



ICSAA

Secular AA 14 Jan 2023 **Secular AA Board Meeting Minutes** 2 PM ET/11 AM PT

Minutes prepared by Margarita from notes taken by Margarita in the meeting. There was no recording.

Meeting ID: 675 599 4057

Passcode: Sober

Call to Order by the Chairman at 2:06 PM Eastern Standard / 11:06 AM Pacific

Marty states AA Declaration of Unity:

This we owe to AA's future: To place our common welfare first: To keep our fellowship united.

For, on AA Unity depend our lives, and the lives of those to come.

Roll Call by the Chairman (Quorum 2/3 = 7 not including Technology Coordinator)

Quorum confirmed (9 present / 1 late)

Board Members

Marty B	Chair	Present
Megan C	Vice-Chair	Present
Margarita A	Secretary	Present
Kurt R.	Treasurer	Present
Dale	Member at Large	Present
Jeb	Member at Large	Arrived Late 2:25 pm ET
Michalina	Member at Large	Present
Sonny	Member at Large	Present
Tyler	Member at Large	Present
Will.I.Am	Member at Large	Present

Marty directed Board Members look to Agenda for Mission Statement, Vision Statement and Meeting Procedures:

Officer Reports/Updates

Chair

Mission Statement

“Our mission is to assure suffering alcoholics that they can find sobriety in Alcoholics Anonymous without having to accept anyone else’s beliefs or deny their own. Secular AA does not endorse or oppose any form of religion or belief system and operates in accordance with the Third Tradition of Alcoholics Anonymous: The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.”



Vision Statement

“Secular AA recognizes and honors the immeasurable contributions that Alcoholics Anonymous has made to assist individuals to recover from alcoholism. We seek to ensure that AA remains an effective, relevant and inclusive program of recovery in an increasingly secular society. The foundation of Secular AA is grounded in our experience that anyone - regardless of their spiritual beliefs or lack thereof – can recover in the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. Secular AA exists to serve the community of secularly-minded alcoholics by supporting worldwide access to secularly formatted AA meetings and fostering mutual support within a growing population of secularly-minded alcoholics.”

Board Meeting Procedures

- Parliamentary authority per Robert’s Rules of Order within the principles found in AA’s 12 Concepts for World Service, AA’s 12 Traditions, AA Service Manual and our Bylaws. Bylaws – should be considered a work in process, please provide the chair with any suggested amendments.
- Committee process
 - Status reports at board meetings
 - Board functions as oversight and holds committees responsible to the collective group conscious.
 - Work to be done in committees not at board meetings.
 - Committee chairs should involve non-board member Secular AA Members in committee work.
- Agenda - be prepared to table new topics if needed.
- Back to Basics and Keeping it Simple

Upcoming board meeting times (to be confirmed), Saturday’s 2 PM Eastern time/ 11 AM Pacific.

1. January 14, 2023

Following future dates of quarterly ICSAA Board Meetings proposed by Marty and accepted by Board approved unanimously:

2. 2pm ET/11am PT - April 15, 2023
3. 2pm ET/11am PT - Jul 15, 2023
4. TBD 2pm ET/11am PT - _____, 2023
5. TBD 2pm ET/11am PT - _____, 2023

Chair’s statement of suggested priorities through ICSAA 2022 (restated and updated from 2019 board meeting in which chair originally presented these thoughts)-

1. Put on a great gathering of Secular AA in...
2. Continue the great work that has been done to maintain our online presence.
3. Build our fellowship within AA, most specifically being visible for other secularly minded AA members who are feeling unique and apart from AA because of their secular perspective. Carrying the message that they are not alone.
4. Assure the sustainability of our work by garnering:
 - a. bids for ICSAA 2023/24



b. qualified and willing candidates for the board

5. Continuing to be fiscally prudent and accountable to our membership

Secretary (Margarita)

1) Approval of last Board Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve.

Seconded.

Approved without corrections unanimously.

