The S.L.A.A. Fellowship-Wide Service
1997 Annual Business Meeting (ABM)
Friday, June 27 - Sunday, June 29, 1997
Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

MINUTES

Conference Theme: 7th Tradition of S.L.A.A.:
"Every S.L.A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions."

SUMMARY:

1. The minutes consist of these pages (Minutes), the ABM schedule (attached), and ABM committee reports
2. There were 42 delegates from intergroups and groups in the U.S., as well as one delegate each from Ireland, and Germany. There were 3 observers, 3 FWS staff members, the outgoing Journal editor, and 8 Board of Trustees members (not counted elsewhere). The Brisbane (Australia) Thursday Evening Group submitted a report to the ABM. Other intergroups and individuals submitted letters pertaining to Business Meeting Item positions, and a request for contributions to an SLAA Meditation book (Jennifer H. Philadelphia, PA).

FRIDAY, JUNE 27:

Summary:
The evening was broken into two parts. The General Assembly convened for the first part to address preliminaries: opening the meeting, orientation introductions, and some Question/Answer time with the Board of Trustees. After a break for dinner and speakers on the 7th tradition, General Assembly was reconvened to receive report summaries, and practice the business method. The Conference Charter Committee (CCC) and Board of Trustees (BOT) have worked together to present the ABM.

Quorum: 34

Members seated and present: 51

First part: Convene General Assembly.
1. The meeting was opened with the Serenity Prayer, followed by readings of the S.L.A.A. Preamble, the 12 Steps, and the 12 Traditions.
2. The BOT members introduced themselves and welcomed the Conference members to the meeting. Delegates were asked to introduce themselves.
3. Volunteers for Service positions were requested: Record keeper; Timekeeper; Spiritual reminder.
4. Jenny R.W. (CCC) and John S (BOT) provided orientation.
   • An overview of the conference theme, delegate packet, schedule of events, the schedule of committee meetings and meeting rooms, the Conference Service Manual (CSM), and use of the of the Interactive Method of Community Problem Solving (pg. 44 of CSM).
   • Committee participation encouraged for each delegate: serve on two committees for two years.
   • The Conference Newsletter (CN) for communication between ABC/Ms
   • Submission of motions at ABM: history and forms in CSM
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- Quorum is 2/3 of the number of delegates present at the ABM. Voting members: delegates, BOT/FWS staff and Journal Editor.

5. Questions/Answer period with BOT
- Four- vs. Three-day ABM format; BOT poll (refer to CN Issue #1, 9/20/97)
- Robin H qualified for BOT: ABM observer 1 year, delegate 2 years; Steps and Traditions committee, Journal, Healthy Relationships, Nominating Committee. Southern Maine intergroup chair.
- Welcome Pamphlet: Jennifer H. working with Conference Literature Committee (CLC); choose color, estimate release date, no budget for pamphlet, $3000 for printing. $400 additional typesetter; referred to Conference Finance Committee (CFC).

General Assembly adjourned for dinner and Speakers on the ABM theme.

Second Part: Reconvene General Assembly.

1. Housekeeping/Announcements were made for airport rides, copying service available, building/room access, and computer availability. A deadline of this evening set for submitting new motions. Jacqui noted there are more registrants than ever before, the Sunday field trip, the staff addition, and SLAA is on line for correspondence.

