Public Outreach document;
  - Outreach kit;
  - Cover letter for professionals;
  - Clergy letter;
  - S.L.A.A. video topics for use on YouTube.
    - Seeking volunteers to write scripts.

*Conference Service Committee (CSC)*

- Committee's mission was read aloud;
- Committee participation increased;
- Handouts provided prior to this report:
  - Pamphlet drafts to be submitted to CLC for additional work;
  - Proposed committee projects.

*Conference Sponsorship Committee (CSPC)*

- Committee's mission was read aloud;

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- Expanding long distance sponsorship and recovery support program;
- Seeking volunteers for correspondence.

### *Conference Steps and Traditions Committee (CSTC)*

- No report.

### *Conference Translation Committee (CTC)*

- Committee's mission was read aloud;
- Goals:
  - Creating and updating an inventory of all S.L.A.A. copyrighted literature that has been translated;
  - Collecting seven core documents of S.L.A.A. from as many intergroups and groups that have translated them;
  - Encouraging CTC linguistic subcommittees to work on translations;
  - Updating F.W.S. website international directory;
  - Collaborating with BOT and F.W.S. in copyright and document approval processes.
- Members recognized;
- Committee meets fourth Sunday of every month, 9:00 am Pacific Time for one hour frequently using Skype;
- Projects include:
  - Developing translations guidelines.

End of Conference Committee reports

Agenda items

### **14o01/13-01: Failed**

Motion: For the time of the year the ABM is held to be changed to outside of school holidays and the main holiday season.

The intent of the item was read aloud:

To allow more delegates to attend the ABM as there would be a reduced cost of flights/accommodation if the ABM was held outside of peak holiday periods, particularly for those travelling from outside the USA.

This Motion was considered as an IFD at the 2013 ABM and the extract from the minutes is attached. Speakers supported the notion that the ABM should seek to be as inclusive as possible and take action to make it easier for delegates to attend. It would require a change to accounting periods but this was considered achievable and possibly also desirable.

An attachment (Attachment 1) to the Agenda with additional information about the Motion followed the Agenda items.

The requirements of the item were read aloud:

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ABM would be held at a different time of year, reducing the cost for those travelling from outside the USA and possibly saving money for FWS and delegates.

Conference Committee feedback:

Facilitators noted Conference Committee feedback appears on the Agenda, right hand column.

No feedback was provided.

Delegate approached the microphone with a question:

My question is having to do with the intent of the motion. And, it talks about more delegates to attend the ABM. And I'm wondering, how many delegates are we missing as a result of not changing it. Will we know?

The other one was reducing the cost. And, so, just to know more about what would be the difference in cost.

The facilitator noted there would be time for questions after the Committee reports. The facilitator noted the questions may be considered a point of clarification, or may be considered part of the discussion.

Discussion:

Con: The Board is not in favor of this motion for the following reasons, it lacks clarity. For example, it says that the ABM is to be held outside of the school holidays and main holiday seasons. The school year changes, depending on where you are in the world and the same for the holidays. The timing of the ABM will either be shortened to be held again in six months, or not again for a year and a half from now. And, there is no effective date for this motion.

Question/Point of clarification:

- Question/Point: Is there detail by the submitter on what they mean exactly by holiday season, and not during break time? It does feel a bit ambiguous.
- Answer/Response: We're referring to the attachment to see if we see any of that there.

Discussion:

Pro: Person asking the question: In the meantime, if I make an assumption, a pro could be that family and other commitments would take place during summer and holiday times. And, that would be a good way to prevent conflict for delegates by avoiding those travel times. But, I'm not sure what we are talking about yet.

Question/Point of clarification:

- Answer/Response regarding the question about any detail provided by the submitter: To answer your point of clarification, we cannot discuss all of the things you brought up to discuss. But, on page 25 of 30, it says what time it is talking about.

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### Discussion

Con: Tampa Bay Intergroup discussed this motion and we do support any action that may help more participants to the ABM. But to the way this motion is written, it lacks clarity and we do not support it.

### Question/Point of clarification:

- Question/Point: Just to ask the question about more delegates to attend the ABM, if there is any way we know how many more we're missing. And then the other part was the reducing the cost: do we have any research or any kind of anything about that?
- Answer/Response: That is discussion. The information they have offered is in the motion itself and in the attachments. That is all the information we have to vote on.

### Discussion:

Pro: No one approached the microphone designated for speaking in favor of the motion.

Con: The motion is not clear. There are some people who would be able to come because the kids are in school, and other people that would be able to come because the kids are out of school. As far as the expense of coming in summertime, I think there is plenty of holiday areas that airlines black out that would be just as expensive.

Pro: No one approached the microphone designated for speaking in favor of the motion.

End of discussion.

### Vote:

Facilitators read the motion.

Facilitators described what it meant to vote in favor of the motion, or opposed to the motion.

Facilitators called for questions about the voting options.

No one approached the microphones to ask questions of the voting options.

Facilitators called for 30 seconds silence prior to vote.

Vote: 3-31-5.

Facilitators noted the vote was not unanimous and called for Minority Opinion. Those in favor of the motion were in the minority, and had the opportunity to speak.

### Minority Opinion:

I brought this motion to my intergroup. They were for changing it in order to give families, members of families, with the hope there are members of the Fellowship with families still, to be able to attend as delegates to the ABM. And, because if they're having to take care of their children, or go on vacation with their children, they can't come here, because if they are trying to rebuild their families and make amends for the damage they've done to their families. But they have to put that effort there, too. So



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they can't get here. So, that's one of the reasons why my intergroup chose to have us vote for this motion.

The cost of international airfares literally doubles for July and August, particularly out of China. So, that is a very prohibitive cost. It is the major cost for coming to this conference, is the airfares, which are not adequately compensated. So, it does make it incredibly difficult.

Facilitators called for the second vote.

Facilitators called for questions about the voting options.

No one approached the microphones to ask questions of the voting options.

Facilitators called for 30 seconds silence prior to vote.

Vote: 7-30-3

Motion failed.

For the record:

All forty members were present for the first vote. One voting member present in the room did not have a vote recorded in favor or against the motion, nor was an abstention noted.

Facilitators noted the motion did not pass by the group conscience of the Conference. The motion did not pass, and will not be adopted.

Facilitator stated this item is closed and will be removed from the Agenda.

Question/Point of clarification:

- Question/Point: Can you explain how we arrived at that without the full Conference voting? We only had 39 votes out of 40 people here.
- Answer/Response: It's about having a quorum. Establishing the quorum.

Announcement: There were several announcements at the end of this General Assembly period.

The General Assembly took a break at 3:26 pm, to be continued at 3:45 pm.

**General Assembly; Wednesday, August 06, 2014 – 3:47 P.M.**

Facilitator: Pam M.

Assistant Facilitator: Juanita J.

Backup Facilitator: Anthony P.

Timekeeper: Madeline S.

Spiritual Reminder: Roberto Z.

Vote Counters: Stephanie S; Mark W.

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Voting Members registered and seated: 40

Voting Members in room: 40

Voting members in the room at the start of the General Assembly: 38

Voting members in the room prior to votes were taken on any items: 40

Quorum: 32

**14o02/13-07: Passed**

Motion to change By-Laws

A Board member summarized the changes to the By-Laws.

This Motion presents amendments to Article VI, Sections 13, 14 and 15 of the F.W.S. By-Laws which will do the following:

- It will eliminate the requirement that the Board appoint a Board Finance and Operating Committee and replace it with a mandate that there be a Finance Committee which will oversee the accuracy and efficiency of the corporate accounting and finances;
- It will eliminate the requirement that there be a Board Governance and Nominating Committee and a Board Public Relations Committee;
- Article VI, Section II in the current By-Laws allows the Board to create such committees as the Board believes will be appropriate under the circumstances and this motion will only require a Finance Committee and would allow, but not require, the three committees currently mandated by the By-Laws or others in their place.

The intent of the item was read aloud:

This change is intended to give the Board of Trustees more leeway in the means by which they choose to reach group consciences in fulfilling their obligations under Concepts 6 and 7 of the Twelve Concepts for World Service of S.L.A.A. Final authority for conducting and managing world service affairs under Concept 7, the Articles of Incorporation, these By-Laws and Texas law rests with the Board of Trustees and not in the committees of the Board. Without a specific grant of authority, the committees can only make recommendations to the Board which then makes final decisions.

This proposed change gives the Board the discretion to utilize whatever committees the Board deems most effective in reaching informed group consciences. It would allow the Board to consider such factors as the number of sitting members and the talents of Board members and non-Board appointees in determining what Committees will be most effective in assisting the Board to reach their decisions.

In order to ensure that the Board of Trustees meets its constant fiscal and financial oversight duties under these By-Laws, Concept 8, and state and federal law, the Board of Trustees believes that a Finance Committee, focused on only the financial oversight of F.W.S. funds, should be mandated and maintained separate from the committees dealing with the other duties and operations of the Board.

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The requirements of the item were read aloud:

These changes to the Bylaws will only affect the operations of the Board of Trustees and is anticipated to have no significant on the operations of the conference.

Conference Committee feedback:

None reported.

Question/Point of clarification:

- Question/Point: You're saying that the Board of Trustees now would have the right to say which committees are gone, or whose committees ... Can I get some clarity?
- Answer/Response: It is referring to the Board committees.
- Answer/Response: This is Board committees only. This motion is for Board committees.

Discussion

Pro: This only applies to the committees under the Board. We've found that our circumstances are such that sometimes we need to change up our committees to help us reach our final group conscience. This won't change the service structure of the Fellowship in any way. An example might be, we had to have one Board member chair two Board committees. It would have probably been much more efficient and we could have probably reached a better group conscience had we had the BPRC functions merged with Operations for just this year. Because, otherwise we ended up with a BPRC with two people. And that's not a very good way to reach a group conscience. So, that's the Board's intent behind this motion.

Question/Point of clarification:

- Question/Point: Are we defining or restricting our comments to Section 13? Or, also Section 14?
- Answer/Response: The whole thing.

Discussion

Con: It says Section 14, there shall be a Board Governance and Nominating Committee which shall consist of three persons as shall be designated by the Board of Trustees. The Board Governance and Nominating Committee shall select candidates for election as Trustees at the Annual Business Meeting, or the meeting held in lieu of the Annual Business Meeting. Candidates for election as officers of the meeting, other trustees held immediately after the Annual Business Meeting or meeting there in lieu of. This is fine just to clarify. But my reading of this leads me to believe you are selecting trustees rather than Conference.

Facilitator interjects that there is no discussion.

Person who spoke against the Motion then noted: Concern.

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Pro: For 28 years, I worked in public sector with non-profit, as a Government non-profit. According to everything I've read in this, it looks as though this puts this organization more in line with current laws of both the IRS and other laws that our former thing. So, I'm for it. Because this way, we will be more legal, if you know what I mean.

Con: None

Pro: I know that in the past years, not this last year, or couple years ago. But, a few years back on the Public Information Committee, it seems there was overlap with what the between what the public outreach, the Board public outreach committee, was doing. And, it seems there was a duplication of effort. This looks like this would be able to allow the Conference Committees to do their stuff and let the Board focus on something that needs to be focused on.

Con: None.

Question/Point of clarification:

- Question/Point: It does say, the Board Governance and Nominating Committee shall select candidates for election as Trustees at the Annual Business Meeting.
- A: If that Committee is disbanded, it would be the duties and responsibilities would be subsumed by another Board committee. Those responsibilities would still remain.
- Question/Point: I understand that, and it could be my poor reading skills, but it appears to state that the Board Nominating Committee will select candidates at the Annual Business Meeting. Is that just for that Committee?
- Answer/Response: No. Trustees, candidates be elected as Trustees. There is a flyer that goes out that lets people know that this is the requirements for being a Trustee, that kind of a thing. They have to fill out an application. And then they fill out an oral application. All that stuff is compiled and then presented.
- Question/Point: Understood. So, this is not in lieu of, or will in no way eliminate the ability of others to present candidates.
- Answer/Response: No
- Question/Point: I'm seeing a big "No". Just my reading of it. I wanted a clarification.

End of discussion.

Vote:

Facilitators read the Motion.

Facilitators described what it meant to vote in favor of the Motion, or opposed to the Motion.

Facilitators called for questions about the voting options.

At this time, it was noted that all 40 voting members are present.

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No one approached the microphones to ask questions of the voting options.

Facilitators called for 30 seconds silence prior to vote.

Vote: 36-1-3.

Minority opinion:

None.

Vote: stands: 36-1-3.

Motion Passed.

Facilitator stated this item is closed for the ABM.

**14o03/13-09: Passed**

Motion: Increase the annual contribution limitation from \$12,000 to \$20,000.

The intent of the item was read aloud:

In the past ten years, while our limit for annual contributions has been \$12,000, our total contributions have been flat and actually declined somewhat, both in absolute terms and more in real value. Much of this decline has been in the reduction in larger gifts received. It is hoped that by increasing the annual limit to \$20,000 it might encourage new donors and/or increase the amounts of other donations, as well as recognize the impact of inflation over this period of time.

An attachment (Attachment 2) to the Agenda with additional information about the Motion followed the Agenda items.

The requirements of the item were read aloud:

There will be virtually no additional costs or labor to implement the motion, if passed, other than to record the motion as passed in our files and records.

Conference Committee feedback:

None reported

Discussion

Pro: The Conference Finance Committee proposed this bill unanimously. It says in the intent it catches up to inflation and it hasn't been changed for about a dozen years. And also, as [the Treasurer] mentioned yesterday, our contributions have not been keeping pace. They've been flat in the last few years, and they've actually gone down from what they were around eight years ago. And we think that maybe calling attention to donors that

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can give more and giving them the possibility of making larger contributions might help out the Fellowship.

Question/Point of clarification:

- Question/Point: Who determined originally the \$12,000 limit? And who is determining, now, the \$20,000 limit? And, how did they come about those amounts? Answer/Response: To the best of my knowledge, having been around for a few years, the \$12,000 was established by the limit that AA set. I do not know how they came up with the \$20,000. But for point of clarification, [a member of the Fellowship], if you want to address that only.
- //Answer/Response: The original contribution limits were set by our Fellowship. AA also has their own limits. They started off at off, I think, at something like \$3,000, or \$2,000, \$3,000, \$5,000. We've also had our own set of limits, which have been internally generated through action of the Conference and the Board. And they initially were \$5,000 when I started out. But they were raised to twelve (\$12,000). And then, this is a proposal that would change that that to twenty (\$20,000).
- Question/Point: For clarification, how does this fit in with IRS and their regulations?
- Answer/Response: As a non-profit, it shouldn't affect us at all. I believe that the personal donation amount has been raised. And, I don't believe a return would be required of the donor at this amount. But if it is, and I'm not sure. Maybe [a member of the Fellowship] knows the answer to that better than I do. That would be the donor side. It wouldn't affect us as far as the IRS is concerned.
- Answer/Response: From my experience preparing taxes, this would purely be a matter between yourself, as the donor, and the IRS. It would be based on your particular financial situation. It would not affect the Fellowship.
- Question/Point: First, a point of clarification based on [a member of the Fellowship's earlier presentation] fantastic presentation of the budget and the financial situation. There is no limit to our prudent reserve. Correct?
- Answer/Response: Yes.
- Question/Point: So, this is referencing the operating portion of the budget? Everybody agreed?
- Answer/Response: Note: Yes.

Discussion continued

Con: The principle, the spiritual principle at stake is the power of the purse. The more we separate the Board from the power of the purse the less affective control that our Fellowship as a whole has. To put it bluntly, on what the Board may, or may not, do. This was voted strongly against by our two largest meetings [in the Delegate's area]. One reason from a finance guy is that it represents a 67% increase over the current limit. Here's another one from the Concepts. Concept 12: the Conference observes the spirit of S.L.A.A. Traditions, taking care that it never becomes a seat of perilous wealth or power. Going back to the power of the purse.

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Pro: Speaking on behalf of the Board, we are in favor of this motion

Con: I've had limited response on this from our area. But, basically, the response I've gotten is that they are against this motion. And, for reasons that are cited by the CSTC, that it is not squaring for us, at least, in terms of least problems of money, prestige divert us from our primary purpose. And also, that this ought to be a self-sustaining, world-wide Fellowship. And so, if people are not giving, and the limit is \$12,000 at this time, then how are they going ... We're now going to have them give more that we'd increased the amount to \$20,000, if it is going to be self-sustaining.

Pro: I would ask the members present to consider \$20,000 to support a world-wide network, and just simply opening the door for that, is hardly the seat of perilous wealth. Especially because we can't guarantee that it will come to us. Higher Power would have to deliver that, in any case. And, I don't think that the self-supporting nature is deterred by donors. It seems the donors are a form of self-support. They're the people that want to help spread the word of the work that we all need.

Con: I haven't heard anything about whether or not there are donors that are saying, "I want to give \$20,000, but I'm being limited because I can only give \$12,000". This also kind of ties back with the previous speaker who said, "If they're not giving at \$12,000, why are they going to give at \$20,000". So, I really do think that we need to look at the fact that AA ... take guidance from AA, that they have not raised their limit in a very long time. And, they don't seem to have a problem. It's not what the limit is. It's the culture of giving to the Fellowship. And, we need to focus on the culture of giving, not on how much can be given.

End of discussion.

Vote:

Facilitators read the motion.

Facilitators described what it meant to vote in favor of the motion, or opposed to the motion.

Facilitators called for questions about the voting options.

No one approached the microphones to ask questions of the voting options.

Facilitators called for 30 seconds silence prior to vote.

Vote: First: 23-13-4.

Question/Point of clarification:

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- Question/Point: What is the vote necessary to pass this motion? Is it the 2/3 vote required to bind the Board? Or, is it a majority, so long as we consider that to be the group conscience?
- Answer/Response: It's my understanding it would be the majority, considering that to be the group conscience
- Question/Point: If the \$12,000 limit was established by the Board in the first place, would your answer change?
- Answer/Response: No

### Minority Opinion:

We've heard our Fellowship compared to AA. There is one way to look at that, which is, well if they have this much, then we should have this much. The reality for finance guys and math people, is that \$100 contributed to this Fellowship is a much larger percentage than \$100 would be contributed to AA, since the organization is about 20 times larger, at least, financially. So again, referring to the budget, our net income projection, or this might be actual, is \$8,474. One \$20,000 dollar donation would be more than double all the discretionary funds at the hands of the BOT. That could give that individual more sway than they ought to have in a non-hierarchical, where we are all equal, Fellowship. And, I wish to repeat for those that are concerned about the money that's about to flood it, that for the purposes of humility, you may give I would assume \$1,000,000 if we all know we have a cap on our prudent reserve. But you could give \$100,000 to the prudent reserve, where you would have no effective say whatsoever on the direction of our Fellowship. But, this is concerning the operating budget. The money that we've been talking about, the money for translation. Or, the money for sending people in to fix the record retention situation at the office. That's what we're discussing. I just wanted to make sure that was clear.

I don't know if I'm allowed to read from the AA 12x12. But Tradition 7 is all about this. There is a sentence in here, "They declared for the principle that AA must always stay poor, bare running expenses plus prudent reserve would henceforth be the foundation's financial policy." And, it talks all about a gift and how it would make the Trustees ask for more money and more money and do things like that. And, so, I would be in favor, since it is in the prudent reserve can be however high we need it to be. Then I would be opposed to this motion.

End of Minority Opinion.

### Vote:

Facilitators stated Minority Opinion had been heard. It is time to move to a second vote.

Facilitators called for questions about the voting options.

No one approached the microphones to ask questions of the voting options.

Vote: Second: 16-18-6



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Facilitators noted the minority has changed

Minority Opinion:

This is only a raise to \$20,000. We have had maximum donations. Probably three over the last three years. We have never, tradition with a small "T", taken any earmarked funds. We have an operating budget of about three and one half hundred thousand dollars a year. This \$20,000 donation is not going to make the Board of Trustees treat someone differently. I think that we were talking yesterday about outreach, and programs, and films and all those things. It takes money. It takes money to do those things. We're not AA. We don't have hundreds of thousands of people in the United States who can put \$2 in the basket. We don't have millions of people around the world. We are a smaller fellowship. I don't think the sum of \$20,000 is going to make somebody unusually powerful in this fellowship. In fact, the most constant anonymous donor we get of \$12,000, we've never, ever heard from him. And, it hurts some people to put \$2 in the basket. Some people, it needs \$20,000 before they can feel like they've given their share. I think that I'm in favor of the motion. And, I believe that you can trust whoever we elect to be our Board of Trustee members to protect the integrity, and not sell the best interests of this fellowship for \$8,000.