Treasurer (Kurt))

1) Links to 2022 Quarterly Financial Statements are posted on ICSAA website, <https://www.aasecular.org/supportus> (https://www.aasecular.org/files/ugd/c732f8_b7dd009cd67c480b9c554661c32babe2.pdf)

Venmo account information is up to date on the website <https://www.aasecular.org/supportus>.

Kurt will find out what Zoom account Secular AA is paying for because we used Joe C's and OMAGOD's accounts for the October 2022 conference and Marty's own account for today's ICSAA Board Meeting.

2) Secular AA Annual Budget (I want to link Kurt's Treasurer Report letter here.)

Standing Committee Reports/Updates

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1) ICSAA 2023

Nominating Committee – As Vice-Chair Megan will lead this committee per Bylaws.

Nominating Committee shall present a slate of qualified nominees for board at the Membership Meeting prior to the election (paraphrased). Needs at least one additional director on the committee per the bylaws.

Contact Megan with suggestions for committee members via her What's App account 6785318342, not by email.

Site Selection Committee – As Vice-Chair Megan will lead this committee per Bylaws.

The Site Selection Committee shall solicit and coordinate bids for next ICSAA with a goal of having at least three viable bids. Needs at least one additional director on the committee per the bylaws.

Contact Megan with suggestions for committee members via her What's App account 6785318342, not by email.

Outreach (Open)

The purpose of the Outreach Committee is to assure that Secular AA is practicing the principle in AA's responsibility pledge "When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that: I am responsible". More specifically, to inform still suffering alcoholics that enduring recovery from alcoholism can be had in AA by agnostic, atheist, and non-religious people. The Outreach Committee is to undertake this goal by means of:



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Interacting and cooperating with established CPC (Cooperation with Professional Community), Institutions (Corrections and Treatment), PI (Public Information) committees and similar entities within AA.;

Acting as the Secular AA CPC, Institutions and PI committees (see AA Guidelines for CPC, Institutions and PI committees).

In-Reach (Kurt)

Purpose - The primary purpose of the In-Reach Committee is to assure that others in AA are aware of our secular AA experience, which is that “enduring recovery from alcoholism can be found by agnostic, atheist, and non-religious people, within AA”. The secondary purpose of the In-Reach Committee is to promote our ICSAA, regional secular AA events, and website resources to AA members at large.

Liaising - The In-Reach Committee shall strive to achieve these goals by liaising within AA with: AA members, AA groups, AA Intergroups, AA General Service Districts and Areas, the AA General Service Office, AA World Services, AA international General Service Offices and AA events such as round-ups, conventions, forums, etc.

Discussion:

Kurt wants to be on this committee and has had discussions with Sam who will participate, for example, follow through on arranging a Secular AA Hospitality Room at the 2025 AA Conference in Vancouver.

Kurt proposes that hybrid format be investigated for the next ICSAA conference. The General Membership Meeting must be accessible virtually, never limited to in-person only.

Sonny nominates Kurt to chair the In-Reach Committee.

Seconded.

Marty calls for discussion - none

Vote taken. Passed unanimously.

Fellowship (open)

The Fellowship Committee is tasked with supporting a fellowship of Secular AA Members to facilitate “sharing our experience, strength and hope” which shall include but not be limited to the following:

Maintaining a “help line” to respond to inquiries from still suffering alcoholics;

Assist Secular AA members in establishing and promoting regional/local secular AA events, as well as maintaining a listing of such events available to the Members;

Maintaining a meeting directory of both physical and online Secular AA meetings;

Maintain a mechanism to host secularly formatted online AA meetings;

Liaise with other secularly-minded AA entities including websites that service the secularly-minded AA community.