2. BOT/FWS/Committees’ reports are attached when available. Additional comments included:
- General Manager’s Report (Jacquie): contains the last three fiscal years. Revenue is forty percent from soft bound books. Contributions to total revenues are small. Contributions go up when we ask for more money. SLAA needs a more sustained method.
- Diversity Committee: Inactive; No report.
- Finance Committee (Sam M.): No written report. Developed reimbursement process; Monitored disbursement. Each committee needs to discuss current budget; needs to submit committee budget request for next year; submit outstanding reimbursements requests at ABM.
- Healthy Relationships (Lynette M): No report given.
- Inter-Fellowship Committee (Mark E): Chair resigned position. Jacqui went to conference, submitted a report. Encouraged “S”- fellowships talking. Next conference in Michigan. SLAA can host a meeting (97n30/97-11)
- Intergroup Communication Committee: Inactive; no report
- Internet Committee: Inactive; no report. BOT has adhoc committee to look at Internet page issue.
- Literature Committee (Rob K): questions from General Assembly re: Bottom-line Workbook status. CLC needs submissions. Write down your experience and send it to CLC.
- Members Retention (James D): Disbanded.
- Prison Outreach Committee: Status unknown; no report. FWS receives requests from inmates. Money budgeted to committee.
- Public Information: Inactive; no report.
- Sponsorship: Inactive; no report.
- Journal Committee: Journal is looking for editor, editor withdrew. Journal originally independent from FWS; intertwined with FWS, now a line item. Journal is making money.

3. Practice Session: Interactive Method for Community Problem Solving Method: refer to CSM (pg. 45) for the rationale and methodology. The goal was to use these methods for problem solving at the 97 ABM, and continue to use after the 97 ABM. Conference members were split into eight groups, with one issue per group. The issues were actual 97 ABM business items to be discussed. Members of each group were requested to choose their roles used in this method of business, including: Record Keeper, Secretary, Time Keeper, Facilitator, and Spiritual Advisor. The groups were asked to an idea of what to do; consolidate and prioritize the issues; get rid of those that are not relevant (Can you live with it?); determine what the group thinks is important. The Secretary was requested to present the information to the full Conference after the practice session. Members of the CCC and BOT moved around the room to help groups with the process.

1997 ABM Minutes (abm97min.doc)

Printed: 10/26/97
Group #1: 97n30/97-11: [The following] list of 6 items submitted as one motion -- paraphrased here -- Website URL/Link to other sexual recovery sites; “S” fellowship information exchange; Interfellowship Forum stance by SLAA; “S” fellowship exchange of literature/merchandise.

Define the Problem:
Inter-fellowship links.

Brainstorm on the problem(s):
Too many parts.
Available resources.
Use resources to link
Prioritized seven items.
Split motion.

Brainstorm on the solution(s):
Not Available.

Group #2: 97n30/97-11: [The following] list of 6 items submitted as one motion -- paraphrased here -- Website URL/Link to other sexual recovery sites; “S” fellowship information exchange; Interfellowship Forum stance by SLAA; “S” fellowship exchange of literature/merchandise.

Define the Problem:
Not Available.

Brainstorm on the problem(s):
Not Available.

Brainstorm on the solution(s):
This group concluded the motion is too complicated to deal with it as a whole.

Group #3: 97o5/95-20 Brainstorm from a previous year: Do some your outreach -- create literature/meetings.

Define the Problem:
Outreach/meetings, youth and issues in SLAA.

Brainstorm on the problem(s):
What is age of youth- how does this fit with 12th step.
How do groups handle- young people SLAA in CA.
Educating teachers contacting therapist counselors.

Brainstorm on the solution(s):
Not Available.

Group #4: 97o19/96-24 Brainstorm from a previous year: We have people attending closed meetings because they are court ordered or need a signature, but they say they do not want to be there.

Define the Problem:
Court ordered attendees who do not want to be at SLAA meetings.

Brainstorm on the problem(s):
safety of group vs. suffering of the addict not wanting to be there.
Difference of opinion about the process.

Brainstorm on the solution(s):
Don’t worry (let go).
5th tradition.
Have unhappy person stay in beginners group.

Group #5: 97o7/96-6. Issue for Discussion from a previous year: Suggestions for sobriety requirements. This group had a hard time defining the issue as a problem.

Define the Problem:
Not available.

Brainstorm on the solution(s):
Not available.
Brainstorm on the problem(s):
Not available.

Group #6: 97n27/97-8: Brainstorm from a previous year: Conference members discuss declining contribution and possible grass roots year-round effort to increase contributions.

Define the Problem:
Declining contributions.

Brainstorm on the solution(s):
1. Educate people at meetings; pass basket, increase donation, reverse 60-40
2. Fund-raising; retreats, etc.