As a Chair, we went over, the other day, about budgets. And, most Chairs are concerned about budgets. I know that I am, for both of my committees. Operating expenses. If somebody wants to give us money, that's wonderful. That helps us out. That gives us the ability to increase the budgets for each committee, if necessary; to upgrade our website. And, please remember, we're not voting about today. We're voting about our future. So, five or ten years down the road, this is still going to be in place, unless we decide to change it. So, it's not just about today. We are dealing with the future. And, that's what we're looking at.

We're comparing apples to oranges, our Fellowship to AA. AA gets a tremendous amount of their revenue from literature sales that support their fellowship. We do not get as much of a percentage. And, keep in mind, to carry the message, it takes money.

It's evident to me from what I have observed over the last five years I've been involved in this fellowship, that it has grown very well in America and Canada. It's obvious to me that you have a lot of support here, within these two countries. However, if we look outside, and I'm not including Germany and Europe, but if we look outside into the developing nations, sex and love addiction is rampant. It is rampant. And, there is nothing set up to help these people. And, we have something here that can be given to them as a gift, with structure, with honesty, with hope, with a higher power. But in order to do that, there are funds needed. That is the reality of the situation. And, it is a small fellowship. It is an incredibly small fellowship. And, I think that if we do have people who do wish to give money so that we can expand and give full service from the Board, very hard working Board, to people outside and to expand into the future, I think that is a very good thing. And also, I believe strongly that we can trust our Higher Power to guide our Board to do the right thing,

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if we give them the responsibility, and we give them this amount of money and authority over this money on our behalf. I trust in that.

Our membership has been pretty generous, if you consider our contributions compared to AA's, both at the group or estimated total members. We give much more per person than AA. I've been involved with the organization quite a while. And, I've seen that our total staff to serve our Fellowship has gone down. We had more staff seven or eight years ago, than we do now. And, SAA, which is similar to us in size, it's been smaller, they have a staff twice the size of ours. So, it's true that we do have a prudent reserve, but it is a prudent reserve to keep us falling back. We really need to have more people. One of the severely limiting factors for us to getting the message out to the sex addict and love addict is not having enough funds or enough staff.

End of Minority Opinion.

There was a request by a Delegate to have a few moments to discuss this issue with another Delegate colleague from the same area. The Delegate was concerned the two of them might vote differently on this matter, and thus cancel out each other's vote.

Facilitators states when we're voting on a Motion, there's not supposed to be discussion of the floor or at the microphones. Facilitators were not sure how to allocate time to allow discussion among themselves.

Vote:

Facilitators state Minority Opinion has been heard. It is time to move to a third vote.

Facilitators called for questions about the voting options.

No one approached the microphones to ask questions of the voting options.

Vote: Third: 25 - 13 - 2.

Motion Passed.

Facilitators note the vote was not a 2/3 majority. While it passed by a majority of the voting members, it is not binding upon the Board of Trustees.

Facilitators stated the item is closed and removed from the Agenda.

Question of clarification:

- Question/Point: I'm curious what binding means. It's not binding.
- Answer/Response: 2/3 majority is binding on the Board of Trustees to follow through the Conference's wishes.
  
- Question/Point: The question I asked before was, does this require to be in effect a 2/3 vote to be binding on the Board? Or will a simple majority make this effective because it has

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nothing to do with overturning the Board? And your answer was, it would be a majority. And, I said, well if the original \$12,000 was adopted by the Board, would that make us need 2/3? And you said, "No".

- Answer/Response: I do not know how the original \$12,000 was adopted. I could not answer that question.
- Question/Point: So, is the process that for anything to be adopted by the Conference it must be 2/3? Is that the case?
- Answer/Response: To make it binding on the Board, that is correct. This is approved by the Conference. The Board can choose to follow the Conference approval, or not. It is not binding on the Board to do so.
- Question/Point: Ok. So the language in there about binding the Board, it's not like overturning a veto, or something. Anything, even if the Board has never acted on it, requires a 2/3 vote to be in effect. Is that what you are saying?
- Answer/Response: Correct.

Announcement: There were several announcements at the end of this General Assembly period.

The General Assembly took a break at 4:43 pm, to be continued at 5:00 pm.

**General Assembly; Wednesday, August 06, 2014 – 5:09 P.M.**

Facilitator: Juanita J;

Assistant Facilitator: Anthony P;

Backup Facilitator: Alice D;

Timekeeper: Duane T;

Spiritual Reminder: none requested

Vote Counters: Mark W, Stephanie S.

Voting Members registered and seated: 40

Voting Members present in room: 39

Quorum: 32

**14n04/14-01: Discussed**

Item For Discussion: The CCC is seeking guidance from the Conference on establishing effective deadlines for submissions of IFDs and Motions to go on the ABM Agenda, that not only helps the submitter, but also gives Delegates and Conference Committees time to review these items.

The intent of the item was read aloud:

To receive feedback from the Conference regarding deadlines for submissions of IFDs and motions, so the CCC can be better informed on making decisions regarding changing these deadlines.

There were no requirements referenced with this IFD.

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Conference Committee feedback:

None reported.

Facilitators allocated 20 minutes for this item.

### Discussion

- I think it's very realistic to consider the fact the people who put together the Agenda are up practically the whole night. Although I do appreciate the fact that we can submit items that late, most organizations I've been in before have at least one day before the Conference to submit that type of information. I suggest that we look at it as two different ways. One, if it is an Item for Discussion that it may be able to go a little later. But if it's an item for Motion, people have to be able to organize their thoughts. And, so I suggest that at a future time we entertain a motion that would perhaps have the day before, not the day before the Conference starts, but the first day of the Conference, and not the evening of the Conference. Maybe around noon, or something like that.
  
- This is my first ABM. And I was just amazed at the process. [A member of the Fellowship] taking notes, and then staying up until midnight, and rewriting them, and then printing them out, I don't know where he printed them out, but they got here. And, then resubmitting them. And that's very flexible. And what also happened was that I saw was a couple of things come up that I really think should have been Items for Discussion. And really great ideas: the Asia piece was very good. And, I would like to suggest that he gets a hand, not a clap, that he deserves, but he gets extra help. So we come here. We meet each other. We talk about things. Who would have known that we were going to have a discussion about Asia needing help spreading the word. And, here it is, right now it could have been an Item for Discussion if we had a little more time to talk about it, to get it on the Agenda. That would have been great. I think if you put another seat next to [the Record Keeper] and had somebody working on updates and that would have been possible. So, that's my suggestion: get another person to help [the Record Keeper] to get that stuff out there.
  
- I appreciate all the work that has been put into this. And, I'm new to this process. It's nice to have clarity and respect for peoples' time. I think everyone is coming here doing a lot of work. I heard from my mentor that self-care is a big part of this process. So, we come here. But, we also have to take care of ourselves. And if we have a right to make a decision, I think that should be based on somebody who has gotten full sleep, and self-care. So, to respect everyone here and who has traveled this far to participate, including the people who help organizing it, if they are at full capacity, and they are taking care of themselves, they're getting full night's sleep. And, I wouldn't want to impose on that. And, employ some kind of organization, and a deadline. I would appreciate, because that would give me something clear to shoot for. And if it is consistent year after year, and everyone knows that, it becomes consistent, it'll, I think, help us be more efficient with our time over the years.

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- My comment represents the group conscience of the Agenda Review Subcommittee, ARS. The ten day interval, between the Second Agenda deadline and the Second Agenda distribution date, is too short. The ARS and submitters need more than ten days to process items and address any revisions. The current ten day interval for the Second Agenda does not allow sufficient time for the ARS to do its work, request revisions and address responses from submitters. We believe that a twenty five day interval, similar to the interval between the Third Agenda deadline and Third Agenda distribution date, is a more reasonable deadline. Changing the Second Agenda submission deadline to twenty five days before distribution would align the Agenda submission deadline with the deadline for Delegate sign up. In addition to providing the ARS sufficient time to do its work, this twenty five day window would also simplify communication about ABM dates. Implementing this suggested change would not change the distribution date for the Second Version of the Agenda.
- I did bring this one to my intergroup. And, there was some mention by a member that has been involved in the ABM in the past, and some of the Conference Committees, to mention that there is a history of an April deadline sometime in the past, and that it may have been a problem. Also, now that we have an ARS, and I don't believe we had one before that we're actually getting through the Agenda, now. But it is reasonable to ask for two weeks before the final, before the Conference actually meets, to be a deadline, just so that there is enough time, and that people do get self-care and sleep.
- I know that with us sometimes, and also being a chair on a committee, it gets really tricky between trying to get to all the committee work done in time to get stuff submitted to the Agenda. And then, also on the other side of it, getting the stuff earlier enough to go through with the intergroup. We need longer meetings. But we don't always seem to get through the Agenda, like I hope we would. And, also, we sometimes have elections that same time. We have a retreat that's in August. So there is always discussion about that. So, our July intergroup is really full. So, if we got things a little bit earlier, especially in more final form, that would help us out.
- I served last night on the ARS, the CCC became the ARS, and we got a rather last minute submission. And, the submitters felt it was important enough that to happen. I would suggest that there are ways to change this to make it better, certainly the interval between the Third and Fourth makes a lot of sense. But, sometimes there is a need for a last minute submission. I don't know the ins and outs of what happened with the Board. But, they needed something very important. And, for whatever reason, it came together fairly last minute. And to block the ability to do that, when it's necessary to our functioning, I think would be a mistake. I'm referring to the 7:00 pm deadline. Now, there are ways around that. One suggestion, which I'm cribbing already off of my new friend, is to maybe make it the day of, at noon. Maybe the ARS would be requested to come the night before. So, there's different ways to do it. But to cut off that possibility, I think it's been demonstrated that we needed that possibility. Although, hopefully, on an emergency basis. Another

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alternative would be to trust our trusted servants, that when they get these last minute submissions, except for the Board, that seems so important. Perhaps, they could vote on whether or not to even take it up. If it's an emergency, ok. If it's not, it's got to wait.

- One of the pieces of discussion about this is the notion of having items that appear on an Agenda well enough in advance that all of the intergroups and groups that will be sending delegates here, have an opportunity to discuss this at length. If items are submitted within the context of the ABM Conference group, after they've left their intergroups to come here, their intergroups do not have the ability to discuss those items and guide their delegates as to how they would vote., or what they would discuss. There is that piece. The other piece is that sometimes coming together, and in the context of these rooms, that generates ideas, and people think of things.
- One of the ideas of having submissions come in early is so that the ARS has an opportunity to work with the submitter to make the item as clear as possible and more understanding. And this happens year after year, where a submitter may submit an Item for Discussion, or a Motion, and it is perceived the intent was this. But, once they worked with the submitter, the item is actually this. So, it makes it a much easier item for the Conference to discuss once we get here. Having said that, I'm extremely grateful that we have had this discussion this year. That we did not have, I'm just pointing out that we didn't have any last minute submissions, but I'm happy that we didn't have fifteen of them like we did last year. So, I appreciate that the message is out there, and that it has been carried. And, I hope that it continues to be carried. It is to the benefit of the Conference for submissions to come in early, as has been stated by others.
- All I thought about this is, it seems to me, maybe this problem of last minute submissions could be alleviated a little bit, if we looked at the possibility of a simpler ARS procedure. They have to go through an awful, arduous, procedure to decide whether or not to accept an item on or off of an Agenda, in my opinion. And, I think that a more holistic approach should also include also seeing if we can simplify the procedure a little bit.
- As an intergroup member, I would appreciate more time to consider items before having to come here and discuss them and vote, and, at some level, represent the group conscience of my intergroup. But, that would not be a matter of a week or two or a month. That may be a couple of months, depending upon the cycle of the distribution and when intergroups meet. And, it's hard for me, as a member of the Conference, to think that people cannot come, sometimes during the last two months, and submit something, and have it on the Agenda and dealt with. They might not even be thinking of it. So, I don't think we can accommodate both those values effectively at the same time. There were no 7:00 pm submissions last night. But there were two items that are on the Agenda that were submitted after the Third version. So, there are two items that nobody had a chance to see until this morning, and certainly did not have a chance to run by their intergroup. So, I think I would be more inclined to be more inclusive. Maybe this distinction between a Board

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proposal and somebody else's should be kept. The Board is allowed to submit anything, without rejection. And, that should continue. And maybe they should have a different deadline, like 7:00 pm because they might have motions, or regulatory or compliance issues. And so Board motions maybe should be treated differently. But, I also like the idea that, putting aside Board motions, maybe we leave Items for Discussion to a 7:00 pm first day deadline, but move Motions back, even two months, so that we can get some voting instructions from our intergroups. It's not all, or none.

- I do have a comment. I concur with what [the member who spoke immediately preceding] said. Specifically, perhaps the wording in that could reflect that we are open and willing to accept Items for Discussion up until 7:00 pm on the Tuesday of the meeting. And as [the member who spoke immediately preceding] suggested, Board motions can be entertained. But motions have a deadline much prior. If it's three months, I happen to agree. It gives us time to talk to our constituents in our intergroups.
- It just occurred to me that if we take 30 seconds before every vote to consult our Higher Power, and yet during that time all we're going to do is reflect on what our intergroups have told us, that kind of makes the point moot. There really is no point. We all have what our intergroups have said. Let's just vote based on that and move on. Save ourselves all the time. But we've been appointed, or by group conscience, to come here, and represent. Yes represent them, but also be open to the possibility that our Higher Power, based on what we are hearing from the people around us, discussion, talk, reading the motions themselves that that might change. So, whether it's last minute, or it's two months ahead, we still need to keep in mind that we have been given that vested authority, if you will, to, at the very least, consult with our Higher Power. And make a conscious decision at the moment.
- I just wanted to point out that there were issues with my intergroup that were going on. I wasn't even voted as a Delegate until June. So, I wouldn't have been able to submit a motion, if I wanted to, if the deadline were, say, three months in advance. I like the idea of being able to submit until late, whether it's needed or not. I don't know what pressing reasons someone's Higher Power, or group's higher power Higher Power, may have them submit something. In the case of now, we don't have that many that are new. I feel like, if Higher Power directs to do something, then that can be done, and that we are open to it. I like the idea of the flexibility.
- When I came here, I didn't know there were only fifty people. And, I say, what! So small. Is that it? I was expecting 500. The issue is, are we representing the community here? Are fifty people representing the worldwide community? But, I was very surprised, because the Program works all over the place. There are many more people. Decisions here have an impact. So, I think it is important that we remember that. Fifty people for the entire community, of which forty six are from the United States, one Canadian, two German –Italian. Wow. I'm an observer. And, I'm observing that. And, I want to share with you, because I think it is something to think about it.

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Question of clarification:

- Question/Point: Who is eligible to submit an Item for Discussion, or a Motion?
- Answer/Response: Any member of the Fellowship is able to do so.
  
- Question/Point: Also any member of Conference. There are members of the Conference who are not members of the Fellowship. So, that means any Board member, whether or not they are in the Fellowship, our General Manager, whether or not she's in the Fellowship, any lone Group, intergroup, or individual member of the Fellowship is eligible to submit. Also, there is a statement, either in our By-Laws or in our Service Manual, that while we take into consideration the group conscience of who we represent, our intergroup, we are not bound that, at least as a matter of fellowship of this body. We vote our conscience. Now our own intergroup may have a different view of that. There is something in our documents. I believe it is our By-Laws themselves, that makes it clear, that we are not wholly bound by our intergroups.

The time for discussion of the IFD has expired. This item is closed for this ABM. The information gathered during discussion will be captured in the official minutes of this meeting. Space will be reserved for a motion related to this IFD in the first version of the Agenda for next year's ABM.

### **14n05/14-02: Passed**

Motion: That the Conference decides to make "Twelve Concepts for World Service of S.L.A.A." into a Core Document of the Fellowship.

The intent of the item was read aloud:

The S.L.A.A. 12 Concepts were adopted at the 2012 ABM. However, it was not specifically decided that it be a Core Document of the Fellowship.

Most Twelve-Step Fellowships are founded on 36 Legacies: 12 Steps for individual recovery, 12 Traditions for unity in our groups, and 12 Concepts for World Service. It is only natural that the adopted Concepts also become a Core Document of S.L.A.A. This will further our understanding of how to conduct service in the spirit of our Fellowship, both at the world level, in intergroups and locally.

The requirements of the item were read aloud:

The Concepts would need to be posted on the F.W.S. website, together with the other Core Documents. Information about the addition of an extra Core Document would also need to be distributed to the Fellowship via the F.W.S. Newsletter. The Conference Translation Committee would need to encourage members in other countries to translate the Concepts into their own language, for posting on the F.W.S. website for their specific language, together with the other Core Documents.

Conference Committee feedback:



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CCC: While the CCC supports placing a document of this importance on the website, the CCC has concerns that the definition “core documents” has not been identified as a Conference approved term, or a Board term, or a CLC term.

CLC: I would like an explanation of what a core document is, and how the process works to make a draft document a core document. As far as the CLC is concerned, we don't know. We just don't know. And, there's two items on the Agenda that talk about core documents, and we have one in the CLC currently, that may be looking to be a core document. The CLC doesn't have a clue. Can you give us a point of clarification of what a core document is, and who decides?

Question of clarification:

- Question/Point: One of the facilitators noted the CCC discussed the concept of “core document”. There was an attempt to have a two committee dialogue. The facilitator requested clarification of what constitutes a core document.
- Answer/Response: A Board member provided the following response: The term “core document” started at the web team, which was a subcommittee of jointly the BPRC and BFOC. They designated those seven core documents, mostly for purposes of translation, but as those things that were necessary to begin a meeting in S.L.A.A., the Preamble, that sort of thing. It did go to the Board, and the Board did approve it. Now, this was all before my time, so I can't tell you the exact language of the motion, but the core documents, it does appear, was something the Board had come up with and voted for themselves.

Discussion

Pro: Speaking on behalf of the Board of Trustees, we are for this motion.

Con: None.

Pro: There may not be a written definition of a core document. To quote the late Justice Potter Stewart, “I know it when I see it”. As was stated earlier, we're not creating that concept, not without a definition. There are seven documents that have been designated as core documents, including *Characteristics of Sex and Love Addiction*, *Signs of Recovery*, and other things. So, I look at the Twelve Concepts, and based on what's written in the motion, and the intent, and what has already been designated a core document, this fits. Whether I have a clear definition, or not, I think I know it when I see it. And here, I see it.

Con: None.

Pro: I've been working on the Translation committee this last year, and those are the documents they give away for free, the core documents, so that they hope that the people in other countries translate these core documents, because it lets the people know what the program is about. It gives them enough foundation to begin. And that's why I think they give them away for free. I'm not a Board member. But, those translated documents are

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really just a bare minimum to begin having some clue about what this is all about, and what they really want to accomplish. So, I think it's a very good thing to give them away

Con: None

End of discussion.

Vote:

Facilitators read the motion.

Facilitators described what it meant to vote in favor of the motion, or opposed to the motion.

Facilitators called for questions about the voting options.

No one approached the microphones to ask questions of the voting options.

Facilitators called for 30 seconds silence prior to vote.

Vote:

Vote: 33-0-5

[There was not a minority, only those in favor of the motion, and those who abstained from voting on the motion.]

[There were 38 voting members present in room at the time of the vote, one less voting member present than at the start of the session.]

Motion Passed.

Facilitators note the vote was passed by at least a 2/3 majority, which is binding upon the Board of Trustees in accordance with the By-Laws.

Announcement: The General Assembly period ended with several announcements

General Assembly adjourned at 6:00 pm, to be continued Thursday morning.

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**Thursday, August 07, 2014 8:00 AM**

**General Assembly; Thursday, August 07, 2014 – 8:05 A.M.**

Facilitator: Anthony P.

Assistant Facilitator: Rick B.

Backup Facilitator: Phillip W.

Timekeeper: Doan H.

Spiritual Reminder: Roberto Z.

Vote Counters: NA

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Voting Members registered and seated: 40  
Voting Members in room: not reported for this General Assembly  
Quorum: 32

Readings

- Twelve Steps of S.L.A.A. (12-Steps)
- Twelve Traditions of S.L.A.A. (12 Traditions)
- Twelve Concepts for World Service of S.L.A.A. (12 Steps)

**14n06/14-03: Discussed**

Item For Discussion: We wish that the Conference discusses the possibility of a no-tolerance policy for using the program of S.L.A.A. as an arena to assault, sexually assault or stalk other members, at meetings or between meetings, and how such a policy could be formulated.

We suggest the policy needs to include guidelines for how to protect the victim's right to safely attend meetings and stay in the program, the responsibilities of a member who has assaulted another member.

Example of how a policy could be formulated to use as a basis for discussion:

"In S.L.A.A. we take the stand that it is not acceptable, or in line with our common welfare, that members use the program as an arena to commit criminal offenses such as sexual offences, stalking or harassment against other members, during or between meetings. A person who currently commits such offences against any other member in S.L.A.A. is not welcome to participate in meetings. You who have previously assaulted someone in the program are welcome back after the assaults have stopped, to those meetings where you are not a danger to yourself or others. You then have a responsibility to adapt to the person you have violated and give him or her priority to meetings that are vital to that persons recovery. In case the assaulted person reports the offences to the police, you are recommended to play fair in a court process and if possible protect the anonymity of the person you have assaulted."