Maintain communications between the Secular AA membership and the board (added at Nov 2018 Board Meeting)

Archives (Open)

The Archives Committee is tasked with organizing and providing access to our shared secular AA experience. The Archives Committee must insure that the dissemination of such



information is always coupled with a statement conveying the following or a similar alternative as may be outlined in the Guidelines for the Committee: "Please be aware that Secular AA does not attest to the accuracy, relevancy, timeliness, or completeness of information obtained from others, including Members of Secular AA, members of AA, organizations calling themselves AA entities, or any other entity or person. We may share information with our Members just as it is provided to us, for the purposes of an open flow of information and ideas, without a critique or review. Therefore the act of Secular AA making the information available does not constitute an approval or endorsement by Secular AA of the information provided."

The Archives Committee shall:

Make available information, such as sample formats, for Members wishing to start a secular AA meeting;

Maintain a listing of secularly-inclined AA literature as a resource for Members;

Maintain a listing of secularly-inclined AA resources such as websites and blogs as a resource for Members and assuring that any listing or link to such a resource is coupled with a statement of group autonomy, and non-endorsement, consistent with the principles in the Traditions;

Maintain a forum to archive Members' personal and the secularly-minded group's "experience, strength and hope", and stories of "what it was like, what happened and what it is like now";

Maintain historical documents, as they become available, on the history of secularists in AA

- 1) Board Secretary Margarita will participate in the Archives Committee. Position of committee director remains open.

Bylaw Committee (Tyler)

Motion to create a bylaw committee by Dale(?)

Will seconds.

Marty calls for discussion - none

Vote taken. Motion passed unanimously.

Will nominates Tyler to lead the bylaw committee.

Kurt seconds.

Marty calls for discussion - none

Vote taken. Motion passed unanimously.

Margarita, as Secular AA Secretary, will be a member.

4. Acknowledge Rady's resignation.

Vote taken - Approved unanimously.

5. Elect a technology coordinator and name the IT committee.

IT Committee (Mikey)

The IT Committee shall be responsible for the technical maintenance, updates and monitoring of Secular AA's websites, email accounts, blogs, online meeting facilities,



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social media accounts, etc. All content shall be in accordance with these bylaws, the Guidelines for the Committees and the direction of the Board.

- 1) Website aasecular.org
- 2) Coffee Shop
- 3) Online Meetings
- 4) Conference Registration

Kurt nominates Mikey to chair the IT Committee.

JEB seconds.

Marty calls for discussion - none

Vote taken. Motion passed unanimously.

Mikey will select members of the IT Committee.

Agenda items

Amend bylaws (Tabled until the new Bylaws Committee brings proposed amendments to a Board vote.)

6. Next ICSAA conference, Decide when and where the next conference will be held.

[Notes on discussion are included here as there was no recording:](#)

Marty says he's waiting to hear from Sam about a site location. They had discussed San Diego but found it not affordable.

Kurt suggests Orlando or another FL city be investigated.

Dale recounts how the last two locations were decided on out of compliance with the Bylaws. At the Austin conference Toronto was the only site proposed at the General Membership Meeting and a committee was set in motion. At the Toronto conference, DC was the only site proposed at the General Membership Meeting and a committee was set in motion. At the October 30 General Membership Meeting, Asheville was suggested, but there was no follow-through. Dale questions how site selection goes forward.

JEB suggests we get financial reports on last in person conferences. JEB describes what happened at a recent first in-person conference after the pandemic with his other group. Only 70 attended - very costly.

Megan states that bidding was held back since we were uncertain of having an in person conference.

Tyler explains Megan's role as Site Selection Committee Chair per ICSAA Bylaws. She puts together subcommittees per site. To comply with Bylaws and have 3 sites to present, Tyler suggests one could be virtual and two could be different cities.



Will explains that because the 2022 conference was virtual, no bids were presented so we were in a unique situation. Will asks Megan to organize reports for our next April Board meeting and adds that there must be attempts at hybrid formats to comply with ICSAA's international vision. Maybe US and Canadian residents could access in-person-only conferences, but not Europeans etc.. Unconscionable for us not to provide virtual access.

Kurt states that we can do both in-person and virtual conferences but at different times. General Membership Meetings must be online.

Micalina confirms that Europeans cannot go in person.