Brainstorm on the problem(s):
Not available.

Group #7: 97n21/97-2: The World Wide Directory be sold to individuals, groups, intergroups, treatment centers dedicated to the treatment of sexual addiction, mental health counselors and physicians as well as international offices of other ‘S’ groups.

Define the Problem:
distribution of World wide directory.

Brainstorm on the solution(s):
Encourage meetings but not names in the directory.

Brainstorm on the problem(s):
Anonymity and autonomy.
purpose of the directory.

Group #8: 97o9/95-40: Brainstorm from a previous year: Create SLAA Promises.

Define the Problem:
no SLAA Conference.
approved promises

Brainstorm on the solution(s):
adopt AA step 9
Basic Text end of step 9.

Brainstorm on the problem(s):
Not available.

4. An announcement was made to turn in new motions to the CCC contact by 9:15 that night.

General Assembly adjourned until Saturday, June 28.

SATURDAY, JUNE 28:

Summary:
The day was broken into several parts. The General Assembly reconvened for Phase I of the Items/Motions/Issues for Discussion, followed by two sessions for Committee Meetings. After lunch, there were acknowledgments and a Speaker meeting. The General Assembly reconvened to qualify BOT candidates, and Phase II of the Items/Motions/Issues for Discussion. After dinner, the auction was held to raise money for FWS activities.

Quorum: 34

First part: Reconvene General Assembly.

1. The delegate from Ireland announced that there are five groups in Dublin, with approximately 100 members, including one 1 woman. The groups want ideas to attract more women.
2. The General Assembly was reconvened with the serenity prayer
3. Phase I of the Items/Motions/Issues for Discussion was explained (refer to the CSM, pg. 56). The roles of Spiritual Reminder, Timekeeper. Vote counters, and Recordkeeper were filled.
There were forty-two items, thirty of them having been submitted prior to the 97 ABM, and twelve having been submitted by the Friday night deadline. It was made clear that each item would be taken in order for an Up-Down vote. If just one Conference member requested discussion on the item, the item would be moved to Phase II without further time being spent on it (go to committee), thus dispensing of items with which the Conference reached consensus (refer to CSM, pg. 58, for voting process). Votes for items are shown as Yes—No—Abstentions

4. Results of Items handled in Phase I:
   9701/95-3&4 referred to committee
   9702/95-9 referred to committee
   9703/95-14 approved by mail
      prior to 97 ABM
   9704/95-19 referred to committee
   9705/95-20 referred to committee
   9706/95-40 referred to committee
   9707/96-6 referred to committee
   9708/96-7 referred to committee
   9709/96-8 approved: 46–1–0
   9710/96-11 voted: 36–3–3
   9711/96-13 referred to committee
   9712/96-14 referred to committee
   9713/96-17 issue for discussion: no vote
   9714/96-19 voted: 38–4–6
   9715/96-20 referred to committee
   9716/96-21 referred to committee
   9717/96-22 referred to committee
   9718/96-23 voted: 40–5–3
   9719/96-24 referred to committee
   9720/97-1 referred to committee
   9721/97-2 referred to committee
   9722/97-3 referred to committee
   9723/97-4 referred to committee
   9724/97-5 referred to committee
   9725/97-6 voted: 36–10–4
   9726/97-7 referred to committee
   9727/97-8 referred to committee
   9728/97-9 approved: 42–1–7
   9729/97-10 referred to committee
   9730/97-11 referred to committee
   9731/97-12 referred to committee
   9732/97-13 referred to committee
   9733/97-14 referred to committee
   9734/97-15 referred to committee
   9735/97-16 referred to committee
   9736/97-17 referred to committee
   9737/97-18 referred to committee
   9738/97-19 referred to committee
   9739/97-20 referred to committee
   9740/97-21 referred to committee
   9741/97-22 referred to committee
   9742/97-23 referred to committee

5. This part of the General Assembly ran over time.

6. A Motion was made to take a ten minute break, and reconvene at 10:00 a.m. Vote: 44–2–3. Approved.

7. A Motion was made to add ten minutes to each committee meeting today. Vote: 21–8–14; There was not a group conscience on this motion; ten minutes was not added to the committee meetings.