The intent of the item was read aloud:

Background

In S.L.A.A. all persons who suffer from addiction to sex and love, or anorexia, should be welcome to recover in accordance with the Third and Fifth Traditions. Our First Tradition states that our common welfare should come first. Furthermore The Eleventh and Twelfth Traditions stress the importance to protect the anonymity of all members.

When sexual assaults are being committed within the program, between members, we lack guidelines for how to interpret the Traditions, and these can also seem to come in conflict with one another. We are now referring to a situation where one member uses the program to act out by subjecting another member to criminal assaults, such as sexual assaults, harassment or stalking.

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Possible consequences of assaults within the program. When assaults happen in the program the victim can be placed in a very difficult situation. Going to the police might mean a risk to break one's anonymity, and in some countries this might even lead to that the membership in S.L.A.A. will be noted in documents open to the public. The committer can also threaten to break anonymity and spread information from shares to stop the victim from going to the police. Other members who have in some way witnessed the assaults might not want to testify due to the risk that their anonymity will be broken.

In this difficult situation the victim needs the meetings and the program, but instead risks losing them. If the violations have been too severe, the consequences might be that the victim and perpetrator cannot or should not attend the same meetings even after the assaults have stopped. In groups and areas where the Third Tradition is interpreted as that the perpetrator is welcome to all meetings at all times the consequence might be that the victim will need to leave the program or all meetings in that area.

In practice this will mean that the victim gets excluded, which means a risk of harm far beyond the original assaults. In addition, group dynamics and human nature can lead to that the victim gets actively excluded by behavior of earlier friends in the program, like breaking contact, stop saying hello and blaming the victim.

All of the above has happened in a recent case in our country. The situation has been discussed, but no solution has been found, partially because there are no guidelines. Several members, both old timers and newcomers have left the program over this issue and it has brought unrest, conflicts and a hindrance to serenity for many more than the ones directly involved.

The Traditions and how they can be applied

We who write this item for discussion believe that assaults within the program conflicts with the First Tradition and that we need a clear policy that gives firm, clear and loving boundaries for acceptable behavior within the program of S.L.A.A.

It cannot be in line with our common welfare that members use the program as an arena to find victims to harm in addiction, and that this in turn leads to that other members first get assaulted, disturbed in their recovery and then need to leave room for the perpetrating member. It is utterly important to the safety of our meetings and the sensitive nature of what we share, that we can trust that other members are sober enough not to commit serious violations of our sexual and physical boundaries or use the information shared to harm us in sex addiction. This suggests that a person who seriously violates boundaries of other members, in or between meetings, should not attend meetings at all until he or she does not impose danger to him- or herself or to other members.

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The Third Tradition states that the only requirement for membership is a desire to recover. It is possible to question the will to recover in a member who uses the program to act out in sex addiction and harm others. However, after the assaults have stopped, everybody who is willing to recover must be welcome back regardless of what he or she has done or to whom. Based on the third tradition no one can be personally excluded from the program as a whole even if you have assaulted other members. However the Third Tradition also applies to the victims' right to safely remain in the program and attend meetings. The third tradition does not explicitly state that all members must be allowed to go to attend all meetings at all times.

We believe that the First Tradition in combination with the Third suggest that a person who seriously assaults other members, in or between meetings, should not be welcome to participate in meetings at all as long as the assaults are still ongoing. However the person is welcome back after the assaults stopped, but will need to come back in a manner that is safe for all and leave priority to the victim and bear the burden of the consequences if the two can no longer attend the same meetings. This means the perpetrator takes the extra work and inconvenience of changing meetings, travelling extra etc.

The Fourth Tradition states that each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or S.L.A.A. as a whole. If it gets known that assaults can happen in S.L.A.A. and that the result may be that the victim needs to leave the program, it can affect the reputation or our program, and may cause that people hesitate to come. In our opinion this affects other groups and S.L.A.A. as a whole.

The Fifth Tradition states that each group has but one primary purpose, to carry the message to the Sex and Love Addict who still suffers. This applies to perpetrator, victim other members, newcomers, and suffering addicts who have not yet found the program. The message is the message of recovery and the Twelve Steps. Therefore we need find a way to apply the message of recovery and the intention of the Steps to the situation of assaults within the program. Of course all concerned parties must do their own inventory. We believe it is in the spirit of the Steps, especially Steps 1, 4, 8 and 9 that a person who has harmed another takes responsibility for the caused chain of events and makes amends by bearing the consequences.

There were no requirements identified.

Conference Committee feedback:  
None reported

Facilitators allocated 20 minutes for this item.

Discussion

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- We've had this happen in our area three times since I've been part of our intergroup in 14 years. The first time was an individual who was mentally incapable of behavior. People in the meeting took him under their wing. It worked. And, it didn't work. But, we tried. The second person was a basic all-out assault. They were banned from the meeting. The third was stalking. It came to the intergroup. We referred it back to the group to ask the individual to attend other meetings. That individual is still attending meetings, doing much better. The stalk-ee, we don't see her very much. I don't know how we can do a policy. I know each group is autonomous. The intergroup are not the police. Some written statement: I don't think there is a guideline for something like this. But a written statement might help.
- The CJC would like to recommend the issue 142, Safety in Meetings, which is available on download from the F.W.S. website. I have received emails from other people asking about behavior in meetings and destruction of meetings, and even along these lines, here. I'd like to find out what other AA groups have done to deal with this. I know AA has. But there are other anonymous groups out there. We should look into that. If you deal with the law. And, anybody that has dealt with them will know, that the first thing they want to know is find your identification. If they are investigating something like this, they are going to get identification from everybody in the room. There is no anonymity as far as the law is concerned.
- I've been in two cases where individuals have been excluded from meetings. Although it's helpful to read all these various things we've been reading, I think it eventually boils down to each meeting making its own decision. I've been in meetings, where some meetings have excluded an individual, and the same individual has been permitted to come to other meetings. So, there are the dynamics within an individual meeting that are important. The individual meeting has a right to protect itself, I think. And some of the meetings, the person was excluded, simply because the group conscience of that meeting felt that there is a requirement to have a desire to recover from sex and love addiction to become a member. And, they felt that this individual did not show that desire, so, they excluded him. Some cases, I've seen they have the police come to not permit the individual to attend. And others, they would just lock the door, and just let people other than this person in. Essentially, I think it has to go down to the judgment of each individual meeting.
- I'm coming from a perspective that I deal with this on a daily basis in my work life, from a corporation perspective. I really like what I heard in respect to the First Tradition, that guidelines can be available, versus policies set. That would be consistent with how we handle it on a daily basis as a company. And, also for each meeting, they can adopt these if they are available. They can go and get the resource, and adopt them if they want to, just like they adopt different elements or documents to read. I think, in these guidelines they can set, going to outside authorities for the person who feels like they are being in the victim role. You can offer different resources, maybe they can find the local resources and provide those to the people who felt that they were being stalked or threatened. You can

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build these guidelines for both perspectives, for the person who is doing the offending and the person who feels offended. And, provide resources to both. This is a voluntary meeting situation. This is not something mandatory for many people. There's other ways to recover. There are other choices for people to recover. So, I like to keep that in mind.

- I think that there should be a guideline that meetings can refer to. One of the things I didn't hear mentioned in the IFD is about the Conflict Resolution that we have in CSM. I think it is Appendix H. Our groups are autonomous. I think it's an outside issue, though. And that the victim may get a restraining order for how many feet they can come near the person. And, that means that if the person goes to a meeting, they can't be there. I do recommend that it be up to the victim. And, get a restraining order.
- I really love this discussion. I think that there's really great, simple room for it as guideline in a similar place to, where we do in a lot of our meetings, is a statement on Cross-talk. I think that it could be enacted as something like a statement on respect of boundaries for other people, and maybe a simple discussion. I think it would have to be very specific, whether it's respecting peoples' physical, verbal boundaries, etcetera, and a brief explanation on that. I do think it would need specific outlines of what assault means, rather than this general assault terminology. I think there is room for it right there in that in that cross-talk type, simple, structured meeting guideline way.
- We have a page about what is protected speech, and what is not, in our folder. I think that helps. The Conflict Resolution Process really does work. I was a part of it, not for what was described, but just for my character defects. It helped me a lot. I will also say that what my personal experience, after a couple of decades is, when there are no boundaries in a meeting, perpetrator types, which perhaps many of us have those instincts, sense that. When boundaries are clear and present, a lot of this behavior never occurs. There is a role for elder statesman to intervene early and up front. And then, since AA was brought up, we had an experience with an individual, where she was literally dissolving meetings because of her behavior. One meeting completely stopped meeting. She was on her way to disbanding my home group. I said, "no, no, no. We can't do this". We did contact. We didn't get a response, for whatever reason. But, an AA board member did contact us. You cannot kick somebody out of the program. You can kick them out of a meeting. Here is what you do. You ask them, have you tried everything to get them to stop. If they have not, you ask them to please come back after six weeks. Ask them again. If they still don't understand, that's the end. And, we did end up having to call the police on this individual.
- We do have a statement in our Preamble, I believe, and I don't remember the exact phrasing, but it had something to do to the effect that in order to keep meetings a safe place, we encourage people not to have intrigue or involvement with others. We have had it come up a couple of times at our meetings. There is a group that we have that's in the gay community, gay friendly. A male member has groped two other male members. It has happened a couple of times. We asked the member not to come to those meetings.

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Unfortunately, it's a place where other fellowships meet. The facility isn't barring them from the facility.

- This issue has affected my group in New York a number of times, this year at least twice that I know of. In one situation, it was a stalking where there were no guidelines. A member who was being stalked came to talk about it. There was no guideline for her to be able to present to her group. And the stalker was more known to the group than she was. The group, unfortunately, was an autonomous group. The group decided to allow both in a meeting. In a meeting that I personally attended, there was an assault that happened. The person who actually committed the assault was more popular than the person who was the victim. The meeting had an off premise Group Conscience because of fear of the other person attacking the victim again on the premises. Actually, members of intergroup, who have since left, came and overturned that in the group meeting. That became a big conflict within our intergroup. Those people have stepped down since.
- I was thinking, supposedly here this is a non-smoking room. And when one starts smoking, so what do you do? So, I think the issue is that you can have a guideline that says don't smoke, and then somebody starts smoking, then I think it would be important to give an indication what you will do then. Because, if you simply said don't smoke, and then somebody starts smoking, and there is a group of people that are strong in the group, and they smoke, eventually everybody will then accept it or leave the room. So, I think it is not really the guideline. It is important that you get also an indication what to do when the guideline is not respected. I don't have a solution. But, I think it is important. That's the real issue.
- I have heard, already, a lot of things that I won't repeat again. But, the thing that I was thinking of, that I wrote down that hasn't necessarily been discussed is about, I wouldn't want to draw the entire Fellowship into a drama that's about the victim, the persecutor, or the rescuer. There is no way for the Fellowship to win out of that. And, it won't help anybody. You're basically supporting someone in that triangle, that's nothing like recovery. I do think that it's the business of the ABM, perceivably next year, to look at creating something, a statement or whatever, that could be used by groups that find themselves in this situation. So that they'll have some sort of guidance that they could work from.
- We did have a situation where there was someone who was emotionally acting out in our meetings. It escalated, and it escalated. This person made it very well know that he had a gun. And he had his gun. And he would use his gun. He cussed me out a number of times. Being the only woman, that was terrifying. Eventually, we did call the police. Actually no, we called hospital security. Hospital security chose to call the police. The police did not take anyone's identification, other than mine and the person's. The meeting was very divided. A lot of people were deer in headlights. I would only go to meetings with my two gay taller-than-me friends would go. A number of people stopped. We lost a new-comer. This person was not well. They weren't sober. They also weren't mentally well.



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They had a medication change. That person did not end up doing well. It's a challenging discussion. I appreciate it.

- A few years back, they had a court case where an AA sponsor had to testify against another member. In our home group, we drafted a statement saying United States law does not protect 12-Step sharing or sponsor-sponsee interaction. I've been hearing this statement being read every meeting for a number of years now. It always make me cringe, because I worry that people won't share. I do believe we need that statement. And, people have their own Higher Power. But, it makes me worry a little.
- I just wanted to share two experiences that I've had in my time in Program. One was that we had a member of the Fellowship in one meeting acting in a very violating way against other members. That Group Conscience was taken at that meeting that the member not return to that specific meeting. Years later, the member, through another member, asked to come back to that meeting. It was voted by that same meeting, by a Group Conscience, to not welcome that member back. And then there was another meeting, a completely different circumstance, where a newcomer was exhibiting completely inappropriate behavior. It was really good, a lot of the new-comers, the old-timers and those who had experience curtailed that behavior immediately. Pretty much told that new-comer, that's not how we behave here, and really upheld the safety of the meeting. I just wanted to share those.
- This recently happened to a sponsee of mine. I think it's the only Love Addicts meeting that we have. It was strictly a Love Addicts meeting. I don't know if she gave it the phone number. But, mainly he was blowing up her phone. But also in that meeting [sic]. One of the things, she did wind up getting a restraining order, because this guy just went berzerk. She wasn't hesitant to get a restraining order or give the police her information. I don't know the answer to this, although I do like the idea of a policy for the Program, a recommendation, and possibly something that's read aloud.
- I just wanted to share, speaking from a woman's point of view. Sort of one of the things that I've learned from my sponsor, and I've passed on to my sponsees, is that in coed meetings, newcomer men or women depending on the sexuality, should not be speaking to others. And basically, after those few moments of the meeting where there's a little bit of fellowship happening, it's sort of our job, if we see two people who "shouldn't be talking each other", we'll zoom right in there, "Hi, how's it going?" And, just be that little body guard, sort of unofficially. For me, it makes me feel safe. I feel that as though that helps set some of those strong boundaries, and help curtail some of this possible behavior.
- I like how it calls out the Fourth Tradition about every group is autonomous, except matters affecting other groups or S.L.A.A. as a whole. Unfortunately, I feel this potentially has a chance to affect other groups or S.L.A.A. as a whole. If someone isn't in control of their addiction, and they are committing violations, and one meeting says, "ok, we can't

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have you here”, that person goes to another meeting, and groups being autonomous, the other meeting doesn’t know about this potential. So, there is the potential for a continuation of this behavior. If there’s a recommendation written up, I would hope that there would be some sort of communication from the groups to the local intergroup, so that there could be mitigation possible on this.

- The document, Anonymity and the Law in S.L.A.A., could be interpreted to apply to this also. It is written for what is shared at an S.L.A.A. meeting, as far as if a person shares at an S.L.A.A. meeting that they are engaged in illegal activity outside of the S.L.A.A. meeting. But, that could be interpreted to assault, or threats made inside the meeting, as well. I was just reading this. It says, people must remember when they are sharing at a meeting with their sponsor, sponsee or fellow members, their anonymity does not exempt them from repercussions for their actions. Also, they must understand that anonymity is not the same thing as a legal privilege. That could be interpreted here. I just wonder if we couldn’t maybe amend Anonymity and the Law in S.L.A.A. to also include activity within the meeting.

The time for discussion of the IFD has expired. This item is closed for this ABM. The information gathered during discussion will be captured in the official minutes of this meeting. Space will be reserved for a motion related to this IFD in the first version of the Agenda for next year’s ABM.

### **14n07/14-04: Discussed**

Item For Discussion: The Conference Diversity Committee wants feedback from the Conference on the proposed Diversity Statement.

The intent of the item was read aloud:

The CDC believes that adoption of a Diversity Statement would help to promote diversity and inclusiveness in our Fellowship. Many organizations – both 12-step Fellowships and other nonprofit self-help groups – have diversity statements. A statement could state where we as a Fellowship stand on these matters, and also contribute to a more diverse membership. In that way, a Diversity statement would assist us in fulfilling our Fifth Tradition, to bring our message to the addict who still suffers.

– How can a Diversity Statement best be used in the Fellowship?

– We welcome feedback from members on how best to use such a statement in the Fellowship.

– What type of document would it be? A basic purpose would be to post the statement on the F.W.S. website. Does it need to go through the Literature Approval Process?

– Should it be a Core Document of the Fellowship?

– Would it be preferable to write “sex and love addict and anorectic” or just “sex and love addict” (still including anorectic members)?

The requirements of the item were read aloud:

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The CDC foresees no requirements of the Fellowship at this time. (If adopted, following a Motion in the future, the Statement could be posted on the F.W.S. Website, requiring a minimum of labor.)

THE DIVERSITY STATEMENT

The First Tradition of Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous speaks of the importance of unity. There is unity in diversity. We have different beliefs, affiliations and backgrounds, but we are one Fellowship. We find a common denominator in our obsessive/compulsive patterns. This is a core principle of our program of recovery. We are stronger together than we are alone. Love and tolerance are our watchwords. Every sex and love addict and anorectic is welcome to attend an S.L.A.A. Meeting so that they may experience sustained, self defined recovery in a supportive environment. Together we affirm S.L.A.A. diversity as a source of our daily strength that invites ever greater outreach, perspective, healing, relatedness and unity.

Conference Committee feedback:

CCC: We would like to express our concerns about the question, should it be a core document? We still have not identified the process for creating a core document.  
CDC: This was presented as a motion last ABM. It was three paragraphs long. We ran into a buzz saw. It seems there's a lot of diversity in their understanding of diversity. We went to great lengths to make it a lot simpler document, which is what we have here. A lot of this work goes back to previous members. So, I basically shepherded it to this point. I don't take a lot of credit for the document itself. This is what it is. Really, we just hope it would end up on the F.W.S. website, and the groups could use it as they choose. That's really our intent. And, the other things are how we get to that process: Probably it would go to the Literature Committee for their input. That's what we're really looking at. And, other feedback from the Fellowship.  
CJC: I've got one of these [the speaker held up a copy of the Journal]. It's our latest issue on diversity.  
CLC: As far as the CLC goes, we would welcome a program like this. It would be a CDC's program or document. The CLC would offer its resources, so that we can send it out, get feedback, tweak it a little until it was satisfied. I do not feel that we need to wait until next year to act on this. I'd like to see acted on this year, and brought to the CLC, and see what we can do with it.

Facilitators allocated 20 minutes for this item.

Discussion:

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- My group (Intergroup), they liked the statement. But, the only thing they had a concern about was the line, “there is unity in diversity”. They are wishing to have that part of it struck.
- I support having a Diversity statement. I think, for the most part, this does it elegantly. This is the third ABM I’ve attended and the third in a row where we’ve discussed the Diversity statement. I have the same concern I expressed two years ago. I’m not comfortable with the sentence, the phrase, “...every sex and love addict and anorectic ...” Anorectics are sex and love addicts. That’s why they are part of Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous. That statement suggests that there is something else, that they are not sex and love addicts. It may set a bad precedent for further references to “every sex and love addict.” Does that mean we would be obliged always to say “and anorectic”? There’s a lot better ways to make it clear that we include anorectics. And, I’d be happy to work with the Committee on that. In my personal opinion, also, this is not literature, and does not need to go through the Conference Literature Committee process.
- I agree that any diversity statement is a great statement. So, anything that I bring up here is merely a suggestion, a recommendation, to the CDC. Based on the language, normally when we see a diversity statement anywhere in any other organization, those words are sort of a form of protection as a mindset. So, I noted there were some traditional language, usable language diversity statement things lacking from this one. And so, I would recommend including, with the lovely new terms, “beliefs, affiliations and backgrounds”, protections like “ages, genders, preferences, and appearances”, because these are the real diversity issues that can divide a unified group.
- One of our processes [of the CLC] is that after we have developed what we feel is a best effort draft document, we send it out to the Fellowship. We want feedback. So, all of the things that are being said that I like, don’t like, that is the process we use. We send it out to you, you send us back our feedback, “I don’t like this” or “I want to change this sentence, that sentence”. Then it is reviewed, and sent back out again for comment. We go through that cycle as many times as we feel is necessary. Then the CLC will vote on it to see if it is approved by CLC. I just wanted to make that clear, that there is a process for all this feedback, and to have your opinion heard.
- I am speaking on behalf of the Intergroup. We discussed this item. We had great concern for it. One, we thought it was redundant to the S.L.A.A. Preamble. Two, we did not care for the words, “love and tolerance are our watchwords”. Three, we felt that “Every sex and love addict and anorectic” was exclusive. If you are going to start segregating members of the Fellowship as how they identify yourself, in our area we have people who identify themselves as “fantasy addicts”, “relationship addicts” and that could go on and on. So, our intergroup believes “every sex and love addict” would be the appropriate term. Not to exclude anorectics for any means.

