

Minutes from the October 8, 2019 EA Board of Trustees (Scott was the scribe)

Meeting called to order at 4:37 p.m. by chairperson Scott.

Those present at our meeting: Scott, Steve, John and Paul

Both Colleen and Derita consented to be absent as trustees, having seen the agenda prior to this decision. Elaine was also not able to be with us but told us to go ahead without her. We'll meet again in November so those items that we'll not be able to handle at this meeting and in regard to other matters – we'll hear updates on these things at the next meeting.

We began by saying the Serenity Prayer.

John made a motion to approve of the Annual meeting minutes as they appear below. (See minutes at the bottom of this page.) Steve seconded the motion. No further discussion. Motion passed.

Steve moved to approve the September 14th board of trustees' meeting minutes as presented and Paul seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion passed. (See these minutes at the bottom of this page, too.)

In regard to the # Scholarships given since last meeting – Elaine will need to update us about this in November.

In regard to the # of people who may potentially start new groups that we are following up with as trustees, we had the follow comments. We've followed up with all who asked for new group information packets except for one person who made a request for said packet today. We're also starting to do 6 week follow ups as well – to see if these people have started groups, how they are doing, and if they need further support.

In terms of the Bylaws committee, Steve sent all 6 submitted applications from those wanting to be on this team to all the trustees for them to review. The intention by Steve, the chair of this committee, is to accept all but one of the 6 applicants. The one individual whom Steve is intending to not accept is an individual who clearly stated that this person was only interested in being on the committee to observe. This individual did not intend to be a contributing member of this committee. With those thoughts clearly stated by this individual, it was clear to Steve in regard to those who did apply and plan to work on this working group, to accept all of the remaining 5. The trustees agreed with Steve. The names of the committee members (first names only) will be shared with the fellowship at a future time once they've all 5 agreed to serve. Steve will be chairing this committee and Scott will be the other trustee on the team. Steve has the backing of the entire trustees to go forward with this team of 7 people.

In terms of the Communications Team – we'll get further updates from Colleen since she was not on the call. We're in the application phase as of now, anyway – so there was not much to update at this point.

In terms of a chat group concern that was brought forward, one of the trustees participated on this chat group call and discovered that the issue that had brought the concern has been resolved at this point in time.

When it came to updates in re: to resolving issues between Italian and francophone groups – Elaine will have to update us on this at a later date – if there is anything to update us on.

In terms of a review of finances, there was a finance committee meeting on Thursday Oct. 3rd. The committee's report came through Paul. He plans to input the monthly financial statements into a spreadsheet so that we can see how things track from year to year and from month to month as a pattern. In general terms, regarding the financial report, it's exciting to see how well the Welcoming Spiritual Awakening Workbook is selling and how that income makes a big impact. Overall, there's a deficit of over \$10,000 from July 1st thru Sept. 30th thus far. We have not had our Fall "ask" letter go out so sometimes there is an increase in giving once people realize how crucial it is that they give to the fellowship's financial status in order to help the fellowship carry out EA's mission. Clearly there is a continued and urgent need for member giving to increase. We find that having reduced staff time (for budgetary reasons) has impacted how quickly (or rather how slowly) orders can be shipped out and that is frustrating for members ordering material. Dave Q. will continue on the finance committee with Paul. The finance committee would welcome anyone who wants to actively participate in this committee.

In terms of discussing the proposed "Regional manager" program and the possibility of Lynne S. being a trusted servant in this area – Elaine will need to update us later if there's anything to update.

In terms of the point of information regarding eliminating color copy materials due to cost – Elaine will update us later.

In terms of a proposed policy for 'hardship' materials for those struggling to be able to afford EA materials, Elaine will update us on this so we're clear on what the policy will look like and how it will be implemented - to both help people have the chance to give towards this fund and how people will be able to access it if they are in need.

In terms of approval of new/revised literature, the Hope pamphlet (new), and the Self-pity pamphlet (new) and The Common Thread (revised by adding questions) – Scott made a motion to approve all 3 pieces and John seconded it. Discussion was supportive. Motion passed.

Point of information: We're anticipating that the next trustees' meeting is Nov. 21st – on a Thursday and we'll wait for Elaine to confirm this date since some of us had a different date down for our Nov. mtg.

We closed with the serenity prayer. At 5:24 p.m. the meeting ended.

Minutes: Annual Membership Meeting. Sept 14, 2019 – Approved as they read below on 10/8/19

Scott J.'s President of EA message focused on thriving, and health and wellness. Looking at how we can increase engagement among the membership. Key points he focused on were: * A year ago we only had three trustees on the board * After a purposeful effort to get more on the board, there are now six trustees * Right now, we have the equivalent of 1.4 employees. If we had more money, this staffing situation could increase in order to be able to reach more people. * How to attract people without promoting (Scott clarified the difference between attraction and promotions – see notes later in the meeting's minutes) * We are working on partnerships within EA * Scott believes that the board is well rounded based on who is serving and the skills that they have. * Gus is deeply missed (he was the former EA President who died unexpectedly in March) * When we sent out votes to groups in previous years for ratification, we had fewer than 30 groups voting to ratify. * Engagement has increased as a result of the issues of whether to refer to God or Higher Power and in terms of the way proposed bylaw changes were presented. * Reactions to proposed by-law changes and controversy around reference to God/Higher Power resulted in decreased donations from the fellowship in the spring of 2019, which hurt the organization as a whole in trying to achieve our mission. * Scott looks forward to re-energized committees, as well as new committees. * We as a board continue to emphasize integrity and transparency.