8. The Chairpersons of the Conference committees were introduced. The Committee break-out times and locations were reviewed.

General Assembly adjourned for Committee Meetings, Lunch, Acknowledgments, and Speaker Meeting

Second Part: Reconvene General Assembly

1. BOT Candidates Qualify: The BOT election process was explained, with three positions to fill. BOT candidates addressed the General Assembly regarding candidacy. Conference members were encouraged to ask tough questions. A candidate needs > fifty percent of votes to be elected. Vacated positions are filled by the BOT appointment with confirmation at the next ABM. Balloting is scheduled for Sunday, June 29. Questions about the process were fielded. Sobriety requirements were clarified. Bylaws state three years of sobriety from bottom-line behavior. Nominations were:
   - Self-Nominated: Gene H., Joan G., Ken W.
   - Nominations from the floor: James D.: declined; Ellen S.: declined. Sam M.: declined; Rob K.: declined; Sam M. renominated: accepted

1997 ABM Minutes (abm97min.doc)
2. The conference theme (7th Tradition) was reaffirmed: 7th Tradition read and the information from the AA Grapevine. Paper in welcome packet read and reviewed.

3. The service roles of Spiritual Reminder, Timekeeper. Vote counters, and Recordkeeper were filled, along with a reminder that anyone can be a Spiritual Reminder. Brainstorming will be done later, for which recorders will be needed.

4. Phase II of the Items/Motions/Issues for Discussion (refer to CSM, pg. 59 for process). This phase was explained (three pros and three cons, vote, minority opinion, second vote; if minority opinion changes, vote, minority opinion), and how it differs from Phase I of the process. Refer to Business Meeting Items Numerically. (Green sheet). A five minute time limit was suggested for each business item in order to cover all the business items on the agenda.

5. Results of Items handled in this portion of Phase II:
   9701/95-3&4  Motion defeated: 3–38–6
   9701A/95-3&4  Motion Withdrawn
   9701B/95-3&4  Motion to Amend defeated: 22–15–12
   9702/95-9  Motion Withdrawn
   9704/95-19  Motion Amended: 28–13–9

6. Digression from Business Meeting Items discussion regarding the motions:
   A Motion was made to finish an item before moving onto the next item.
   Discussion: time limit is not comfortable. Need to spend time as we need on each item. CCC tried create order. If we need to go through. This motion will be tabled. Would like to see this cleaned up.
   Vote: 39–5–5. Minority Opinion: Time limit is a good one. Time limit was determined by CAC today. (5 minutes). Procedure questions. We need boundaries around out time. Second Vote: 37–8–4: Motion carries: No time limit on handling motions: Finish each motion.

   A Motion was made to prioritize the agenda as follows: motions, then issues for discussion, brainstorm.
   Discussion: Opposed to change. Some items have been here since 1995. Stay in this order. Chair should make these decisions. Against the motion. Saying some things are more important. There should be a rational. Let’s prioritize.
   Vote: 9–36–5. No Minority Opinion: Vote stands: Motion defeated to prioritize agenda.

7. A Motion was made to extend the General Assembly session 30 minutes
   Vote: 11–31–6: Motion defeated.

General Assembly adjourned until Sunday June 29.

SUNDAY JUNE 29:

Summary:

This day consisted primarily of morning events, with the 1997 ABM adjourning just after noon. The General Assembly reconvened for the BOT elections, and continued Phase II of the Items/Motions/Issues for Discussion. Twenty minutes was to be scheduled for Topic/Issue Brainstorm for coming year's committee work; however, this did not occur. The General Assembly broke for Group Committee Meetings, followed by reconvening the General Assembly to announce the BOT election results and receive final reports from Committees before closing the 1997 ABM.

Quorum: 34

First part: Reconvene General Assembly.