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- In relationship to your feedback about listing age and things like that, that was the feedback we were given last year. We had a listing of various people that we thought would be discriminated against. The feedback we got from the Board is that if we didn't list everybody that could be possibly discriminated against, we could be sued. So we took all that out. That was feedback we [the Conference Diversity Committee] were given.
- I think that last comment brings up an important point that we discussed in one of our committees yesterday. Sometimes, the more language we try to apply to something, the more it incites other questions or other concerns, or other "well that needs to be explained or clarified more". And the question, I realize I wasn't here last year, so there may be some background to this that I'm missing. But the biggest question I've had in my mind so far, and couldn't get answered in our little corner is, is there a need for an additional diversity statement? I'm not against diversity statements, or diversity, at all. But I think the Third Tradition is a very elegant diversity statement that states, "the only requirement for S.L.A.A. membership is the desire to stop living out a pattern of sex and love addiction". I think that's an extremely inclusive and elegant diversity statement.
- I actually like the line, "unity in diversity", because it is a reminder of the paradox of my personal recovery. So, I really do like that line. I also want to point out that everybody is saying that anorexics are part of sex and love addiction. I am personally aware that there are some anorexics that have never had any of the other symptoms, that they are basically the null set of sex and love addiction. But, they still qualify.
- I went to the Diversity Committee yesterday, and some of the questions I brought up were, what is the purpose of this in the long-run? It's a great statement. Things can be edited. Things can be changed. But, for me, I'd like to know the ultimate purpose. I know my groups are white, male, 50, usually married. I ran out of my first meeting. Literally. Literally. So, is the ultimate purpose to get different types of people in the room, and then welcomed? We have homeless people in our meetings. We have people who are wealthy. We don't have anything welcoming them. So, that's like a long-term question: What's the purpose? And, someone suggested a pamphlet. I would appreciate that. And, I would welcome it.
- We have a huge amount of anorexics within our intergroup. They are not going away. They have their own meetings. Perhaps a pamphlet would be a nice thing to have, so they could feel welcomed. And, to agree with not changing the language of our other literature that is inclusive. It's a very strong, for us, constituency. Just to have the acknowledgement might be nice for people.
- Couple of things from my experience: When I was living in one area in the Midwest [United States], the understanding the folks in the area had was that only men could be sex addicts and women could only be love addicts. So, at this particular church, whenever a woman would approach, she was always directed upstairs to go to the "love addict"

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meeting, and all the men were directed to go to the “sex addict” meeting below. When I moved to that area, and was a participant, it sort of rocked their world that there could be anything different. And, there was a joke that I had with some of the women in the Fellowship that they were going to come to the area and go to the meeting downstairs, and knock everyone off their socks. That never happened. The other thing that comes to mind is that we hear a lot about the anorexics. When I first came to the Fellowship, I hadn't heard about anorexia in the context of our Fellowship. When I heard about it, I recognized that that's something I identified with. To me, when we start to use that, it becomes divisive. We lose the diversity, and we become separate little groups, like oil and vinegar doesn't mix. I do identify as an anorectic. To me, what that means is, we can either act out by staying home Saturday night, or we can act out by having multiple sexual encounters. In both ways, we are sex and love addicts, and we are avoiding the intimacy that we seek.

- At the intergroup, we discussed this, and the consensus of the discussion was that between the Traditions and the Preamble, that this is a redundant statement.
- The Diversity Committee helped us change our Preamble to include this type of statement. We had a pamphlet that went around called “People of Color”. Everybody that I showed that to, and it was about approximately fifty people, gave me very negative feedback. And, some people, very negative, negative feedback. All entities that I know of, businesses, non-profit, whatever, do have a diversity statement. So, I do believe a diversity statement is necessary. I know it's covered in other things. But, if you want to look at our pamphlets and our literature, there's a lot of things that overlap, that you will find in one, or the other. I'm definitely in favor of this. And, I encourage it to be worked on during the year, instead of waiting next year, to see what happens.

### Point of Clarification:

- Question/Point: Does it need to be Conference approved to go forward?
- Answer/Response: I do not know the answer to that. The CCC is looking for guidance on that, and looking into that right now.
- Question/Point: Just as an example, we had the Diversity Questionnaire. And, we sent it to the Board. And, the Board, if they approved it, could be put on the website. So, that's a different animal. So, I don't know the difference between this and that.
- Answer/Response: As was stated yesterday regarding core documents, the Board apparently did approve core documents at an earlier time, but there is no formal criteria for what is a core document. So, we are still researching how to achieve that.

### Discussion:

- Speaking on behalf of the intergroup, we support posting a diversity statement on the website, and prefer the removal of the “anorectic” from the language.
- Speaking personally as a member, and someone who identifies and suffers from anorexia, I don't want divisive language. We are united in the common denominator of our

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obsessive, compulsive patterns. Whatever those may be, regarding sex and love addiction. So, even though, as a member of the CAC last year, I worked with the Diversity Committee to include “anorectic” in the statement, now personally, as a member, I would support the removal of that word.

- I guess my question is, in a lot of meetings, they are already doing this. They have statements about 13th stepping. They have statements about the meeting being a safe place. And, I wonder, does that fall under that umbrella, of on a group-to-group basis that if your particular group wants to encourage diversity, that the group itself would develop its own diversity statement and announce that at every meeting. I just wonder if that doesn't fall under that umbrella.
- The question was raised, “what is it?” And, it is even more than “is it a core document?”, because it was raised as, “is this Conference approved?” I think that answer is obvious: until the Conference approves the statement, it's not Conference Approved. I suppose the Diversity Committee is free to adopt a statement, saying this is the statement of the Diversity Committee on diversity, just like an individual group is free to adopt a statement at its meeting. So, I don't consider that to be too much of a complicated question. It's Conference Approved when it becomes Conference Approved, whether or not it's a core document, which is a separate and unrelated. I appreciate the background of the Literature Committee. But again, I don't think this is literature. If I were on the Diversity Committee, I would not subject it to the literature process. Finally, I, too, when I said remove the words “and anorectic”, that was not to exclude anorectics, that was to include anorectics as sex and love addicts.

The time for discussion of the IFD has expired. This item is closed for this ABM. The information gathered during discussion will be captured in the official minutes of this meeting. Space will be reserved for a motion related to this IFD in the first version of the Agenda for next year's ABM.

Announcement: The General Assembly period ended with several announcements

The General Assembly took a break at 9:30 am for Committee break-out sessions and lunch, to be continued starting at 2:15 pm.

### **General Assembly; Thursday, August 07, 2014 – 2:15 P.M.**

Facilitator: Steve B;

Assistant Facilitator: Pam M;

Backup Facilitator: Lisa C;

Timekeeper: Bob G;

Spiritual Reminder: Stephen F.

Vote Counters: NA

Voting Members registered and seated: 40

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Voting Members in room: 39

Quorum: 32

Scheduling change: no 5:00 pm General Assembly

### **14n08/14-05: Discussed**

Item For Discussion: The CICC be tasked with the stewardship of a master list of intergroups/lone groups, and the CICC be steward of a master list of all Conference committees' contact information, whether it be through the F.W.S. (except U.S. mail), email address, Google group, an Information phone number, or other means.

The intent of the item was read aloud:

The intent is that the CICC create a master list of contact information for intergroups/lone groups, by working with and sharing with the F.W.S. and the Call Squad.

The CICC would like to create a master list of contact information for all Conference committees.

The CICC would be responsible for the maintenance of these lists.

The intent of maintaining two lists is so the CICC can reach out to the intergroups/lone groups and respond to any request for information from the intergroups/lone groups, thereby shortening communication time between intergroups/lone groups and the committees.

It is intended that this project be conducted under the guidance of the F.W.S.

The requirements of the item were read aloud:

The CICC will need the cooperation of the F.W.S Office to keep the CICC informed of the status of intergroups/lone groups, i.e., additions or deletions of groups, and the cooperation of the committees to keep the CICC aware of any contact information changes.

Conference Committee feedback:

CPIC: The CPIC feels it is useful to have a contact list as a resource for communication.

CHRC: This will assist us in our mission to get the resources developed effectively shared with all groups. This is in alignment with improved communication and demonstrates healthy relationship behavior.

CPOC/CSPC: Speaking for both the committees. This is such an important issue to me. Both really need some central place where they can have the information disseminated. For example, we need pen pals. There are so many intergroups out there, and meetings, who don't even know we need pen pals, don't even know the program exists. Sponsorship is looking. So, we need this. In addition, one of the things that the CPOC may be doing in the future, might just happen to be reaching out to intergroups and see if they want to have Prison Outreach committees in their local intergroups, too. I think that this is such an important function for S.L.A.A. And, I think it will help S.L.A.A. as a whole.

CLC: I think that this is very important. We've been looking for a way to get our draft material out to the members in a more effective way. We could send our draft material



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right to the intergroups. And, it will filter it down from there much easier than sending it to other committees and such, and hoping that they'll bring it to their meetings, or intergroups. There's also an avenue for other committees that are working on any type of literature, whether it's approved or not, to send out to. And, we do joint projects with the CAC, Prison Outreach, and Journal Committee.

CMRC: We feel it is a benefit for our committee to have this as a resource to gather/share information.

Facilitators allocated 20 minutes for this item.

### Discussion

- I remember [a member of the Conference] brought up something that has come up in our intergroup, which is the idea of meetings that might no longer be active having their contact information still in the mix. So, just to add to this wonderful initiative that I think should happen, I would ask us to consider, if there is some rule around how long a meeting can go without contacting the F.W.S. point person and updating their information, before their group info is removed from the contact list? And, that is to protect individuals from reaching out to those meetings, or going to those meetings that no longer exist. So, just for part of this discussion.
- From a web point of view, this would be pretty easily be done. So, as far as work is concerned, that's really not an issue. From a member point of view, I think that this needs to happen. I see a lot of emails from groups, from intergroups, from committees, and there is just a disconnect. The intergroups aren't communicating within, amongst each other. The committees aren't communicating with the intergroups. Like [a member of the Conference] said, intergroups don't know about these projects. And, I think that they should know. A lot of these projects could maybe get off the ground faster if the intergroups had the news, and had the resources that they need to get these things off the ground. So, I'm totally on board with this.
- I am actually speaking on behalf of the office staff, in full support of this. It's really frustrating when we have people in crisis who call and say, "I just drove four hours, which is the closest meeting to where I live, and this place is locked up. There is no one here. I talked to the building, church, maintenance guy. There hasn't been a meeting here for six months. Help." And, of course, we send an email. It bounces back. We call. It's no longer a good number. So just, on behalf of the office staff, there is nothing more frustrating for us than really wanting to help someone and having no resource to reach out to a group. And, the intergroup may not have any additional information for us. So, this would be a huge, huge help to us in the office, so that we can help you better.
- I'm fully in agreement with everything that's been said so far. And, on top of that, as a member of a committee that lost the information on when my meeting, my telephone meeting, was supposed to be, and the access code, I looked all over the place for somebody

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to contact, so I could call them and say, "hey, what is it?" And, that information was not available. So, if we at least know where we can contact people, we can keep in touch with each other at the Conference committee levels, too.

- I wish we'd had this opportunity fourteen years ago, because we had a heck of a time trying to get stuff sent from a Conference committee to intergroups, going through the Boston office. That list was in a bear trap. We had to actually physically mail stuff to the office, and physically ask them to mail it for us, and not know whether it got out, or not. My only concern is from a confidential part of it. If there are names of individuals attached to this mailing list, I would have some concern regarding that.
- On behalf of the Board, we would just like to say, we are glad to hear that there is a Conference committee that's willing to take up stewardship of this. And that you guys are willing, and able, and motivated. It turns out that anonymity is a big concern for the Board of Trustees. And, it's not going to be a problem. We can redact the things that are not necessary, so that peoples' anonymity will be protected, and we can still disseminate it to a Conference committee. And the last thing is, not sure we need a motion for this. But, this can be done within this Conference year. And, we are looking forward to working with the CICC. And, as a member of the Board Public Relations Committee, and a committee that's only two people, we're really looking forward to the help.
- I think it's a great idea to have a list. I think it sounds like most people agree that it is a good idea to have a list. I wonder if, just since committee membership tends to fluctuate between high levels of activity and low levels of activity, if it wouldn't be better to just have Fellowship-Wide Services offices or the webmaster be responsible for maintaining that, rather than having a middle party. I don't mean to put more work on you, but you need it, right?
- I've actually already given my intergroup's Google group information to the CICC. Listening to everything that's been said, I would propose that one of the first things that gets done, is that the intergroups all send their meeting lists to the CICC, so that they are current meeting lists. Start the ball rolling. So, when everybody gets home, maybe do that, so that we have current information.
- I'd like to give, maybe, some historical information. Those of you who know about this, maybe if you could help me with dates and times. I think this is a great idea. I think there's a great need for it, obviously. I think there is a concern about anonymity. So, that's important. I should let you all know as delegates, observers, volunteers, we used to have a master list on a colored sheet. It was a member list of conference attendees. We used to put it on a colored document, so it could not be duplicated. Well, people were actually duplicating it, and scanning it, and sharing it. For the same reasons it was on a color document, again, not to share, but also to protect anonymity. And so, that was done away

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with a few years ago, because of that very reason, because of being shared, and anonymity. I just wanted to put that up for the good of the order, so you guys could know.

- One thing that I'd like to add is that we have a living database. It changes all the time. And that's where this master list is going to come from. At any given time, the CICC will be able to look at that list as it changes live. That's one thing that's going to be really great. But the other thing is, we want to be able to coordinate and to work together with the intergroups, as well, to keep the information on the F.W.S. website as current and accurate as it can be. Because, that is one of our big problems, is the groups are just not communicating directly with us. We want to really work hand-in-hand with the intergroups to verify this information, too, to make sure that we have valid contact people, and that we have valid email addresses that we can refer members to, when they are looking for help in their area. We're really hoping to just increase the collaboration with the intergroups.

- We're talking about people wanting to do service, wanting to do the kinds of things that need to be done in a central kind of office. I'm hearing somebody offering to work on nurturing a culture of volunteerism, and self-supporting the kinds of things that went on that built AA. The things that I think we need to do if we want S.L.A.A. to be successful in the future. I'm in favor of the idea. The details of how it happens may need to be hashed out. But, I think it is a very good start.

### Point of Clarification:

- Question/Comment directed to webmaster: Just wondering if the database can be connected with the information that's on the website, that it go directly, in any way to make the least work out of it?
- Webmaster response: Are you asking about the directory, like when people look for meetings? That actually calls information from that database. So, when a group registers, I get an email that says, "you have a new registration from such and such group is this city, state and country." That email comes to me. And then, I log into the database. I verify that information. It doesn't get posted until I verify. I make sure all the information is in order, that we have everything we need, and then I click, "publish", and it goes into the database. When you search for a meeting, it directly pulls information from the database for whatever city, state or country the person is requesting. So, this list for the CICC is going to come from that same database.
- Question/Comment directed to webmaster: Ok. So it wouldn't take that much work then?
- Webmaster response: Right, Exactly. Everything is being pulled from the same database. We have all the information there. It's this treasure trove of information. And, it could be being used in so many more ways than it is. So, that's what we're really talking about here, is just getting the lines of communication open, because the information is there.

### Discussion

- Not to put a bummer on it. But, also a piece of reality that the Intergroup Communication Committee has activated, inactivated, activated, inactivated a few times

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through the years. In reality that this would need a big commitment from a group of people to keep this list going and not have it just disintegrate. And, I know it would come back to the webmaster as it is updated. But, just a little bit of reality, but not to put a bummer on it.

- Really appreciate the efforts of CICC. To ally some of the fears about anonymity: the names would only be first name and last initial, no telephone numbers would be transmitted, and it would be done via email addresses. And, for the places that don't have email addresses, we would be more than happy to help you begin connecting with those intergroups, so you get the information for that.
- Actually, let me clarify: we decided not to have names even. Just an email address, the name of the intergroup, and the city. That's it.
- I just wanted to say thanks for all the service work. And, I just want to say very, very big thanks to our Board, and our webmaster, and everyone else who's keeping us within anonymity and confidentiality parameters. Thanks for that sensitivity.
- I think it's a no brainer. And, I think that what a previous speaker said was really important that this not fizzle. So, I just think that it's a great idea if people want to help out with this clerical, monumental, task.

### Point of Clarification

- Question/Comment: Ownership and upkeep of the list will be maintained with the F.W.S and the webmaster, correct? So the list will be loaned to the committee?
- Answer/Response: Yes, they would remain in ownership of the list. We would just get it, clean it up, and give it back to the webmaster.
- Answer/Response: I just want to clarify a couple of things about how the database works. When we talk about maintaining the list, the list really maintains itself. As groups register, the only thing I have to do is click a button that says, "publish". I verify it. Because, when the registration comes in online, and that's why we ask groups and intergroups to register online, because when you fill out those fields, and I verify that, those fields that you filled out, they go straight to the database. I don't have to sit there and enter in all the information. It gets done for me. So, as far as maintaining the list, when groups and intergroups register, that is the list. So, it really takes care of itself, as long as we're using that form, and we're getting that communication. The list will take care of itself. And, that's where we're talking about a centralized list, because we had a list over here, and a list over here and there was information that was new over here that wasn't getting over here. That's what we're talking about centralizing the list from that database that we already have, that really is a living organism. And, it just takes care of itself as we go on the website and use that form to send updates and things. So, as far as maintenance, it's just a matter of generating an Excel spreadsheet, which is done with a click of a mouse.
- Question/Comment: Just wondering if there was de-registration.
- Answer/Response: You mean, like if a group folds?

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- Question/Comment: Yes.
- Answer/Response: I do have one of those. Basically, all that has to happen is the group just needs to contact F.W.S. and say that “our group is no longer meeting”, and then I just go into that particular listing, and then I just delete it. I actually have had a request for a link that says, “our group is closed”. I think that needs to happen, too, because people aren’t doing that. Groups are closing and they are just not letting us know.

### Discussion

- I’m the webmaster for our intergroup. One thing I’m trying to do on our local level is to establish just hard-and-fast email addresses, so that whoever comes into a contact position, like a media secretary, can just have the password and that email address. It just keeps from having to keep changing when we get contact information changing. It’s just one thing I thought I’d put out there.

### Point of Clarification

- Question/Comment: Just a question about intergroups. So, we have a static list. How does an intergroup go about verifying that its list is up-to-date with what F.W.S. has in its database?
- Answer/Response: We can’t. And, that’s the problem, is that we don’t have the manpower. As the oversight of the webmaster, we have no way to verify all of these listings. There’s thousands of them.
- Facilitator interjects: I believe his question was how can he check if his group is registered and what the information for his group is on the website.
- Question/Comment: I want to know as an intergroup member, for my local intergroup, how can I go about making sure that all of the groups on my list are either in, or not in, registered with F.W.S. I can’t go on F.W.S. and see the list, can I? Can I see all of my registered groups?
- Answer/Response: The answer to that question is “No”. However, that said, what you can do as an intergroup, and I’ve actually talked to a few people about this, what an intergroup can do is they can email me and say, “look, we want to get our groups registered. Can you tell us which ones are registered, and which ones aren’t?” That’s easy to do. All I have to do is go into the database and ask it all of the groups that are registered as a member, because it asks you is your group a member of an intergroup and which one? So, I can go in there and can filter and I can say, give me all the groups that are a member of the Puget Sound Intergroup. It’s easy. Long story short.

The time for discussion of the IFD has expired. This item is closed for this ABM. The information gathered during discussion will be captured in the official minutes of this meeting. Space will be reserved for a motion related to this IFD in the first version of the Agenda for next year’s ABM.

### **14n09/14-06: Discussed**

Item For Discussion: A Conference Literature Committee Representative selected by the CLC, be sent to the ABM every year, with the F.W.S paying the costs.

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The intent of the item was read aloud:

The CLC Representative's duties will include, but not be limited to, chairing the CLC sessions, reporting to the General Assembly on behalf of the CLC, and speaking upon request at other Conference Committee sessions to explain the CLC process, resources, and document repository.

Having a designated CLC representative at the ABM will:

- Ensure that all CLC projects or co-projects with Conference Committees or intergroups, are understood by the ABM delegates.
- Answer questions about literature that is submitted for Conference approval.
- Open discussions on past, current, and future CLC projects, and how the CLC works with other committees and intergroups to create a best effort, draft of their literature submitted for Conference approval.
- Recruit new members.
- Report to the ABM and the CLC on all current, inactive, and future CLC projects, Documents Repository activity, committee projects, co-committee projects, the status of all CLC subcommittees/writing groups, and any work being done with an intergroup.

A CLC Representative that is a delegate from an intergroup/lone Group, has responsibilities to that intergroup/lone Group and would be dividing his/her attention between duties to each. It would be unfair to the intergroup, the CLC, and ABM Conference.