Marty suggests Las Vegas, Orlando, and Asheville as sites.

Sonny states that bids need to be concrete. He will have data on San Diego ASAP and that December is the cheapest time of year.

Marty suggests we need dates before we get bids.

Tyler- we need to amend bylaws to allow virtual. He emphasizes having a HYBRID option for ICSAA's core values of being international.

MOTION Megan motions to plan HYBRID.

Tyler seconds.

Marty calls for discussion on the motion for a hybrid conference.

Discussion paraphrased:

JEB - The general membership voiced a strong desire for in person. We need a standing committee for virtual for every year and in person every 2 years per bylaws involving the Outreach Committee.

Kurt General Membership Meetings should always include virtual access. We need an in-person/virtual hybrid format. Kurt supports the General Membership Meeting being hybrid.

Will- We need to clarify the motion. We should have a committee always investigating hybrid possibilities. So per Marty what dates? We have to decide on a virtual conference or in-person next and when they'd take place.

Marty - Should we table?

Dale - Proposes we alternate years in-person with virtual only with General Membership Meetings always being hybrid.

Sonny prefers a virtual conference.



Tyler - thinks our intent is for in-person and always attempts to be hybrid because the technology is within our reach already.

VOTE on motion to move forward on plan for hybrid convention.

Megan, Margarita, Micalina, Sonny, Tyler and Will - yes.

JEB, Dale, Kurt against

Marty abstains.

Minority opinion:

JEB states it's unfortunate Mikey isn't here to explain complications. We need a standing committee for virtual for every year and in person every 2 years per bylaws- I will forward the document with the post conference meeting's discussion.

Marty- To have a conference available to watch is no problem, participation is the challenge.

Kurt - I want tech committee input. We need more information.

Dale - "hybrid" means full participation in person and online - Mikey says WAY too expensive.

Will- How much of the next conference can be made hybrid? I thought we as a board proposed in person with people looking into hybrid at least partially in order to lean toward international inclusivity.

MOTION by Megan: to move forward with the understanding that we are having a hybrid conference. Both in person and online.

Amendment : to investigate the options and feasibility of hybrid

VOTE with amendment -

Megan, Margarita, Micalina, Sonny, Tyler, Dale, Kurt and Will - yes.

JEB opposed. Investigated already by post oct 2022 conference meeting how complicated. Hybrid impractical.

Marty wants to table hospitality room 2025 to April meeting, and get financials on website

Kurt gives info to Margarita who contacts Mikey.

Kurt - We need to vote on dates. - Motion early 2024.

Will seconds.



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Sonny - no fixed date, but rather based on location choose most affordable dates.

Dale - Wants to see the bid form. Austin and Toronto conferences bid for the site with no form nor investigation. A committee was then put together the venue, hotels, etc. Early 2024 is too soon, a super tight schedule, without a site even selected before April, in-person is not possible.

Marty - The pandemic has changed the world. Normal processes did not happen. Location was suggested then a committee was formed around it.

Will- trying to put a time frame and soon realistic - first Quarter of 2024. We can't wait two years. We want to respond to membership wishes.

Megan - AA conventions are every 5 yrs. The end of 2024 may be more realistic.

Sonny - San Diego - Jan 2024 too soon. Late Dec 2024 is more practical.

Kurt- we need to focus on only in person without a virtual conference in the meantime.

Amended MOTION: our next event will be an in-person event with a hybrid general membership meeting held as early as possible in 2024.

VOTE:

Yes: Margarita, Micalina, Tyler, Will, Dale, Kurt

Opposed: Megan, JEB, Sonny

Marty abstains.

Motion passes.

Marty will see if Sam has forms. It requires people on committees to be in town.

Meeting adjourned.

ACTION REQUIRED by BOARD MEMBERS:

Marty: Board Members should study Bylaws.

Margarita to Board Members: Please update contact information and add committee member contact information to the corresponding pages via this link:

[+ ICSAA Board & Committees Contact Lists](#)