1. The roles of vote counters, spiritual reminder, timekeeper, and record keeper were filled.
2. The General Assembly started on time. However, the quorum needed to do business was not present until after some announcements.
3. The CLC asked for help with literature and passed out a survey for the bottomline workbook project.
4. Information was given regarding committee meeting processes, e.g., elect a chair, complete contact sheets, set agenda for the coming year, set first meeting of the year, submit a budget by July 31, 1997, copy of contact sheet to FWS and to the CCC (Jenny R.W.), distribute within committee.

5. Phase II of the Items/Motions/Issues for Discussion continued from Saturday, June 28.

6. There was some confusion about the status of the last vote on 97o4/95-19 from the earlier session of the General Assembly. Clarification was provided that the motion had been amended by the previous vote.

7. Results of Items handled in this portion of Phase II:

   97o4/95-19  Approved: 27–19–4
   97o5/95-20  Approved Motion to Withdraw: 39–0–2
   97o6/95-40  Approved Motion to Withdraw: 39–0–3
   97o7/96-6   Issue for Discussion: No Recommendation Required
   97o8/96-7   Motion Tabled: 41–2–5
   97o10/96-11 Motion Tabled: 26–12–11
   97n24/97-5  Withdrawn
   97n25/97-6  Withdrawn
   97n26/97-7  Withdrawn

8. Phase II was closed for the 1997 ABM. All other agenda items will be carried to the agenda for the 1998 ABM.

9. Announcements were made regarding three motions withdrawn by the originators, and housekeeping, checkout procedures for the afternoon.

General Assembly adjourned for committee meetings.

Second part: Reconvene General Assembly.

1. BOT election results: Robin H. retained, Sam M and Gene H. each elected to BOT for three-year terms.
2. The roles of time keeper, spiritual reminder, and recorder were filled.
4. Announcements/reminders were made along with acknowledgments to all present.
5. The 1997 ABM was closed with the serenity prayer.

REMAINDER OF 1997-1998 DELEGATE YEAR

Quorum: clarification needed from BOT By-Laws.

For guidance on delegate and committee responsibilities after the 97 ABM (from 30 June 1997 until the start of the next 1998 ABM), refer to your Conference Service Manual (CSM). If you do not have your CSM, contact F.W.S. in Boston: 617/332-1845.
SATURDAY, JUNE 28:

Summary of reports from committees, and discussions regarding motions:

- 9701/95-3&4:
  BOT: did not want to make recommendations regarding motions before the ABM, as ABM is advisor to the BOT. SLAA By-Laws require BOT to listen to ABM, applicable to all motions. BOT referred to By-Laws Sect 5 Para 4. BOT members will attend committees and share information. Issue is procedural CCC: withdrew motion to approve. amended that CCC make a guideline and to send summary three months before the ABM; motions submitted after the three months will be added to summary and will be presented to the ABM. CCC recognizes that people want to be heard. BLOC: approves amended version. Motion as amended: Change deadline to guideline. Discussion: Pro: Conference members retain ability to add motions at the ABM; Allows CCC to work within constraints and yet facilitate communication; puts order to the process, and allows motions to be submitted; issues of priority; flexible, rigidity. Con: Practice recovery is a part, insanity submitting at the last minute. There is the ability to submit at the next ABM. Motion allows sanity, insures delegates return. Keeps the process going. Unfair to allow motion submission first evening of ABM, to be reviewed by general assembly. issue of responsibility. Clarification: procedural issue: when CCC is non-existent, BOT must summarize and clarify. After they are sent out they come back with changes etc. This is the only way we have to record. Concern is here for this. At least it is there and recorded. Vote on amendment (to replace original motion): 29–14–7. No clear group conscience. Minority Opinion: ambiguous and sloppy; need clarity; not time to review the amendment. Original does give time to review. Second vote: 19–24–6. Minority changed. Minority Opinion: Allows flexibility but provides structure; Allows everyone to be heard; There is always a balance between rigidity and flexibility; We should not be so rigid. Final vote: 22–15–12. Amendment defeated. Refer to CSM pg 27 for list of deadlines. Original motion stands: A vote to approve means that we approve this motion. Vote: 3–38–6: Motion defeated.