The Conference Literature Committee needs to be well represented by a designated CLC member who has no other responsibilities than representing the CLC. The CLC is a vital and important Conference Committee to the Fellowship much like the Conference Charter Committee (CCC) is to the ABM (see Index of Motions 2010 when motion approved to pay costs of CCC chair to ABM) and the Journal Editor (see S.L.A.A. By-Laws 2013 page BL-10 where not only costs to attend ABM are covered, but is a voting member of the Conference).

For the past few years the CLC budget included a request for a paid worker because the duties of archiving, and time to create, email groups for the 12x12 book and other writing projects were overwhelming for any member or subcommittee of members. This past Conference year such a paid staff person was hired. This stresses the importance of the work of the CLC and need for a CLC Representative at the ABM as described above. The CLC feels a designated, knowledgeable; representative of the CLC will benefit the ABM, all committees, and S.L.A.A. Fellowship as a whole.

The requirements of the item were read aloud:

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A CLC Representative will be selected each year by the CLC. Cost for attending the ABM will be paid by the F.W.S. Estimated cost would include travel expenses, hotel & meals, and delegate registration

### Conference Committee feedback:

CLC: I know that a lot of committees would like to have representatives here. But, we're talking about the CLC, right now. This is my first time at the rodeo. I came as an intergroup rep, and as a CLC rep. I just happen to have those two fall together. It's quite possible that we have nobody from the CLC as an intergroup rep. And, then, everything kind of falls apart for us. I have not had time to go around and talk to people, recruiting volunteers, explaining what our projects are, looking for new projects. If I had just that responsibility when I came here, it would be much better. I could explain what our process is, what happens with the document repository, and that sort of thing. The only way I had to do that this year was for people to come and visit our literature meetings, and try to explain it there. There was so much to explain, that I couldn't do it in one meeting, or two meetings, or three meetings.

CHRC: Due to the vital role of the CLC in integrating and disseminating the work accomplished by all the committees and delegates at the ABM, the Healthy Relationships Committee strongly supports this IFD. We also recognize that the CLC helps create one of our most integral tools used in local recovery meetings.

Facilitators allocated 20 minutes for this item.

### Discussion

- I'm just trying to get clarification that the Journal Committee and the Conference Charter Committee already have, maybe, a role like this where just a representative of their committee is able to come and speak. On one end, I would say this might be a slippery slope. But, if it has already been happening for committees that really need it, it seems like a normal extension. And, the Literature Committee certainly seems like an important, overarching committee that we could use a representative for.
- With the age of technology being where it is, I think it would be much more cost effective for all the committees to be able to have a video conferencing, or a phone conferencing system included for the break-out sessions. Everyone that wants to, and can get to a phone, can participate in the Conference Committees, instead of seeing one person at the cost of, it probably cost over \$2,000 this year for one delegate to attend. And, that is probably on the low end, especially when we've been discussing earlier in the sessions, money being a problem.
- As CCC Chair, I have come to the ABM the last two years as a guest of the Fellowship. I am very appreciative of that. This year, my intergroup chose to send me as a delegate, so that our intergroup could have another vote, and also so that we could save the Conference a tremendous amount of money, that cost to send somebody here. I fully support the idea. My concern is the added cost. At the earlier financial presentation, and I'm going to just

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ball-park numbers, so I apologize, I think I heard something like it cost \$52,000 to put this on, and they get \$40,000 from the Delegates. Ballpark. We're losing money. So, I'm not opposed to the idea. I'm just concerned about the cost, the added cost to the registrants, because the money has to come from somewhere.

- I was voted on as Vice Chair last year, of the CLC. I came here to give a 12x12 presentation. I'm the Journal Editor. So, I was running around with Journal stuff. I mostly concentrated on Journal stuff. But, it does seem like a lot to ask of somebody to come here and be a lot of things, and represent a lot of things. We discussed it many times on the CLC calls, about having a representative that could help with everything. There is so much, so many projects in the CLC, and so much to do. So, that was our thought when we had the calls.
- Ditto to what a previous speaker just said. That saves me some time. I agree. I think it's kind of a slippery slope as well, except for, we make our money on literature. So, literature is that important to us. I see this as a little bit more than just a Conference Chair coming. I see it as an individual who is helping us to build our inventory, so that we can give that to all the separate addicts that are still out there. It's that important, that somebody ought to focus. I feel like it is a person on the committee, not necessarily the chair, but it's an individual whose whole time would be dedicated and devoted towards making sure that we have the best literature that is out there, so that all the addicts that are out there can be reached and approached, and gotten. I agree with the finances, but I think it's that important that we find them to bring somebody here.
- I think in our intergroup had enough money to bring four delegates. So, I'm concerned about money, as well, for the F.W.S. And, we do have one person doing way more work than anybody else. Whoa! One person is doing a lot of work. But she comes from a place where they have enough money to send a delegate. So, I don't know where to put this.
- They're good arguments. My own bias would be that our public outreach would be central. I've done some writing, and I'm not sure how much face time that requires. But, I very strongly support the idea of updating us technologically, so that all people can participate that wish to, and do work throughout the year. And, I very much am hoping to hear from the Board on this. If they have already spoken, then my bad. I realize it is a good idea, but resources are limited.
- Just a couple of comments. I do appreciate the issue of financing. We could be in situation, and I lucked out this year, where my intergroup sent me here this year, and the CLC elected me as representative, not because I was Chair. They wanted me to be representative. But, we could be in a position where nobody from the committee is sent by their intergroup. We would have no representative here, to answer any questions, or to do anything. So, just wanted to make that point.



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### Point of Clarification

- Question/Comment: I am sorry if this was answered. I am confused. If you could explain, what are the committees that already do something like this, if any? I'm not sure. (Reference was made to the Journal Editor) Is that the same kind of thing for the Journal Committee, or the Literature Committee? Are there other committees that have sent a person just to represent the committee here before?
- Answer/Response: If the question is, who does F.W.S. pay for, the Journal Editor's way is paid, and she is a voting member of the Conference. The CCC Chair's way is paid, but the motion had a proviso that says, if the individual also comes as a delegate, as the CCC Chair has done this year, then the intergroup pays. And those are the only two, other than Board members and staff on F.W.S.
- Question/Comment: Thank you. That helps so much.

### Discussion

- Then it seems that provision has already been done, and certainly the precedent has been set in a way that seems to work, so far.
- Again, I think this is showing where we have some potential for some growth in the Fellowship, in terms of growing our own maturity, if you will, and our capacity to perform certain functions. It's been clearly demonstrated over a number of years that the CLC chair role is a vital one. We have come to the point where we need someone who is focusing on that, and only on that, much the same as we are at a place where we have a CCC Chair who focuses primarily on the facilitating of this, and not functioning as a delegate. So, I think the concept is great. Finances are one of those things where the devil is in the details.
- Piggy back a little bit on what the last speaker just said, and also my perception of Conference committee work over the last three years: I believe during the discussion that we were having the other day with financing, there is a lot of pushback about the Conference doesn't get enough money. I believe this is an opportunity for the Conference to get some money. I believe the money would be well spent for the CLC to have the representation and probably have an opportunity to grow during that ABM, without having their hands tied with the CLC chair having other things to do if he was here by other means. Having said that, the Conference, as a whole, hasn't really done a whole lot the last three years. Certain committees have done a lot. And, the CLC is certainly one of those. So, I think this is a good idea. I'd like to see other Conference committees. And, I'm very appreciative of the earlier discussion on the CICC. Get this thing in gear, and stop kicking the can down the road.

The time for discussion of the IFD has expired. This item is closed for this ABM. The information gathered during discussion will be captured in the official minutes of this meeting. Space will be reserved for a motion related to this IFD in the first version of the Agenda for next year's ABM.

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Announcement: The General Assembly period ended with an announcement that the auction raffle raised \$5,120 Wednesday night.

The General Assembly took a break at 3:16 pm, to be continued at 3:30 pm.

**General Assembly – Thursday, August 8, 2013 – 3:35 P.M.**

Facilitator: Jack S;

Assistant Facilitator: Juanita J;

Backup Facilitator: Steve L;

Timekeeper: NA

Spiritual Reminder: Madeline S.

Voting Members registered and seated: 40

Voting Members in room: not reported for this General Assembly

Quorum: 32

Tradition 12: Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, every reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Facilitator read Tradition Twelve.

BOT Nominees present speak about Tradition Twelve

Rick B;

Susan G.

Note: one person standing for election to a Board position was not present:

Chris D.

Susan G:

I don't know how many of you guys got to look at this 12 Traditions illustrated, that was in your packet. I just thought it was so cool. I was reading up on Tradition Twelve. I was amazed at what AA wrote about the Twelfth Tradition. The way they presented it, was that the Twelfth Tradition actually includes a little bit of all the Traditions in it. When I thought about that, I thought that is so neat: The main tradition being that of humility.

Tradition 1 being that we use the Traditions to work together. This is our common welfare coming first. This is not about me. This is about us, and working together for the good of S.L.A.A. I have to be careful to control my personal desires and ambitions. There are no big shots in this program. The only big shot is the big guy, the big shot up there. And, that's Tradition 2. We're just merely a part of the bigger whole. Tradition 4 reminds us about group autonomy, that, as a trusted servant, I need to always watch out, that I remember to watch out for the welfare of all groups, that we're in this together.

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Tradition 5, being a part of that is always remembering that we have but one primary purpose. If I'm staying humble, and staying teachable, and remembering I am just an addict, then I'm remembering that's my primary purpose. Part of the humility of the spiritual foundation of all of this, is that I'm not getting caught up in money, property and prestige, which is Traditions 6 and 7. Then we get to Tradition 9, that this is an opportunity to serve and not to flaunt a title, "Oh, I'm on the Board of Trustees". I have a title. That is not what it is about. Tradition 10: this is not an opportunity for me to voice my opinion. I'm not an authority on anything here. This is a spiritual program. As in Tradition 11, I'm not promoting myself. Tradition 12 reminds me that this program is stronger than just me. I'm just a little cog in the wheel. There is something stronger than my human personality, our little groups, our big intergroups and this assembly. That is the spiritual foundation of our program. I just think that is so cool.

Rick B:

I used to believe in something called coincidence. My first sponsor explained to me that coincidence is my Higher Power's way of remaining anonymous. It is not a coincidence that I am standing for election in a year where the theme is Tradition 12. Twelve is a very powerful number for me personally, but for 12 Step fellowships, in particular.

It turns out that after the Twelve Steps were written, run through, and numbered them out, it turned out to be twelve. The Steps follow a pattern. The Traditions follow a pattern. And, the Concepts follow a pattern. As has been mentioned, the twelfth of any of these things, the three Legacies, sum up the previous eleven. The Twelfth Step talks about having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps. We tried to carry this message to the addict who still suffers. Which in by its very essence, we had a spiritual awakening because we acknowledged that we were powerless, and that we believed we were insane and needed help. We turned our will and our life over. The previous eleven are all summed up in that one sentence.

Tradition 12 does the same thing. It sums up all the Traditions into that one. The Concepts had to end up with those six Warranties, because they do the same thing. There is so much stuff inside there, they had to put it into six Warranties. Tradition 12: Anonymity being the spiritual foundation of all these Traditions. I was reading through literature about the Twelfth Step. There is just so much in it, that trying to glean anything specific from it: the truth is, there is a lot to be gleaned. The most important part that I was able to gain from it is that the spiritual essence of anonymity is sacrifice. Not just sacrifice of my status, or the job and all those other things. It is the sacrifice of my ego. It's trying to let go of that stuff and allow me to be a conduit through which Higher Power's will can be known. It is an opportunity for me to check my stuff at the door and try to come in here as a clean slate to be of service to my fellow human, in the way that is effective and necessary, but not in support of status: "Well, I did that." "Well, look at me." All of those things I want to do from the get go, instinctively. I really appreciate how Tradition 12 is a reminder: It's about the principles. It's not about the founder. It's not about Bill W. It's not about all of these people. It's about the principles of why we are here, and what brings us to this place, and what I am called to do.

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In about the last six months, I took on a new sponsee. We've been talking, and we've been interacting with my friends, my support network. It's come up, "How often does this work?" He's asks about a specific spiritual tool. I try to come up with percentages, because I think he is an accountant. I don't even know what his job is. It's not really important. I really thought about it. The truth is, humility works 100% of the time. I want to engage in it about 10% of the time. It really does work every time. I appreciate that we talk about principles before personalities. That means that I get to place principles before your personalities. But, the most important thing for me is that I have to place principles before my personality, because I so want to bring my personality into things. Boy, does it get in the way. I'm really grateful the Traditions exist, not just to help groups to stay healthy, but so that I can interact with others. I can use the Traditions not just at meeting level, but with friends, and people at my job and with my family.

Tradition 12 is really important for me, because it reminds me to stay focused on not me, and so often. So often, I want it to be about me. I want to be the center. That is so unhealthy, because that's part of my spiritual sickness.

### **Questions/Comments from the floor:**

Facilitators stated all the voting members and observers were allowed to ask questions. This was the participants' opportunity to ask the two candidates present any question that you choose. Please do not attack the candidate.

- Question/Comment: Thanks to both of you for serving. You're doing more than your share with the size of the Board. I don't know what we would do without you. Thanks for standing for election again. My question is about Board authority. Several years ago, the Board made a decision to move the office from Massachusetts to San Antonio. I'm not talking about the reincorporation. I'm talking about the physical move of the office. It did not consult the Conference, at least not formally at an annual business meeting. I know that Chris was on the Board at that time. And, he was part of that decision in favor of moving the office here without consulting with the Conference. How do you two feel about major decisions, and generally should the Board be running that kind of thing to the Conference?
- Susan: I absolutely feel that it's important for a decision like that to be run by the Conference. I think any major decision that involves your contributions, definitely your resources, your thoughts, your spiritual input is very important. What your groups think. As intergroup reps, I think it's important for you to inform us. And, we need to give you plenty of time to let us know what you think. Tradition 12 is an important part of this. I think the move was very controversial. I think there were a lot of personalities that got involved before principles in this matter. It's a lot of water under the bridge from now. Chris isn't here to speak to this issue.
- Rick: When I think of interactions with others, I have to think of the Traditions. Tradition 1 is our common welfare must come first. Personal recovery depends upon S.L.A.A. unity. And unity asks for certain things. It asks me to comply, to some extent. It asks me to release some of me and become some of us. So, in that question, I would not be comfortable with deciding to move the office myself or the Board. I would definitely bring it

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before the Conference, because it is not my decision. It's not really the Boards decision. It's the Conference's decision. It's the Fellowship's decision. I think that we would all need to weigh in on that. I am not going to discuss previous boards, because I wasn't there. I don't know what happened. I know that there were some reasons given. And, that's up to them. I think they did probably the best they could at the time. Hindsight is 20/20. I often say to my sponsees, "Give it a couple days, a couple of weeks. You'll figure out what was the good decision, the right decision, in this." I know that it was damaging to the Fellowship. Today, it's not something I would engage in. Nor, would I do. I appreciate that whenever it comes to a decision, I always have a knee-jerk reaction. I know that's the one I need to avoid, because only pain and heartache will follow.

### Point of Clarification

- Question/Comment: This is a point of clarification. I have a written interview from Chris and Rick. But, I don't have one in my file for Susan.
- Answer/Response: It was handed out at registration.
- Question/Comment: It's in the binder, under what tab?

Note: There was indistinct commentary not made at the microphones. The comments were not audible for the minutes.

- Answer/Response: It was handed out at registration. It was on a table at registration. When you first walked in the door, there was a whole stack of them.
- Question/Comment: Could someone let me borrow theirs?
  
- Question/Comment: Thank you both for your service. There's a lot's that I could ask. But, if you feel comfortable, and, if you don't, that's fine. I got a little scuttle-butt that the Board is working on record retention, possibly archiving, destruction of records: If you want to talk philosophically or technically about that. And, I don't know if you want to announce any changes to our website, or not, that have happened recently: All up to you. But, I'd love to hear back from either, or both, of you. And, thanks for your service.
- Susan: The Board is listening to you. It's hearing what your concerns and needs are. The website, thanks to amazing Beth, is constantly working to update and be the best website that it can be. Some of the changes that we're looking at making is, we appreciate the intergroups that are coming back again and again, making purchases. We know that you want to have an account and register. But, we're also aware that some of our shoppers don't want an account. They just want to get on there and make a purchase and be done with it. They want to be anonymous. So, we're going to make that happen. We also are aware that we have a lot of records at the office that have been with us a long time. We are looking at record destruction policies. What do we do with these records? We need to look at being in compliance with the law. There are a lot of laws about records, record retention, record destruction. We need to, at all times, make sure that we are in compliance with the IRS [United States Internal Revenue Service] and state and Federal laws. So, we're definitely working very hard to listen to you, what your concerns are, what your needs are. And at the same time, balance them with the needs of the Corporation, as well.

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- Rick: It's interesting, because I got on the Board and thought, "OK, I'm going to help out the addict who who still suffers". It's a lot of business, so that everyone can help the addict who still suffers. It's numbers, and laws and legal stuff and reading up. I can't believe how much I've learned about law and accounting and P&L, profit and loss sheets, and all that stuff. With that being said, it turns out that non-profits are held to certain laws. One of them is the Sarbanes Oxley Act [Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002, Public Company Accounting and Reform and Investor Protection Act]. It says you must have this, you must do this, you must do this. We had to tick it off, one at a time, the things that we were doing. One of it is we must have a records retention policy. We created that so that we would be in compliance with the law. Now that that is said, we can start taking care of getting rid of records that we need to get rid of. I'm looking forward to us being able to go through that, so we can retain our history, and the archival stuff, which is important. And, get rid of the stuff that's just left over. I'm a little bit of a clutterer. It looks like other people were clutterers, too, because they save a lot of stuff. I'm glad that we're going to be able to get through this, and get to other side.
- Question/Comment: Thanks very much for the commitment that you're showing. There's a lot of work, and there's teamwork. I have a concern, and maybe I want to understand what is your opinion about it: The third is not here. There's a third person that is not here. How do you feel about it with somebody that should be on the Board of Trustees and who is not showing up? How do you feel about it? Is it teamwork if the guy who is supposed to work with you is not here today? How do we feel about it?
- Susan: I've known Chris D for many years of my sobriety. He has been appointed to the Board recently, and is standing for confirmation now, of that appointment. He has showed up to every Board meeting. He is responsible. He has twenty three years of sobriety. He's an amazing man. I trust. I trust him. I trust he'll show up. I trust that he'll be present. That's all that I can say.
- Rick: In the past people told me things. I had to believe them, for what they said. Now, in this Fellowship, I trust what I see, and what I experience. I know that Chris has always showed up. I knew that when he was appointed, there was a conflict with his job, and he would not be able to be here during this ABM. And, I still appointed him. I know that in the past we have elected Trustees who were not present, because they were not Delegates at the time. But, they still sent in all the paperwork, and filled out all the applications, so they could be presented to the Conference. They've been elected. Other than that, I'm not sure that there's anything I can say. But, I'm grateful that I have an opportunity to interact with someone, and work closely with someone who is sober, emotionally competent, and willing to work and be present, and always on task, and always prepared. As I shared once before, I'm a cake decorator. All I really had at the time was willingness and a zest for learning.
- Question/Comment: Can both of you talk about your experience with sponsorship, not being sponsored, but sponsoring others, if that's taken part in your journey in the past, or currently? How it has informed or continues to inform your work on the Board.