Elaine's Director's report focused on * We have a competent and dedicated staff. * Claire has been helpful doing a plethora of things, including keeping donor records. * Sandy Wells manages accounting as well as incoming orders. * Carlene manages shipping. * Office continues to be closed on Fridays. * Elaine's grateful for the staff. * She's focused on addressing technology issues and updating software systems. * She's making significant inroads into the Global EA community – i.e. EA is active in Germany and there are two groups in Iran. * She's hopeful that with a full board that we can move the organization forward.

Scott summarized for those who might be on the EA Annual meeting telephone call and are not familiar with who we are - EA has been around since 1971. People gather in person, on chat rooms, phone, and skype.

Steve motioned to adopt rules of order, John seconded. Motion passed.

Each group gets 1 vote. Charlie from NJ wanted to confirm which group he will represent – he selected a Skype group to represent instead of the one from NJ.

Steve gave a report re: a new Bylaws Committee that's being formed and summarized: * We're currently accepting applications for the committee until Sept 30. * The work the bylaws committee will be charged with is to work on the bylaws without specifically trying to address hot-button topics. There will likely be some proposed changes to the bylaws. The goal is to focus on how we operate as a fellowship and how the bylaws can be written in a way that supports this work and to make sure that the membership gets to ratify all changes. *

Membership applications are available on the website. * Membership/fellowship will adopt or revise by-laws, not solely the committee's recommendation.

Questions were fielded from callers about procedural vs. content in regard to by-laws.

Steve shared that the plan is to hold at least one group telephone meeting each month 60-90 minutes in length on days which are mutually convenient for everyone with the first meeting being held in October, if possible.

Colleen gave a report re: Communications Committee summarizing: * We are putting together a communication plan regarding how best to communicate with members. * From October 1-31 we're accepting applications. * We're encouraging people to apply for the committee. * The challenge and opportunity is to pull groups together around the world.

Scott's report on activity in regards to Books and Lit.: *There seems to be both good group growth and health and individual growth in people as they are reading the new pamphlets, as groups are working the steps, and people are using exciting and transforming new material like the Welcoming Spiritual Awakenings Workbook. * Ongoing reflection questions are being added to pamphlets – we will be rolling this out as we can afford to make these revisions – in terms of new language in pamphlets they will focus on 'trusted servants' instead of 'leaders'

Paul's report on the finances - *he reviewed 2019 vs. 2018, as well as FY20 forecast * he was asked about # of total groups – 650 registered groups across the world, no way to really know how many groups there are as many don't register to be included on the website

We had an open discussion during this annual meeting asking for ideas to attract more people which are as follows: * Contact medical professionals, religious organizations, gov't, editors, writers, articles, radio, use internet as best as possible - Scott cleared up promotion vs. attraction: promotion includes a promise of a result of doing something, attraction provides information/creates awareness. EA does not promise anything – all efforts to share the message focus on letting people know of EA's existence.

Comments from members on other matters: * Someone mentioning that foundation was shaken due to literature changes. This person noted that 'people are trusted servants' and said that the emphasis should be to 'consider the current membership before attracting more people' * Someone recommended that we make sure that we show up on Google results, Google Maps * Someone noted the need for more outreach and more financial donations – that we can improve online donations from members. * Someone said that getting new members to stay is difficult. * Someone else asked if he is allowed to put into a paper a notice of the meeting and the answer is yes, he is allowed to do that. * Someone commented that they would like the literature could be less expensive. * Derita's comments: In Ohio they have a meeting in a hospital once a month * If WE want the fellowship to grow, WE have to get the word out.

The membership meeting closed with Announcements: * There's an Annual telephone conference call, Oct 19, how to cope with fear and anxiety using EA tools. Greta stated that this will be her last year managing the annual phone conference and invited anyone who would like to do it in the future to contact her.

We closed the Annual membership meeting with the Serenity Prayer.

Minutes – Board meeting Sept 14, 2019 – approved at the Oct. 8th, 2019 board meeting.

Approval of August minutes: Motion made by Derita, Steve seconded. Everyone approves

August minutes are now able to be posted

Derita – makes a motion to post minutes right after they are approved at the current from the previous meeting, John seconds it, everyone approves

No scholarships given since last meeting, also no requests

Have \$3,000 reserved for scholarships and prison materials as a result of a request for funds to the membership last year.

Colleen suggesting a note in the newsletter that members should not to make copies of material for meetings as it is copyrighted material.

Discussion around maintaining The Connection newsletter for sharing of experience, strength and hope, whilst creating a quarterly update for an update on organizational updates to separate EA business issues from EA program-related materials.

Steve has been receiving applications for by-laws committee; 4 applications so far, but he would like to have 10. We will send another reminder that we are collecting applications through the end of September. Steve said he would send the 4 applications around to the board.

Colleen is looking for a trustee to co-chair the communications committee. Scott to co-chair

Elaine- update on Italian/French issue. Still waiting for a response from the Italian group regarding the rights of the French group to translate materials into Italian.

Steve motion to accept budget, John seconded. Everyone approves. From the initial forecast budget, the cost of books (as represented in the budget) needs to be increased as book sales are forecast to increase. Also, we will invest another \$1,000 extra for pamphlets and other material. Will review material investment at the 6 month mark to see where finances are.

Everyone discussed year to date finances. We have \$4,000 year to date losses, while revenue is up notably. Administrative expenses are higher, offsetting the gain in revenue. We are going to

analyze the expected payroll for the remainder of the year so that we can accurately forecast the remainder of the year.

Chat room needs to be healthier. Need to put out the value statement and make it clear to everyone. Trustees will hop onto chat room and help facilitate healthy guidelines and principles.

As a board, we are working towards developing the idea of partnership and creating a pamphlet to define the partnership idea. John noted that any sort of partnership needs to be structured. This would not replace the idea of sponsorship but be an additional way members could work with each other, as sponsorship is something EA members continue to request but few are willing to act as sponsors.

That's the end of the Sept. 14th trustees' meeting minutes.