- 9702/95-9:
  Diversity Committee: No report. CLC withdrew motion: in agreement with spirit, fellowship does not need motions to create literature; fellowship needs written words. San Francisco: withdraws Motion withdrawn.

- 9704/95-19
  Interfellowship: withdraws motion. Steps & Traditions: amend motion: the ABM/BOT send a policy statement/letter to all groups stating: "The ABM and BOT encourage the use of SLAA/AA conference approved literature only, to foster SLAA Unity", our common welfare, and to practice our twelve traditions" Discussion: It is the obvious do not need to broadcast. It is important to state this. Motion to amend 9704/95-19: Amendment reread Discussion: Pro: there is non-conference approved being written. phones to BOT and FWS call say that AA literature is approved. Con: opposed to encouraging the use of AA literature. We read but do not encourage. want to support using conference approved. However, it does not say at group level. People will use what they chose to use. This is inappropriate and will not be effective. Vote: 15–24–9: No clear group conscience. Minority Opinion: would amendment be approved without AA. (Would be a new amendment.) Should have some statement that does not encourage to use outside literature. Reference to AA dropped from the motion. Amended motion now reads: That the ABM/BOT send a policy statement/letter to all groups stating "The ABM and BOT encourage the use of SLAA conference approved literature only, to foster SLAA Unity our common welfare and to practice our 12 traditions" Vote: 28–13–9: Motion passed.

1997 ABM Minutes (abm97min.doc)
SUNDAY JUNE 29:

Summary of reports from committees, and discussions regarding motions:

- **9704/95-19**
  There was confusion about the last motion passed. Baseline determined to be that the vote amended the original motion (see discussion of June 28, and Business Meeting Items Numerically). Concerns raised included that the BOT shall act as guardians of the fellowship; that this demonstrates BOT leadership to educate the fellowship; that such a direction to the BOT is a step toward rigidity; that this is only about encouragement; that there is insufficient conference approved literature available; that there is sufficient conference approved material available (e.g., Steps & Traditions, Basic text, Journal); that this wastes money, the success of S.L.A.A.; that this is a local issue; that the resources and time can be better spent developing our own literature.
  First vote: 28–16–6: Minority opinion
  Second vote: 21–22–7: Minority opinion
  Third vote: 27–19–4: Motion approved, but, advisory only as the vote was insufficient to be binding on BOT

- **9705/95-20**
  CLC recommends motion to withdraw, as no motion is needed to create literature: action is needed to create literature. SC supports motion to withdraw. Not other committees reported. A vote to approve the motion withdraws this item from the Business Meeting Items.

- **9706/95-40**
  CLC reiterates that no motion is needed to create literature.

- **9707/96-6**
  Four recorders were identified, and five minutes allotted for brainstorming: sponsor sponsores issue; set-up rules for sobriety is uncomfortable; slips part of the process; minor vs. major slip; who makes the decision; self policing personal decision; determined on length of time sobriety and in program; sobriety--process of continuing growth; abstinence--no acting out on bottom line; group votes on the retention of keeping those that slip; look to older groups for guidelines; difficulty getting people to do service and do service if slips; sobriety guidelines and not rigid sobriety is self defined

- **9708/96-7**
  FC suggested rejecting motion; SC suggested approving with amendment. Discussion included: that FWS not supportive of doing convention, working with FWS; BOT in charge of the ABM and there is a desire to do a recovery convention; feeling that convention should be generated out the fellowship; difference between convention and international convention- if group has a convention that uses SLAA that is international; not clearly defined at the local level, but concern when local groups that use; content a concern when using copyrighted SLAA materials

- **97010/96-11**
  CCC indicated need for exact wording of the By-Laws; BLC suggested motion to rework By-Law V.5.e to read: “it is suggested that each delegate be elected for a term of two years.....” all other remains the same; By-Laws and BOT are working to get the exact wording.
  First vote on motion to table: 43–3–4: minority opinion; Second vote on motion to table: 26–12–11: Item is tabled and goes back to the committee.