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- Susan: Part of my coming up through service was I got started out on the sponsorship Conference committee. The Conference Sponsorship Committee has a long distance sponsorship program. I would get emails from girls all over world, saying, "I need a sponsor, I need a sponsor". So, I'm like, "OK, I'll take you. I'll take you. I'll take you." As a result, I've sponsored women all over the world. It's given me a real feel for the program all over the world. I've had to put a limit on that, because I'm just one person. I can't sponsor the whole world. As it's turned out, it's been a blessing, exactly how the number, and the timing and everything. I have a number of women, the number is manageable. It's a god thing. It just all works out. They're in Germany, and the UK [United Kingdom]. It's just amazing. I get to hear about how the programs are in those countries, and the intergroups that they're working with. And, their meetings there. I also think it has taught me good discipline about how to manage my time. How to spend time being a sponsor. How to spend time in my own program, and my own growth. And, how to manage my time in service. So that there's balance between it all. And that I'm not going crazy trying to do it all. I have boundaries, and I don't overdo it in any one particular area.
- Rick: Sponsorship has been very important to me. In my other 12-Step fellowships, I tend to put people who have more time, and my sponsors, on pedestals. And, they had to be perfect. And then, when they weren't. It was part of my disease trying to say that "People are no good. People are dangerous. You need to stay safe." My sponsor relationship today, allows me the opportunity to receive things I didn't receive in my youth and in my acting out times. I sometimes get brother love from my sponsor. Sometimes I get father love from my sponsor. Sometimes, it's uncle love. The brother love is difficult because sometimes it gets a little raucous. It allows me the opportunity to interact with somebody who's actually just being themselves and not pretending. They are not doing anything special. I am acutely aware of my sponsor's character defects. And, my sponsor is acutely aware of my character defects. And, I can still appreciate the human that he is. And, the example. "Uh, that's something I should be doing." Or, "Ah, I probably should be very careful of that character defect in myself." It's allowed me to really nurture that little boy inside, and use my sponsor as an example of what I need to work towards, emotionally, spiritually, and program-wise. [Facilitator interjects that the question was geared toward candidates' sponsees.] Was it sponsees? Thank you. It's been a wonderful process for me to be able to share with sponsees. It's been a great chance for me to work on my codependence, because I want to fix people. It's what I was raised to be as a kid. And, I am not, I can't fix. So, I share with my sponsees early on, "I'm here to share my experience, strength and hope, and to walk you through the Steps. And, we'll see what happens." Friendships almost always flourish. But, not always. Sometimes, it's just by the book. I really appreciate the ability to differentiate between my stuff and their stuff. In the old days, it was all my stuff. "They are crying because of me." "I'm not doing enough to keep them happy." I have a sponsee who cries almost every time I talk to him. But, I was there once. He goes, "Rick am I ok?" I said, "I was much worse off than you were." He goes, "I don't believe it." [Rick] "Let me tell you some of the things I've done." It gives me the opportunity to keep it green. Because, without that the outside and out there with my addiction will look more and more appealing.

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- Question/Comment: At the beginning of the Conference, we heard something about the use of consultants, again. One of the ABM participants pointed out that there was bad language from the consultant in the report or the form of what you all signed. This is the second time we've had bad consultant recommendations. I believe the move of the office ended up being from a bad consultant report. I haven't seen any requests. And, I'm wondering if there will be any requests to the body of the Fellowship to fill these types of needs for consultation. I know the Fellowship might be a little small. But, I'm pretty sure we have people that can fulfill this. It seems to be reoccurring character defect of the Fellowship that we don't go to ourselves to fulfill some of these roles that we have, or needs that we have. I was wondering if there was any looking, or if you are looking to, perhaps, going to the current Fellowship to see if we can fulfill, like we finally got our webmaster, and she is part of the Fellowship. If we are going to continue that trend?
- Susan: Correct me if I'm wrong, but the first consultation that we had was done by a member of the Fellowship. What I want to clarify is that we don't believe that our strategic plan is bad. What we believe is that the consultant that created the plan used a few terms that we didn't catch, that were not exactly what we wanted them to say. For example, he said, "constituents" instead of "members". So, what we're going to do, is we're going to look at this thing, and we're probably going to revise it. We're certainly going to take the first six pages off of it, which are just like an executive summary, which has most of the language that just doesn't say what we want it to say. But, the plan is good. Don't throw baby out with bath water. The plan is basically about the Board working smarter rather than harder. What we've been is a working board. We've been working like crazy trying to stabilize the office, instead of trying to have a far reaching, future oriented dream and goal about, "How can we best serve our Fellowship?" "How can we support you guys?" "How can we be the wind beneath your wings?" so to speak. We've been so busy working, we've had our nose so to the grindstone just trying to get the office stabilized, that we haven't been able to come up for breath and visualize the future, and have dreams about, "What can we do?" "What can we do better?" "How can we have a plan?" Our plan is not to move the office, or do anything crazy. So, don't worry. We're not going to do anything bad. We're not out to hurt you. Give us some time to look at that thing, and just make sure that it says exactly what we want it to say. We're sorry that there is language in there that you guys object to. We should have looked at it a little closer.
- Rick: I know that I came to my first ABM, and I was really excited. I was like, "Wow! Look at all these Conference Committees. This is awesome. I can't wait." When it comes to looking into the Fellowship and looking for resources, I would like to remind you that we regularly transmit the flyer for the BOT and Conference Committees. And, the best that we get is four people on the committee. One person is doing most of it. We have a very small board right now. This is the best that we can get, with what we've been asking for. So, I believe in going within the Fellowship. But, we also need to take care of what's our responsibility. That being said, I've shared this before, and I'm hoping not to share it after this: I'm a cake decorator. I know nothing, nothing, about Word, Excel, PowerPoint. But most specifically, being a member of a board of trustees. What does that mean? I read a document that says I have rights. I can go to the office any time I want and say, "I want to see all the financial



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- records.” Say, “what?” I didn’t expect that I was going to get power like that. Authority like that. And that was like, “Wow! That’s really incredible.” So, I think it is important for people who are mostly lay people who have no experience of being trustees to have a learning experience and documents and resources provided for us, and adapted for us, that will say, “This is what a trustee. You get to do this. You have legal rights. These are what they are.” So that we can work on that Board development aspect, and keep moving forward. The other aspect was? The last one suggested that we move?
- Question/Comment: No.
  - Rick: OK. Was that it?
  - Question/Comment: Getting people out of the Fellowship.
  - Rick: I absolutely believe in getting the people out of the Fellowship. I have a Board committee that has two people on it. So, I will start asking people who are interested in serving on a Board committee as a non-BOT member, so that we can keep working on all that.
  
  - Question/Comment: This is a comment about Chris D; he is not here. Since I think I know him better and longer than anyone else, I thought I would make a few comments. I intend to vote for all of the Board members that are up for election. I’ve known Chris for over seventeen years. I persuaded him, or urged him, to run for the Board, the first time he ran. He works very well with groups. He has a good sense of humor. He has good judgment. I thought it was my requirement to say that, so you guys have some input from other than the Board. I think he is a top-notch person to vote for.
  
  - Question/Comment: I would like to ask you, what do you like about being on Board? What do you like least about being on the Board? And, how do you feel about this process now?
  - Susan: I think this was one of the questions that were asked for the returnees. What I like most about being on the Board, is having a chance to be a part of a collaborative process, where it’s not about me. But, it’s about being able to listen to what everybody else has to say, and to get a chance to be informed. To be able to change my mind. Yet, also be able to have my voice. To be able to come to consensus. That’s something I’d never done before, when I was in my disease. I never did something like that. This is such a gift. It’s such a wonderful thing, to be able to sit down with a group of people and to be able to discuss important issues and to really care about things. To uphold the values of fellowship, and the Traditions. To put forward such a wonderful, valuable thing. To have spiritual principles about the whole process. What I like the least is the fact that we do all have different opinions, and that sometimes we have to have numerous go rounds. That’s part of the parliamentary processes, it that you guys know you get to present the opposing side, and if the opinion changes, then we have another go round, and then the other side gets to, so on and so on. That can be arduous. And as far as what we are doing right now, I was extremely nervous when we started. I’m a lot calmer now. I just have to breathe.
  - Rick: Thank you for the question. S.L.A.A. saved my life. It was not only empty and hollow, it hurt to live and to breathe. I was absolutely at the end. Not only did S.L.A.A. save my life, it gave me life worth living. A life beyond anything that I could have imagined when I was a

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year sober, two years sober. Just incredible, the depths of the relationships that I have today are phenomenal. I am so grateful, my gratitude has action. And, that action is service. So, that's one of the things that I really like about being on the Board is, I get to show my gratitude by giving my time, my talent and my treasure. A little bit of my treasure. What do I like the least about it? I think what I like the least about it is the fact that very often it's my ego that's the problem. It's my character defects that are rearing their ugly head. I often have to look at myself and then do something about it. Surrender to my Higher Power. Ask for some help. Talk it out. Do some journaling. Whatever, to be able to work through my stuff. As for process now: not always easy. I knew when I was running for the Board, people had said to me, "Be careful. You're going to have a Bulls-eye on your back." "Yeah. Sure. Whatever." It is challenging sometimes to be able to go, "OK. I'm going to go sit down. And, I'm going to place principles before personalities." And, just try to take my ego out of it. And, it's not always easy. But, it's really important. Because, without those experiences, I can't work on my stuff: my character defects; my spirituality. And, learning to place the Traditions at the foremost when it comes to my interactions with others. I think that that is it. How do I feel? I feel buoyed. I feel less weighted down. I feel lighter. I got to do an auction. It was fun! The first time I did an auction, I thought I did a terrible job, and everyone was like, "that was really awesome". I get to come here and be me, instead of pretending that I have to be somebody. I like the fact that when I'm here, though it can be tiring, because it's a long day, it's not because I'm pretending to be something other than what I am. As I was going to sleep last night, "Gosh darn it, this is awesome." These people are the people I'm most comfortable being around. It's just friggin' awesome. In my intergroup there is a person, and we joke, we have to open an S.L.A.A. retirement home. So we can all retire together, because hanging out with normal people is just so boring. It's awesome being able to be around us.

- Question/Comment: My question is, I am a first time delegate: for the first time, I really saw the impact of our international assets. The people from England: I am very familiar with. The people from Germany and from Asia: that was an "aha!" moment. I'd like to hear your long-term plans for pulling the international community closer to us.
- Susan: Actually, I don't have long-term plans. That's why it's so important that we have more participation from folks that will help inform us what we need to do in that regard. I'm so glad the contribution (limit) was raised to \$20,000. That's going to help us tremendously. Because at this point in time, that will give us more options, in terms of what we might be able to do internationally. But really, we need ideas from you guys. What can we do? You tell us, what can we do. The ideas come from the membership. Your groups tell us. The intergroups tell us. Then, the Committees tell us. The committees to the Board inform us. Then we sit down at the board table. We discuss it. We hash it out. We look at the budget. Can we afford this? Is there room in the budget? What are the laws? What are all of the ramifications legally? We hash it out until we're pulling our hair out til all hours of the night. And, we see what we can do. If there are repercussions that affect the Conference, we bring it back to you guys. Then, we make a motion. We take a vote on it. It's a circular process. It involves you. It involves us. It's a "we" deal.

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- Rick: Thank you for the question. It turns out that we have a lot of resources, not just here in the United States, but all over the world. Those resources are slowly percolating up. We've had Trustees from other parts of the world before. We've had them in the Southern Hemisphere, which is a little challenging for them because our days, their night, their night is our day. The good news is that to be a member of the Board of Trustees, all you need is three years sobriety, and some experience in the Conference. Other than that, it's open to anyone. We've had Trustees from the United Kingdom, from Germany, from Italy, from Brazil. We've had them from all over. Everyone is open to this process, and is welcomed into this process. Also, those other countries are beginning to develop such rich intergroups and rich meeting systems, and meeting families, that only better things are going to come. I'm hoping that with some of the experiences we have had recently on the Board with Go-To Meeting, because usually we spend time on the telephone call for two hours or three hours, depending on what month we're in. It would be nice to be able to start using the ability to be able to see the people that we're participating with, to see their interactions, their facial characteristics, and what they're trying to say. Maybe that's a way that we can begin to open this process even further, to other countries, so that people can participate from everywhere.
- Susan: Let me just add to what he just said, and clarify. I don't know if you guys know that Go-To Meeting is like Skype. It's a process that we used at this ABM, where we were able to have Chris sit in on our Board meetings with us. We are all on a screen with our cameras. We can see Chris. And, he can see us. We can hear him and the meetings are recorded. It was really an awesome process.
- Question/Comment: I didn't hear. So, there is no long term international plan that you have in mind?
- Rick: We've developed a strategic plan that will help us to become strategic. The problem is, with such a small Board, it is difficult to engage in those plans, because we are too busy trying to take care of themselves. If all of the Trustees that are up for election are elected, we'll still have a five-person Board, which means I'll still have to chair two committees, two Board committees. As soon as we can begin to get more resources, we can begin to engage in being more strategic and more far looking than as opposed to looking at right here, and right now.
- Question/Comment: We have a lot written down on how to run our Program, how to run our organization. One of the things we have written down is Tradition 4, which allows each group to be autonomous. How far, in your opinions, do you think that a meeting has the right to go? Can they interpret Traditions in different way than what they were said? Can they decide to let children into the meetings? Or adult youths? Example, example, example. How far can they take autonomy, and still be in the fold?
- Susan: We get a lot of questions about just those things at World Services (F.W.S.). That Tradition (Tradition 4) is very, very specific. It says, each group is autonomous except for matters affecting other groups, or S.L.A.A. as whole. I just want to say right off the top, we are not the S.L.A.A. police at World Services. We don't police groups. You guys are autonomous. If a group decides that it's ok to have a little baby in the meeting, that's what

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- the group decides. I went to a meeting recently where there was a beautiful little baby there. That's what the group had decided. That was ok. If a group decides that it's ok to have teens there, that's what the group has decided. There are legal considerations. We've had groups that contact us, and ask, "Is it ok? What shall we do?" We encourage them to check, what are the laws in their local area. They may want to consider that. We encourage each group to be autonomous, to have group conscience meeting, to practice Tradition 2 beforehand, maybe have a moment of silence to invite their Higher Power to be a part of the group conscience process. We trust they will make the best decision possible for their group. We've found that most groups have done very, very well in deciding for themselves. Many groups will go to their intergroup for guidance. This process works. It really works. And, I am proud to be a part of that.
- Rick: Tradition 4: Group autonomy. It turns out that, for myself as an addict, the best way to get me to do something is to tell me I can't do it. So, I'm thinking that if you told me I had to do this, I wouldn't do it. So, I think that's where this Tradition comes from, because of addiction's knee jerk reaction to repel and to be contrary. That being said, meetings get to follow Tradition 4 to the very gates of insanity and active addiction. I have to have the faith in my Higher Power that everything is going to work out for them, to the best of their ability. If it were just Tradition 4, there would be nothing but absolute anarchy. But as we saw in the Concepts presentation, we're looking for a society that is spiritual enough, and has enough love of humankind to be able to weather the storm. I know that Tradition 4 is a difficult one, because there are times when we hear things that are going on in meetings, and you're like, "Oh my gosh, I wanna..." It's not for us to say. We're not the S.L.A.A. police. But, I have to have faith that the meeting's Higher Power is on their side and is going to help out, that the elder states people are going to stand up and say, "Hey, maybe we should try something different". As I said before, there are a lot of other Traditions. Unity: if it's a crazy meeting, less unity is going to ensue, and more people are going to not want to go to that meeting. They're going to go to other meetings. It's going to become weaker. And, eventually, maybe, new life blood will come into it. Tradition 2: it's about group conscience. It's about trusted servant-ship, and not governing. All of those things are really important. I like the opportunity that we get to talk about, not just Tradition 4, but all the other Traditions, and how they come together in a web, that helps to keep us from the brink. I think that is one of the challenging things, that the Tradition 4, because we had meetings, "this is what's goin' on". Tradition 4: we would recommend this, but I'm glad we have some stock letters that we send from the office, whenever there are issues in a meeting. Have a group conscience meeting. Everybody sit there for a minute in silence and try to connect to your Higher Power and see what the right course of action is. That's great. And, that's why we have them. Tradition 4 could be a sticky wicket, but I appreciate that we have all the other Traditions to balance it out.
  - Question/Comment: Question about your experience in S.L.A.A. recovery and S.L.A.A. service around the 7th Tradition: how did you grow in understanding of what it means for a group, your home group, all the way up to the world-wide Fellowship, to be self-sustaining?

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- What was the evolution of your understanding of self-sustaining? And, how might that be influencing your decisions on the Board?
- Susan: I've held a lot of different service positions. Currently in my home group, I'm the treasurer. It gives me great joy to see the \$1.00, \$2.00 contributions come in. And to watch the treasury growing. And to be able to make a recommendation after a few months to send the 40% contribution to World Services (F.W.S.). It adds up over time. And, to be able to do our part. That awareness: even though I am on the Board of Trustees now, I never want to give up my service positions as a member of a meeting. I'll always be a member of a group. I'll always want to be a coffee maker. I'll always want to be a treasurer. I'll always want to be a secretary. Or whatever. Something that is just another member of the group. And, it's interesting that you picked this question, because it just so happens that I'm the treasurer, and I get to see the \$1.00, the \$2.00. And then I get to turn it over to F.W.S. A staff member gets to take it and turn it over to the finance guys on the Board. And, I get to see the totals that come in on the profit and loss sheets. And, I get to see the totals that come in from all over the world, and how that supports our Fellowship. And, I'm just amazed. I am amazed at how our Fellowship supports services all over the world. It gives me chills, every month.
  - Rick: My recovery in S.L.A.A.: I have a few 24's in a couple of other 12-Step fellowships. And, it pales in comparison to what I received when I came into this Program. My S.L.A.A. recovery has enriched and nourished and made vibrant all of those other recoveries. And, it's really helped me look into that fourth spiritual dimension. And, I'm really grateful for that. My service life in S.L.A.A. was dictated actually by the first person that I really connected with. It's an individual who I met on my second meeting. This person had long term sobriety, and really seemed to be emotionally even. And, I was on that roller-coaster. I said, "You know what? I can't have a male sponsor. It's just not going to happen. It's not going to work out." So, what I did is, I just started emulating what this person did. He was of service. I was thinking, "Well, I'll do that, too." I put the chairs out. And I took the chairs back. When nobody was willing to chair a meeting, I would chair a meeting. Whenever we passed the basket, I collected the money for a while. I ended up becoming an intergroup rep, because that's what this person did. So, I just started following. That really helped me as well. More service led to more service. And, then I became a Delegate and came here. As for Tradition 7: that has been an incredible experience. I can interpret it that we are fully self-supporting. But, I can also interpret it, I am fully self-supporting. How can I support myself through this, not just financially? How can I support myself emotionally? How can I support myself spiritually? What do I have to do to invest in these parts of myself? I don't go to church. But I do go to about six or seven meetings a week, in this, and other, fellowships. I learned that that really nourishes my spiritual side. How can I deal with my emotional side? I developed friendships in the Program. And, they've helped me to nurture that spiritual side. I also seek therapy, because I realized when I first came in here, I was like, "There's a whole bucket of crazy that's coming up now, and I don't know what to do with it. I've been running from it for a long time." Having that support was a way that I could nourish that emotional side. Developing friendships really helped my anorexia and becoming outward going. I also was able to look at the financial parts of it. What I give in

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an AA meeting, I give twice as much in S.L.A.A. because it means twice as much to me. Now, I'm grateful to do that. And when I can give more, I do give more. And I've gone through some difficult financial times since coming into recovery. And I've like, "I can at least put \$1.00 in." And, I do, because I'm saying it's worth it. What I've received is worth it. It becomes not just money. It becomes spiritual currency. It becomes a spiritual exchange. I really appreciate how the 7th Tradition allows me to be spiritually responsible for myself, and where I'm at.

Announcement: The General Assembly period ended with announcements.

The General Assembly adjourned at 4:39 pm. General Assembly scheduled to reconvene Friday morning, 8:00 am

### **Friday, August 08, 2014 8:00 A.M.**

#### **General Assembly – Friday, August 08, 2014 – 8:00 A.M. – BOT Elections**

Facilitator: Jack S

Assistant Facilitator: Juanita J

Backup Facilitator: Lisa C

Voting Members registered and seated: 40

Voting Members present in room: 39

Quorum: 32

Readings:

12 Steps (German and Italian)

12 Traditions (German)

Board of Trustees Election:

Election process explained by Rick B, BGNC Chair

BGNC member opening ballots; two tabulators, first year Delegate, observer.

Tabulators distributed ballots, confirming that 39 ballots were distributed.

Once Delegates received ballots, they marked selections for the Board members.

Tabulators collected ballots, confirmed that the same number of ballots distributed were collected.

Those persons then left the room to count the ballots.

While the ballots were tabulated, no one could enter or leave the General Assembly room.

Time was given for questions about the voting process. There were no questions prior to voting.

Election process had three parts:

Part 1: Confirmation of an appointed BOT, for which the term ended at this ABM.

Chris D

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Part 2: Standing to fill partial terms not filled

Chris D

Susan G

Part 3: Standing for a 3 year term

Rick B

### **Agenda Review Subcommittee (ARS) Process presentation**

While the ballots were tabulated, there was a presentation of the Agenda Review Subcommittee Process. Andrew H. facilitated the presentation, with help from Jay G (OH). The third ARS member at the ABM (Kelly H.) was not available.

The process of putting items on the Agenda can be intimidating, the concept of putting pen to paper. The presentation was an opportunity for the CCC to provide an explanation of the process and field questions from the Conference.

Motion vs. Issue For Discussion (IFD):

A Motion asks the Conference to make a decision.

An IFD asks the Conference to discuss something.

For a Motion to be effective, experience suggests that the item ask the Conference to make one decision about a matter, consider one concept: "What is it that you want me to decide?" It is suggested the motion be a complete sentences, e.g., with a verb and a subject.

Keep in mind that not all delegates have the same language abilities. And, not all members of the Fellowship worldwide, those who will be considering the Agenda item, have the same language skills. For some, the language used at the ABM (i.e., American English) is not their first language.

### **Questions/Comments from the floor:**

At that point, the presenter opened the floor for Questions, Answers, and Comments.

- Question/Comment: Thanks for service. So, how can the ARS help me on trying to come up with an IFD, might be a Motion? Is there anything you all can do to assist me?
- Answer/Response: The focus for the ARS is that we want to facilitate the crafting of well-composed and structured items for the Agenda. If you have an idea, before you even begin to write it, you can always contact the ARS. If the ARS chair and committee have not yet been announced to the Fellowship, you can always send it to the CCC. If you don't know how to contact the CCC, you can get in touch with the F.W.S. office. I think all of you are aware of how to contact the F.W.S. office. They will make sure you are in contact with the CCC. We'll help you decide whether or not it needs to be a Motion or IFD. We'll help you structure it, help you identify what the intent is, and help you identify any requirements that there might be.

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- Question/Comment: Is the ARS a subcommittee of the CCC?
- Answer/Response: It is, in fact. As such, any of the decisions that the ARS makes are subject to confirmation by the CCC. So, we don't go off and do things on our own.

Typically, what we've tried to do for the make-up of the committee is that we want to do our best to reflect the diversity of the Fellowship, so that when we're evaluating the items on the Agenda, the perspectives are diverse, if you will. This last year, we actually had somebody from Sweden on the ARS, which was helpful. It does impact trying to find meetings times that work. But, other committees are faced with that challenge, anyway. It's nothing new. I was amazed at the diversity of thought and perspective that was on the committee, with five people. We came from five very different perspectives. We were able to work respectfully with each other. Almost all of our decisions were ultimately unanimous.

The ARS is a subcommittee of the Conference Charter Committee, but not every ARS member is a member of the Conference Charter Committee. That's why, when somebody spoke at the microphone and said the Charter Committee was the ARS on Tuesday night, was there was an item submitted at the 7:00 pm deadline. It was submitted by the ARS. Being that it would not be fair for the ARS to review its own submission, the Charter Committee did so. The ARS process is in your Conference Service Manual, in your binder. It details everything said, including the fact that when something is submitted to the ARS, the ARS has three choices. It can do one of three things. It can accept it as is. It can reject it outright. Or, it can ask for a revision. That's what leads to some spirited discussions, such as you get something that says, "We should do something outside the holiday season." Someone might say, "let's ask them for a revision. What does that mean?" Somebody might say, "No. It's their motion. There was an IFD on it last year. Let them control their own motion." An exception to these things is the Board cannot have anything rejected. We can ask for a revision. But, ultimately they are going to decide whether to revise it or not.

The way the process is set up, of course if an item submitted is accepted as is, it will be going on the Agenda. The liaison on the ARS will notify the submitter of the item that that's the case. If the ARS asks you to revise an item, you're not required to revise it. If you choose not to revise it, the ARS will then take it up again: "Are we going to put on the Agenda without revision?" Or, is the ARS then going to reject it, at that point. We, this year, chose to accept items on the Agenda without revision. Each ARS is free to choose how they want to handle that. If the item is rejected, ideally, there is a clear enough reason given for the rejection. And then, an alternative offered. It might be restructuring it. It might be that that particular subject that's being addressed in that item was a subject that was addressed in an immediately preceding conference.

If you read some of the questions (used in the ARS decision making), this year, we did have very spirited discussion. We had some good times, because some of the questions are not well phrased. If you feel that there are some revisions to be made to the process, if you have some ideas, it would be great to let the CCC know, so that we can take those into consideration. One



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of the things we looked at this year is, perhaps all the questions need to be questions you can answer “Yes”, or “No”. If it is a “Yes” answer, it leads toward one thing. If it’s a “No” answer, it leads toward another direction, rather than the way it is now. Sometimes, if the answer is “Yes”, you’re generally going to look at accepting it. Sometimes, if it is a “No” answer, it means that it will get accepted. That can lead to some confusion, particularly those for whom English is not their first language.

- Question/Comment: The composition of the ARS: is it always three persons? Do any of them retain from one year to the next? Or, is it always a whole bunch of new people?
- Answer/Response: It’s actually either five or seven persons. The way the guidelines are set up now, is we suggest the persons serve no more than two consecutive years on the ARS. It could be that it’s a whole new crew in a given year. The last several years, there has always been at least one or two people who serve one year, and then serve the next year. [It was noted the current ARS chair served for two years. Reference was made to another of this year’s ARS members being on for two years. Both of these persons will be stepping down from service on the ARS. It was noted the other three ARS members this year expressed willingness to serve another year on the ARS.]
- Question/Comment: I believe in direct representative democracy. Just right out to the floor. What would be your thinking of why there even is an ARS?
- Answer/Response: Good question. Last year, I presented a little bit of a history of how we got to the ARS process. It’s currently not documented. This year’s ARS proposed that we put some sort of history in. Of course, it’s very one sided in the fact that it represents my experience, as well as that of a couple of other people. It’s not a complete history. If there’s someone else that has some knowledge, it would be great that they also share that, so that it can be a more complete history. We felt that having that history in there would help people to understand how we got to where we’re going, and benefits.

When the ABM’s first started, anybody could put anything on the Agenda. There was one person who processed these things. You handed it to them. It went on the Agenda however it was written. There was no review of it. There was no filtering. There were no questions. There were no suggestions. So, at one point when I was on there doing that work, at which time it was called the BMIS Editor, (BMIS stands for Business Meeting Items Summary), it said, “Two month chip”. That was it. No intent. No requirements, just, “Two month chip”. So, that went on the Agenda as, “Two month chip”. Then, it gets to the Conference. Ok, so you’re being asked, here’s the motion, “Two month chip”. What does that mean?

I took it upon myself one year as the editor, didn’t even think about it in the context of group conscience and all of that, when somebody handed me something, I’d say, “you know, we just had that on the Agenda, and it failed as a motion. And, from what I know of the Conference, it will probably fail again. If it’s something that’s important to you, and you want it to pass, maybe we need to look at how we can restructure it so that people understand it differently, so it’s something more likely to be passed.” I started doing that.

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Some people misunderstood my intent, perhaps. But that was catalyst for someone who wanted a change. They got together with some other people in the Fellowship and they crafted a process. And then, the process has evolved.

There was a question about the election process that did not pertain to questions/comments about the Agenda Review process.

- Question/Comment: Out of curiosity, why the people that are counting need to get out of the room? Because normally I've seen other processes people counting in the room.
- Answer/Response: That is an election process question. I'd like to hold that for later. We won't ignore it. We'll just hold it for later.
  
- Question/Comment: You mentioned that, very briefly when you were talking about the process, that it couldn't be from the preceding year, the motion or IFD. Can you go into that a little bit more about what the restrictions are?
- Answer/Response: Primarily, it would be with regard to a motion. We didn't really have any motions that failed. Let's say somebody said, during New Delegate Orientation we talked about a motion that everybody has to wear winter clothing, because it is always so cold in here. So, let's say the motion had been that everyone has to wear winter jackets. And that motion failed. But somebody is really, really, just absolutely intent on everybody should have to wear winter jackets. So they turn around and submit the same motion again the next year. And, maybe the next year. And, the next year. That would be called churning, is the way we've described it. It's not effective use of the Conference's time to churn motions. Out of respect for the Conference, we ask that that not be done. So the process is that if there is something that was on the immediately preceding Agenda that it not appear the next year.
- Question/Comment: Just a comment regarding the necessity for having an ARS. Before we had it, we had a number of motions that never got addressed during a Conference. We would go through a whole Conference. Recently, in the last three or four years, we've gotten through all of our Agenda. We would go through chronologically as they were submitted. And at the end of the Conference, we would not even get to any of the current year motions. Sometimes it would even get through last year's motions. So, people who were interested in a motion, it might come up two years later. It was so cumbersome. We needed some way to cull and sanitize the Agenda.

This is an example of the history. The first year that I participated in an ABM in 1996, there were probably some 200 items on the Agenda. Can you imagine trying to go to your intergroup and figure out, what are we going to talk about? I always thought it was me, but somebody else says it was them, it doesn't really matter who it was, letting go of the ego thing. But, there was a motion made that if there was anything more than, I believe, five years old would be taken off the Agenda. It took some 175 items off the Agenda. Because, they were so old, that the people who had even created them were no longer present at the Conference. There was no one to

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speak to it. No one really understood what it was. There were incomplete sentences and things that rambled on, because there was no structure to how these things were created.

- Question/Comment: So, if you have an item for discussion, and I'm going to pull something off of our Agenda for this year, for example, the moving of the time that we meet. Looking at it now, we see that it would have been very good to have a time frame of what they were talking about. So, in seeing that, would you, as a committee, say to someone submitting an item for discussion, "well, gee, you should be a little more specific", and how far would you go with that suggestion? Or, would you just hand it back to them and say, "revise it"?
- Answer/Response: "Revise it. And here are some concerns that we've discussed." Those kinds of things were addressed with that particular one. Each group of people that comes together, they are going to have a different perspective. And, they are going to have a different mindset.
- Question/Comment: We had a little creative brainstorming in the corner. We're trying to figure out what ARS stood for. It was not in any of the glossaries.
- Answer/Response: It is there.
- Question/Comment: We couldn't find it. So, based on the New Delegate Orientation, no stupid questions.
- Answer/Response: Exactly. I will tell you.
- Question/Comment: We found the answer. But, we figured I'd share the answer: Agenda Review Subcommittee. Because, we were pretty creative over there.

Again, because this has come up maybe three or four times, a couple of times on the floor, also. The motion: it was a motion to change the time of year. You'll notice in the right hand corner, we tell you this item was accepted as submitted by a vote of 3 to 2. Three people on the ARS felt it was satisfactory as written, and two people had some other idea, either to reject it or ask for revision. In that case, it was to ask for revision. So, there is some subjectiveness. What was the reason? I don't want to say, but our minutes are public. What I can say is it was an Item for Discussion last year. There was an appendix summarizing the discussion from last year. And, that appendix did fill in some of the blanks. What "holiday season" meant to them; how much it cost. So, that was the argument of the three people. And the argument of the two people on the ARS was, "Let's suggest to them that they rewrite this, so that in the motion it answers these two questions." That was the dynamic.

The IFD's that were on this year: the discussion will appear in the minutes. Those persons that submitted those IFD's will receive a copy of that discussion information that was in the minutes. As you are discussing with your groups, as you are reporting, as people look at next year's Agenda, if any of those IFD's become motions, we encourage you to look at the minutes from this year's ABM.

- Question/Comment: I just want to take a moment to thank you and the members of the ARS for their service. It's a thankless job, with capital T. Sometimes they are presented with

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what feels like drama. They stand up and do their job. We are very appreciative. Thank you.

- Question/Comment: One of my sponsees put in motion form regarding the fifty questions of anorexia being on the website, probably as a core document. She knew I was coming, and she gave me this motion. I went to the CAC. Is that the right way to go? Or, should I have taken it right to one of the people ....?
- Answer//Response: If an item has to do with literature, then the ARS effectively is just going to refer it immediately to the Conference Literature Committee: direct the submitter to take that information to the Conference Literature Committee. Sometimes people think of something, a motion or an IFD, and it really has to do with, maybe, the day-to-day operations of the Office. That might be something better directed to the Board and the Office, rather than bringing it to the Conference floor, things like the Conference wants to tell the Board that the F.W.S. General Manager needs to wear a business suit, and a different suit every day that they are in the office, for example. That would really be a personnel matter.
- Question/Comment: So, it's already a of Conference Approved piece of literature.
- Answer//Response: Correct. And, they want it to be up on the website?
- Question/Comment: They want it to be with the core documents, because she feels that a lot of people won't relate to this, but they may relate as an anorectic.
- Answer/Response: If it's about placing something on the website, that really would be about content. I'm talking off the cuff on that one. I don't know how the ARS would think, where do we refer it? What comes to mind for me first, is that is going to be a website issue, and that is going to be a literature issue. So, it might be referred to the Literature Committee, and our excellent webmaster, perhaps the Board, to make a decision about what the content is on there.
- Question/Comment: One other question, kind of similar. Do we need to go through a whole motion? Maybe this is the same answer, just to have a little tiny link at the top in the front page of the website, "Be a pen-pal". Does that have to go through a whole thing?
- Answer/Response: Again, that is website content. And, I don't think you need to come to the Conference, to ask them to ask the webmaster and the Board and such to do that. Something like that, a lot of times, you can contact the CCC. Think of it in terms of, do we want the Conference to make a decision about this? Or, is this a decision that can be made by others within the Fellowship?
- Question/Comment: As a new delegate, I think it would have been helpful to have a lot of this information in a sheet, like how do you make a motion. I was thinking of making a motion, and then I was referred to people when I got here to talk to. And that might be just something new delegates might need to know. If your blank has to do with this, refer to this committee. But, also, I didn't really know what and IFD was. I didn't know that some of these motions were formerIFD, and that there were minutes in them. When I was looking through about the school holiday one, I was like, "Oh, wait! What's this?" And so, I saw

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finally the information on it. But, I wouldn't have known to have looked. There was no note in there that this was an Item for Discussion last year, refer to these pages. I know that is a lot of work, I'm sure. But, it would have been helpful to have known that before voting on it. What I'm asking for, perhaps it might be useful, since there are so many new delegates this year, to have some more information on how to make a motion, and the process of it. And, what to refer to.

- Answer/Response: Thank you. I'm sure the CCC will make note of the fact that you are interested in being on the ARS next year. Some good points there. It helps us in terms of looking at how we need to communicate the process. It's in the Service Manual, but as a new delegate, you don't know all of that. I think some of it might be how we mentor. It is a very good point. Thank you. I said it somewhat in a light-hearted manner. But, that is the kind of thoughtfulness that the ARS needs. And, I would encourage you to consider being available to serve on the ARS. Sounds like you have the kind of mindset and the willingness to serve that would help there. Thank you.

For those of you who are returning, there might be some redundancy here. For those of you who are new, I'm glad we're being redundant, if we are. But, for me, I have a good forgetter. So, I need to repeat things, sometimes, or have things gone over with me more than once. I'm not sure. I was asking a few people around me if we've actually talked about where the process is in the binder. That is in Appendix B. If you are wondering what the ARS does, there is a process for them to follow. They are not chosen editors of documents. Actually, they are. But, they're not just using their own free will here. They have a process that's been approved by the CCC. There's actually a process now, that's been put forward to edit that process, because they've been reviewing it, because there are some redundancies in that process. It needs to be edited. I encourage you all, especially if you are looking to put forth an IFD or motion, to look over that process. Make sure your checks and balances are in order. You're not remiss if you get your item back for revision, or if it's rejected. You can be fully informed and fully aware of what's in that document and what actually goes on in the committee. It's not a hard-and-fast process. Sometimes, it is very difficult. There is a list of questions, both for actually the test of the item, to make sure it meets all the standards. There is also a list of questions for revision, why an item can be revised, and also, why an item can be rejected. Sometimes, it's not always black-and-white. That is why there is always an odd number of the committee voting processes.

With regard to the process that appears in Appendix B, the ARS this year had worked on suggesting some revisions. We hoped the CCC would accept it. They did not. We thought about putting it before the Conference. The CCC felt they should deal with it first. That's fine. That's the way this process works at the Conference level. The ARS report includes the fact, the full content of what was proposed as an IFD that was rejected by the CCC. You have that as the supplemental report to the CCC. You can see what kind of revisions we were suggesting. I would encourage you to look at those, as well. If there are any ideas of how we can make this process better. It really is about how we can make this process better. Nobody went running out of the room screaming, emotional, or anything this year. This has been one of the most

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serene, sane ABM's that I have been to. It is a reflection of the quality of thoughtfulness people give to the surveys that allow us to continue to refine the process. So that we can work together as a team, building Legos, and being effective.

- Question/Comment: Speaking somewhat obliquely about the IFD that was proposed, can you mention what the advantages would be, if there are any, about submitting your Item or Motion in advance? Does it, in any way, affect the process or individuals, when they do submit just prior to 7:00pm the first day of the ABM?
- Answer/Response: The most direct thing is, is that if you wait until 7:00 pm of the first day of the ABM, then the ARS doesn't get to bed very early, and we're very groggy in the morning. The Office is busy trying to photocopy everything for you. More importantly, then suddenly, you're handed these things. Your intergroups and groups have not discussed it. And then let's say you submit something, the ARS is like, "what are they trying to say?" It was written in haste, in a haze, so it wasn't all quite there. If you submit well in advance, we can review it. If there is something we think we can do to make it more effective for the Conference, then that gives you the opportunity to work on it with us. We can get it distributed. It can go out to all the world to evaluate and discuss, so that when you come here, there has been thoughtful discussion. There is a real, meaningful discussion about the concerns and the business of the Fellowship.

End of ARS presentation

Election results presented by Jack S, non BOT member of BGNC

Chris D: confirmed: confirmed BOT appointment to a term that ended at the 2014 ABM

Susan G: elected to a one year term ending at 2015 ABM

Chris D: elected to a one year term ending at 2015 ABM

Rick B: elected to a three year term ending at 2017 ABM

Delegate Feedback about the ABM

Facilitators encouraged participants to complete the survey included in the packet.

### **Request for Delegate Feedback on ABM experience:**

- Question/Comment: I was a bit surprised by the way the counting was done, because normally I'm used to seeing the people counting are in the room. They also say how many people voted for and against. I'm a bit surprised by the process the people go out, disappear, come back and say a majority. Is that in the process? Or, is that a conscious decision? Because, this is not what I'm used to in other countries.
- Answer/Response: Thank you very much for the question. It turns out that anonymity is a very important part of all of our processes. We need to make sure that we adhere, as best we can, to that. One of the reasons why we don't count them in the room is so that no one will know whose vote they're counting. So, people don't know if I'm going to vote for [a person on the ballot], or not. If I don't want to, I have that right. I'd rather it not be read here, in front of the public. It is part of the process that we've had. It's been long-standing.

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- We do include a first year delegate, who knows nothing about the process, to sit there and watch, to be an observer, so that there is accountability for that. These people didn't know that they were going to be selected until last night. So, it's not like there could be anybody getting together and trying to come up with an idea for something like that. I mean, changing the votes, and all that stuff.
- Answer/Response: I've been coming since 2001. I've never seen it done differently. So, this process has been in place for a long time.
  - Answer/Response: I'd just like to assure that this is the proper way to do the counting, because I work for a government agency. We had an association similar to this one, which I was heavily involved in, for many years. We counted our ballots for board members in a similar way. Maybe, not exactly, but in a similar way. It also goes to the fact that the IRS, or some government agency, requires that the voting be done in a similar manner. So, we are, kind of, also following the law of the land, as well as the process of being fair to people. And anonymity.
  - Question/Comment: I was a little confused, just getting my bearings here, what the three different voting slots were that we just voted for, which almost delayed my vote. But, then I did feel that I still wanted to elect people, to whatever they are doing. I would love to know, especially when Chris is on there twice. That was a bit confusing.
  - Answer/Response: We had to count the ballots this way. We had to count Chris being confirmed for the current term that he is serving, that he was appointed to. And then we had to count Chris as being elected to the third year of a three- year term, that expires next year that was vacant.
  - Question/Comment: I hear this term "anonymity" thrown around a lot. From my experience of another fellowship, the term "anonymity" is really stressing at the level of press, radio and films, not within the Program. We use first, last names, addresses, phone numbers, in directories that can be copied. It's confidential. I hear this "anonymity", but I think the term we should be using is "confidential".
  - Answer/Response from an earlier Question/Comment: Thank you very much for the question. I apologize for not having explained it a little bit better. Whenever the Board of Trustees has an empty slot, they can appoint a trustee to fill that slot. We have that authority. And, the responsibility, you guys have given to us by having elected us. But, you have to sign off on it. You are the ones that have given us that. And, we can't take that responsibility and authority away from you. So, when the person comes to their very first ABM, they have to be confirmed. It just turns out that [Board member's] term was only for about five months. We made sure he was on the ballot, because it's important for you to know who has been appointed and who has served, so you can either confirm them, or not. Of course, usually we have people who stand for terms that are full trustee terms, but it's not necessary. There were two slots available for one-year terms, and there were two slots available for two-year terms. The individuals chose one-year terms, because they had that

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- right, the right of decision. The last one was, of course, for the regular three slots for a trustee term that lasts three years. Does that answer your question?
- Question/Comment: So were you completing a previous three-year term, and that's why you were in a separate section from [the other Board members].
  - Answer/Response: I was completing the term that I was appointed to, that comes to an end at the end of this ABM.
  - Question/Comment: So, you needed a whole new, three-year, term?
  - Answer/Response: I didn't need it.
  - Question/Comment: We needed you. We needed you for a whole new three-year term. Whereas [the other Board members], they're just having these partial terms that we are electing them for.
  - Answer/Response: That's correct. I feel my Higher Power has led me to another three-year term.
  
  - Question/Comment: I just feel really strongly about the comment about confidentiality and anonymity. So, I just really want to state that there is a huge difference between the two. Outside of these rooms, I'm a public servant. If it ever, ever, got anywhere on the internet, anything, that I was a member of this group, my career would be destroyed. So, I just want to say thank you to everyone who protects anonymity, because I could not be here at all. And, I desperately need this program.
  
  - Question/Comment: Going back to the piece about the about the confirmation [of a Board member], I just want to double-check. Are you asking the Fellowship to confirm his appointment to a position that is now complete?
  - Answer/Response: Yes.
  - Question/Comment: Basically, you asked the Fellowship to confirm a decision you made to have him in a slot, a Board term that is now complete. If that's the case, what would have happened if they had not confirmed that?
  - Answer/Response: That's a really good question. Most people who are appointed, are appointed to terms that are longer than just five months. Usually they are a year and five months. So, you guys get to say, this is a terrible idea, and that's the end of their term. They finish. In this case, I think it is important for transparency that you get to see this is the person who was serving. You can say, no, we don't want this person to serve. We don't sign off on this. That's you guys exercising the voice and the conscience of this Fellowship. And, it's important for you to be able to write off on that. It is very rare that we appoint someone for a term that's less than a year. It is not necessary for us to put it on the ballot. But, I think that it's for transparency sake, that it should be put on the ballot.
  
  - Question/Comment: It's been a great ABM for me. I've been away for a few years. But going to the heart of what I see structurally, I'd like to know how many of our Board members entered the process without being appointed first.
  - Answer/Response: What time period?



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- Question/Comment: Entered on Board service without first being appointed by the Board. In other words, outside, came in as a candidate.
- Answer/Response: There is only one trustee on the Board right now, that started out their service by being elected. Most of the people that I know in the last five years began their trusted servanthship on the Board of Trustees as an appointee, and then ended up being elected.
- Question/Comment: So, for me, there are positive and negatives to that. And, I'm going to tell you what I've heard so far from the Board. I've heard, "we do make use of people with special training, lawyers, accountants". I've heard a few times, "I'm a cake-decorator". And, I've, because of willingness and enthusiasm to learn, I've been able to manage this. I've heard personality growth issues, resentment of those. I say all of this, because for the years that I've been involved, I've yet to see our Board at full staff. Because, I've definitely heard "overwork, overwork, overwork", "can't get away from a working board to be what a board traditionally is", which is the strategic, a little bit removed, so they can think about overall. So, I challenge this board, and I challenge us, to reach out to people (they don't have to be in this room), that are three years sober, and ask them to serve. And, ask them to come from outside this bubble. And get elected. And go through that process. And, I encourage the Board to experience for the first time in the dozen or more years I've been involved, a full board. It is simply not the case that we don't have enough people willing to serve. It is the case that they are unaware they are wanted, needed, desired. And, I hope we can start issuing more invitations. But, they can come from the outside. They can come from any of you. It can be you. It can be that person back home, who you know is on fire and has the spirit of this Fellowship, and wants to serve. So, please consider that.
- Question/Comment: I want to address that particular issue. I remember [a Board member] stated clearly, that there were, I hope I have my number correct, there were five people that were contacted to serve on the Board, that declined. So, there are people that are being asked, that are choosing not to. It has been a number of years. I stepped off the Board in 2001. So it's been thirteen years ago now. I would say within a few years of that, that was the last time we had a full Board. Prior to that, most everyone was elected. There were very few appointments to the Board. We have been using the appointment process a lot more since that time. There's a lot of reluctance to serve on the Board, probably because of the issue of time, and people actually set good boundaries. I didn't. I learned about boundaries being in the Fellowship. When you're asked to serve on the Board, if you're asked to be appointed to a position, if you decline, we can't hog-tie you to make you do that. I'm starting to ramble now. I had other thoughts.
- Answer/Response: I really appreciate [the person who asked about the Board appointments] the question you put forth. It turns out that in our binders it says, BOT Candidates. And, when you open up to that, there is the questionnaire that every BOT candidate has to fill out. And, at the very end of it, there is a red piece of paper. And it is the BOT flyer. This gets sent out with the F.W.S.'s newsletter on a regular basis. It gets sent out with call squads, and things like that. It tells you what it is we are looking for: three years, willingness to serve, understanding of the Traditions. It gets sent out regularly. I

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encourage you to bring this back to your intergroups and make recommendations, and see if people are willing to be of service.

- Question/Comment: I have a question. Is there going to be time set aside in another assembly to talk about self-care after we leave?
- Answer/Response: There probably will not be time in the final session. So, if you want to talk about self-care, talk about self-care. This originally started out we wanted to hear from the delegates. So, please.
- Question/Comment: For first year, returning delegates even: one of the things that I heard and was really valuable at my first ABM was to really consider your self-care as you leave and when you return to being outside the bubble and back in day-to-day life: going to meetings, doing stuff to take care of yourself, get rested. It can be a bit of downer to go home after having this wonderful interaction, and being in our recovery bubble for a week. Or more, Board members. So, just something to keep in mind.
- Question/Comment: I may have missed it. But, was there an opportunity to discuss the voting options? Or, ask questions about the voting options for the Board candidates?
- Answer/Response: I don't think so.
- Question/Comment: I found the ballot to be confusing, because in Part 3 it said, there can be no more than three choices selected on the ballot. I wasn't sure. That was only section that talked about, and there was only one candidate. The ballot was a little confusing. It would have been helpful to have what terms, the actual dates of the terms for each of the sections, for what the candidates were running for.
- Answer/Response: I will include that feedback to the next chair of the Board Governance and Nominating Committee.
- Question/Comment: This has been a really wonderful ABM for me. I'm much more rested. I'm grateful that I wasn't up past 10:00 pm on Tuesday night as a member of the ARS. I feel like we got a lot done. I would have liked to have heard, probably, more discussion on the floor about some of the Motions. I really value the connections that I have with people here. I am rotating out of service. So, I will miss you all next year.
- Question/Comment: What I wanted to say: I am not a first time Delegate, or a delegate at all. This is my first ABM. The biggest thing that I have seen this week is that this is serious business. It's overwhelming to me that we're all willing to come here and make decisions for the Fellowship. I've been amazed. And, the connections that I've made with committees and with intergroups. I'm just looking forward to seeing the emails, and seeing just the results of all these connections I've made.
- Question/Comment: Some feedback on the ballot: I, too, was very confused. And, I've elected a lot of trustees and directors of various organizations. I've written more sets of by-laws for non-profit and profit-making organizations than I'd care to count. It would have been much easier for me. Maybe this is my language: The first thing would have said, to

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ratify. That's the word I use. Not confirm. To ratify him for a term ending today. But, more importantly, to next year's BGNC, we are here to help. And, if you didn't run that ballot by someone who doesn't have as much knowledge of the process as you, just to say, "Do you understand this? This is the ballot we're proposing." Maybe you should next year. And, also feedback to the Conference. If you have concerns about the process, the By-Laws control. In fact there is a special form to submit to the ARS, if you want to amend the By-Laws, and bring it to the Conference next year. So, we control it. So, if somebody would want to say, make them count in the room, or announce the numbers. I'm not necessarily saying I'm in favor of that. But, I'm in favor of the process. That would be part of the By-Laws. Any member of the Fellowship, and any member of the Conference, even if they are not a member of the Fellowship, can propose a By-Law change, to be commonly discussed and voted on at the next Annual Business Meeting. And, the first time anybody can submit anything for the 2015 Agenda, technically, is tomorrow. What we got yesterday was called the fourth version of the Agenda. That was because, believe it or not, there were three previous versions that were posted on the website and widely distributed. The first one being last January, along with instructions on what is in here, what could be in here, how to submit something, who's the ARS chair, and all that. That information started to be disseminated with the first version of the Agenda seven months ago.

- Question/Comment: The thought occurred to me, in hearing how much the Board works, and I heard a number of hours per month: Would that number of hours per month go down if you had a full Board? If we could get, is it, nine members, all nine members. I'm thinking if we could get all nine member, and then that reduced the number of hours, it would also make it more appealing to people, to doing the Board. How many hours would it decrease, do you think, in your workload, if you had the full Board?
- Answer/Response: Just speaking for myself, it's hard to say exactly, because there are different positions within the Board. There's officers, who have certain additional responsibilities, of the other Board members. But, if we could spread it out among nine members, I think the general Board functions could be decreased significantly, because we could share some of those general responsibilities. Maybe, as much as a half.
- Question/Comment: One thing that last year I was thinking, it would be nice to be on the Board and everything. But, I need a couple of years of doing this as Delegate to understand what's going on. And then this year, they came out with the questionnaire. There is no way in the world I could meet the requirements of that questionnaire, all of the requirements of the questionnaire. I think the questionnaire is more excluding than it is including. And, possibly that should be revisited, and looked at, to see if that is the case. Now, as it turns out, because of some family obligations, this will be my last ABM for a while. I'm hoping to come back in a few years, if I live that long. Anyway, I just wanted to let you know that I feel like that questionnaire is more excluding than including.
- Question/Comment: Just to respond to the call for Delegate observations or feedback: As a first time Delegate, I just, first of all, wanted to express my appreciation for the warm

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welcome that I received from everybody, and the sense of unity here. Just kind of share an observation from, maybe, a 20,000 foot level, about what I plan to take back. And, then maybe somebody, anybody, could give me feedback on how to fine tune this, or improve this. I've been gaining a better understanding of addiction in general, and how it might apply to my service. Because, I can tell you that as a sex and love addict, and this is not going to be news to people here, I've kind of lived with a tendency to not want to confront my issues, to either ignore them, or hide them. Or, dump them on somebody else. In other words, look for a rescuer. But, at the same time, I was also busy trying to be a rescuer for people in need, and thriving on that role, and that energy. It's occurred to me during this meeting, because I've heard a lot about things about how things are going on, that groups take on personalities, too. I can start to see that sometimes our individual groups or intergroups act needy, like I would as an addict, and want to reach out to, well, "What would the intergroups say? What would the Board of Trustees say? What would F.W.S. say? We need to ask them." Sometimes a group, theoretically this group or a Board, could want to fill that need, and want to be a rescuer, and say, "Well, let's solve your problems. Let's engage in this." So, part of the message I'm going to take back is, we need to be responsible and autonomous, and work together, and seek our Higher Power, and have group consciousness on the lowest level possible. I think it's good, I think what I've observed is that the Board has modeled that behavior, not trying to rescue people from all of their problems, or issues or disputes. Hopefully that continues as much as possible, because I agree, we need service. Being overburdened is going to dissuade some people from serving. So, part of the message I'm going to take back is, let's do everything we can to lighten the load of the Board, of F.W.S., to help them, but also to leave them alone as much as we can. One of the best leadership principles I've heard that I think applies to this is, teach the people correct principles, and let them govern themselves. I think that's being modeled very well. I think, for me, that's something I need a constant reminder of, and I'm going to take back: Let's not seek rescuers, and let's not seek to be rescuers.

- Question/Comment: I'm standing up here, and way over-juiced on coffee, to my very toes. And, I have a little case of ADD, hardly noticeable, just around the edges. I'll try and do the best I can with what I'm thinking of. This is my second year as a delegate, so, I'll be stepping down after this year. Definitely into the spirit of rotation back home. Some of the things I wanted to share with everyone is that, and I've talked a little bit this year, but I really believe that the ABM, or the Conference, needs to have some sort of mechanism in which it does what in groups would be called a group inventory, and to come up with a way in which it does self-examination. And, look at where we've been, where we are, and where we hope to be. Another thought that I had while I have been here is that there is a great need to look at the fact that, when this comes together, there's a whole lot of emphasis on, "we want to do something more; we want to do something more; we want to do something more". We have talked in here about having less resources than we need. So, we want to try and up the level of resources that are needed, funds, in order to operate and to do the things that everyone is attempting to do. There is a lot more put into trying to "do more, do more, do more" with less. In a way, I just see that there is not enough focus, this is all just personal,

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but not enough focus on, better to have some accomplishment, well developed and complete, than to have multiple things going on, where a couple of things get lost or just die in the process. So, just a group inventory, basically.

- Question/Comment: I wanted to ask, if the answer is yes on this, I imagine it would be helpful to bring service. But, are regular members all over the world encouraged to be a part of the committees?
- Answer/Response: Very much so.
- Question/Comment: So, I can go home and say these are the different committees, every meeting here, anyone can join and be a part of it?
- Answer/Response: You are strongly encouraged to do so.
- Answer/Response: There's a link on the F.W.S. website that will take you to the Conference committees. You click the link the committee that you want. It will direct you to the chair of that committee via email.

Announcement: The General Assembly period ended with announcements.

The F.W.S. General Manager announced the winner of the Delegate raffle. The raffle reimburses the Delegate's registration and housing for the ABM.

The General Assembly took a break at 9:31 am, to be continued at 2:15 pm.

**General Assembly – Friday, August 9, 2013 – 2:18 P.M.**

Facilitator: Jack S, CCC Chair outgoing  
Assistant Facilitator: Steve B, BOT Chair  
Backup Facilitator: Christiane S, CFC Chair acting  
Timekeeper: Alice D.  
Spiritual Reminder: Wil C.  
Vote Counters: Mark W; Stephanie S.

Voting Members present: 40  
Voting Members in room 33  
Quorum: 32

Reports

Board Reports

BOT Chair, Steve B, reports on corporate officers:

- Board selected Steve B. to be Board chair
- Thanks Susan G. for her service at Board chair for previous year
- Board selected Bob G. to be the Board Finance chair
- Announces corporate officers election results:
  - President: Steve B.

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- Treasurer: Bob G.
- Secretary: Susan G.
- Remaining Board committees and Board committee chairs to be determined at a future time, in accordance with recent By-Laws changes
- Conference Committee liaisons
  - CAC..... Susan G.
  - CBC..... Rick B.
  - CCC/CMRBOTC..... Steve B.
  - CDC..... Rick B.
  - CFC ..... Bob G.
  - CHRC ..... Rick B.
  - CICC..... Rick B.
  - CJC..... Susan G.
  - CLC ..... Susan G.
  - CMRC ..... Chris D.
  - CPIC/CITC/CIFC..... Rick B.
  - CPOC ..... Bob G.
  - CSC ..... Chris D.
  - CSPC..... Susan G.
  - CSTC/CCAC ..... Chris D.
  - CTC ..... Bob G.

Board Finance Committee: Chair: Bob G.

- No report

#### Conference Committee Reports

Note: Conference Committee meeting times are noted for the Pacific Time zone, as this was the most frequently referenced time zone.

#### Conference Anorexia Committee (CAC):

- Membership: six new, five returning.
- Discussed ongoing projects: four new literature items are in draft phase.
- Discussed new projects committee would like to undertake:
  - Focus on web presence:
    - Committee page;
    - Website as a whole
- CAC meets the fourth Sunday of the month at 11:00 am Pacific Time.
- To get on committee's email list, use email CAC contact link on the website.

#### Conference ByLaws Committee (CBC):

- No report.

#### Conference Charter Committee (CCC):

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- CCC revised addendum to document distributed first day of ABM describing committee mergers. It is the committee chairs who make merger choices, to be confirmed by the Conference.
- Persons not previously serving on the CCC expressed interest in joining the committee during this ABM.
- Committee met four times during the ABM.
- CCC merged with the Conference Members Relation to the Board of Trustees Committee (CMRBOTC).
- Committee emphasizes committee leadership elections ASAP.
- Project discussions
  - FWS website committee corner;
  - Use of technology for audio conferencing at ABM and video conferencing for CCC Conference Committee meetings;
  - Working with CSC to resurrect the Conference Newsletter.

### Conference Diversity Committee (CDC):

- Person not previously serving on the CDC expressed interest in joining the committee during the ABM.
- Projects:
  - Diversity statement;
  - Diversity awareness questionnaire.
- Committee meets the first Sunday of the month at 8:30 am Pacific Time.

### Conference Finance Committee (CFC):

- The CFC has four members, two of whom are at ABM.
- CFC is looking for more participants.
- Reminder to Committee chairs to turn in budget request forms.
- Next meeting August 21, 2014 at 5:30 pm Pacific Time.

### Conference Healthy Relationships Committee (CHRC):

- Membership: there were eight people in attendance at all committee meeting times at this ABM. In contrast, the Committee was inactive two years ago, and only three members last year's ABM.
- Projects:
  - Checklist for tools for maintaining a healthy relationship;
  - Sober dating plan literature;
  - Looking at healthy relationships through the 12 Signs of Recovery booklet;
- No budget request as everything is anticipated to be in digital format.
- Committee is aware of non-Conference approved literature (e.g., sober dating plans) in distribution among members. The CHRC requests material contributions be made to the committee through the link on the website.
- CHRC meets the first Sunday of the month at 11:00 am Pacific Time
- Next meeting Sunday, September 07, 2014

### Conference Internet Communications Committee (CICC):

- CICC gained members at this ABM.

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- Projects:
    - Develop intergroup communications forum to facilitate communication between intergroups;
    - Help the F.W.S staff (including webmaster) verify group information.
  - CICC can be reached via the link on the website.
  - CICC meets the third Sunday of the month at 3:30 pm Pacific Time.
  - Next meeting, Sunday, August 17, 2014.
- Conference Journal Committee (CJC):
- CJC membership is small and invites others to join the committee.
  - All the Questions of the Day distributed at this ABM were answered.
- Conference Literature Committee (CLC):
- CLC gained members at this ABM.
  - CLC received lots of new ideas about the literature processes.
  - CLC received lots of questions seeking information about literature that is not documented. Committee hopes to document the information.
  - CLC can be contacted through link on the website, or contact information provided on the disk distributed during the ABM.
  - CLC invites feedback to contents of draft literature projects contained on disk.
- Conference Member Retention Committee (CMRC):
- CMRC membership small.
  - Projects:
    - seeking input on how people are sponsored and sponsor;
    - meeting formats that keep long term members;
  - CMRC open to merging with another committee if membership remains small.
  - CMRC meets the third Sunday of the month at 11:30 am Pacific Time
- Conference Prison Outreach Committee (CPOC):
- CPOC gained members at this ABM.
  - CPOC actions at this ABM included:
    - Selecting male and female responders;
    - Selected project chair(s);
    - Confirmed committee projects
  - Projects:
    - Letters to intergroups seeking pen pals and encouraging local POC;
    - Increase outreach to include treatment centers;
    - Literature on plain language, simple steps;
    - additional projects to be determined.
  - CPOC meets the fourth Saturday of the month at 12:00 pm Pacific Time
- Conference Public Information Committee (CPIC):
- CPIC merged with Conference Interfellowship Committee (CIFC) and Conference Information Technology Committee (CITC)
  - Projects:
    - Outreaching to other S fellowships for interest;



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- Suggestion for outreach in final draft for approval;
  - YouTube public service announcements (PSA) for which CPIC invites script suggestions
  - Letter to clergy;
  - Additional projects referenced generally, but not identified specifically.
  - CPIC meets the third Sunday of the month at 1:30 pm Pacific Time
- Conference Service Committee (CSC):
- CSC gained members at this ABM.
  - Projects:
    - Developing Service pamphlet, which has been passed to CLC. CSC also reaching out to FWS staff for their input;
    - Looking at ways to disseminate information to intergroups (estimated to be 650) in hardcopy and electronic format. Working with the CICC on this project;
    - Developing a newsletter;
    - Exploring ways to get out message to serve on Board of Trustees;
  - CSC meets the first Saturday of the month at 8:00 am Pacific Time;
  - Next meeting, Saturday, September 6, 2014
- Conference Sponsorship Committee (CSPC):
- CSPC gained members at this ABM.
  - CSPC met a couple of times at ABM
  - Projects:
    - Sponsorship booklet;
    - Seeking way to provide direction for people to sponsor;
    - Integrate literature currently referencing sponsorship.
  - CSPC meets twice a month on Tuesday nights at 7:00 pm Pacific Time.
- Conference Steps and Traditions Committee (CSTC):
- CCC Chair, as facilitator of Conference Committee Chairs' meetings, reported CSTC absorbed CACC.
  - No report.
- Conference Translations Committee (CTC):
- Projects:
    - Booklet describing translation process and literature distribution in languages other than English;
    - Collecting shares for international issue of the Journal.
  - CTC meets on the one Sunday of the month at 9:00 am Pacific Time.

Vote to confirm Conference Committees

33-0-0

Conference Committees (listed above) confirmed for 2014 - 2015

Announcement: 2015 ABC/M will be held in Houston Texas followed by an IRC. Date and location will be announced at a future time.

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Motion to adjourn: seconded

Voice vote: unanimous to adjourn

General Assembly closed with recitation of the Serenity prayer

General Assembly adjourned at 2:53 pm

End of General Assembly Minutes