



Minutes of **Board Meeting of SECULAR AA**

3 October 2020 / 2:00 PM EASTERN STANDARD / 11:00 AM PACIFIC
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86026065030?pwd=ZG5pcGpdlZNBHYvT3h4VmJVTVJsZz09>

Meeting ID: 860 2606 5030 Password: 017230

Meeting Called to Order by the Chairman at 2:04 pm Eastern Standard / 11:04 AM Pacific

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

2017-2020 Board Members

Carol M. – ICSAA 2018-Toronto, Host Committee Chair - present

Geri B. – Secretary - present

Joy R. – Treasurer - not present

Sam E. – Chair - present

2019-2022 Board Members

Gregg O. – ICSAA 2020-Washington DC, Host Committee Chair - present

Joe C. – Outreach Committee Chair - present

John S. – Archives Committee Chair- present (arrived 5 minutes late)

2020 Board Members

Marty B. – Vice Chair - present

Chair reminded the members to review the Mission and Vision Statements and the standing Board Meeting procedures.

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 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 2pm Eastern time/ 11:00 AM Pacific.

January 9th, 2021 (see also New Business: non-Board meeting scheduled for November 14th prior to online conference)

Chairman reviewed past meetings and situations and stated that perhaps the initial approach to the Bylaws and the goals for Secular AA were overly complicated and should be reviewed. The following is included from prior minutes in the interest of continuity.

Discussion from October 2019 Board Meeting offered to board by Chair (the following has not been updated)-

Consider adopting this policy of priorities through ICSAA 2020

1. *Put on a great gathering of Secular AA in DC 2020*

2. *Participate in the AA International in Detroit including a Secular AA hospitality suite to:*
 - *Carry our message in our mission statement to conference attendees*
 - *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. Let's carry the message that they are not alone.*
3. *Continue the great work we are doing (thanks Courtney) with our meeting lists and online meetings.*
4. *Assure the sustainability of our work by:*
 - *Garnering bids for ICSAA 2022*
 - *Garnering qualified and willing candidates to be nominated to the board for terms beginning 2023*
 - *Continuing to be fiscally prudent and accountable to our membership*

Here are some the things I think we should set aside, or deprioritize for the time being, not forever but for now:

1. *Spending all the time trying to satisfy everyone who wants something from us. Remember we cannot help others if we are still drunk, our above priorities must come first or we will not be around to expand our work. I think we should respond to all additional requests, no matter how reasonable or important, by making a statement like this: "We are a relatively new organization served by a small number of volunteers, we are committed to our mission 'to assure suffering alcoholics that they can find sobriety in Alcoholics Anonymous without having to accept anyone else's beliefs or deny their own.' We have great ambitions with regards all the things we would do to realize our goals but, alas, our time is limited and it is probably best that we take our steps in order. As of now we don't have the capacity to take on additional tasks but we are most definitely open to the help of others."*
2. *Working on the bylaws. I'm currently thinking we should set aside plenty of time in DC 2020, in a side room, to discuss the bylaws and anything related to the organization of secular AA with all interested prior to the business meeting and the chair would welcome motions for amendment from that group or others at the business meeting.*
3. *The Board committee chairs should consider prioritizing the three items in Point 4 (Assure the sustainability of our work...) in the list above, and table the rest.*

IT Issues

1. **secularaa.net (Board website)**
2. **Secularaa.com (Conference website)**
3. **SecularAA.org (information, outreach and service website)**
4. **Coffee Shop**
5. **Online Meetings**

Discussion on ideas to manage IT. - John S. reported on the current state of the website (AASecular.org) which has been being used regularly. Discussion on contacts who may be able to help with website. John has talked to one volunteer with whom he has not been able to connect. Marty suggested he has a contact who helped with BOAF website.

Geri offered to help with the current emails. Sam offered to handle any difficult emails.

Sam suggested that perhaps Faye would be available to "Manage" the website, work with web master, consider contact.

John S. said he will contact Courtney to complete the transfer of the SecularAA websites back to the Secular AA organization

Coffeeshop - Joe C. reported he has a low level of admin credentials, and that many people have moved to the Beyond Belief facebook page.

Sam asked John S. to report on the progress of the website to him within a couple of weeks.

Secretary (Geri)

- 1) Minutes of last Board meeting approved unanimously, moved by Joe C. and seconded by Sam.

Treasurer (Joy)

Sam will call Joy and go over the reports with her so he can report to the board if she cannot attend next meeting. He will ask Joy about the money that has been donated through the "old" Secular AA site, and if she will contact Courtney to transfer the funds to the new AASecular paypal. John reported that the new Paypal has been set for AA secular account. John S. will see that a "Contribution" button will be on the new AASecular website.

- 1) Quarterly Financial Statements - on hold for next meeting
- 2) Secular AA Annual Budget - on hold for next meeting
- 3) ICSAA registration money - per Gregg, all monies have been refunded, unless asked to keep or carry over.

Standing Committee Reports/Updates

Officer Reports/Updates

ICSAA (Gregg)

- 1) ICSAA 2021 - Still on a holding pattern
- 2) 2020 Conference: Gregg reported that all refunds have been made.
- 3) ICSAA guidelines (Marty/Carol/Gregg/Geri) - Gregg reported making initial outline for guidelines and committed to working with Carol on the draft and ideas he has at this time.
- 4) Create a draft ICSAA 2021 budget. - Gregg reported having initial outline for a budget started. Sam has some information based on Toronto expenses and Carol has information. Sam will build a spreadsheet to use to find the break even points for ICSAA 2021.

Nominating Committee – Vice-Chair (Marty)

Discussion on putting information on the AAsecular website for "help wanted" for Board positions upcoming in 2021.

Site Selection Committee – Vice-Chair (Marty)

No report

Outreach (Joe C.)

Joe reported no report at this time.

In-Reach (open position) - no report

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.

Fellowship (open position)

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)

John S has been handling the new AASecular.org website and emails

- 1) Voice call answering service number +1-323-693-1633 (which is posted on website) Joe tested the number which worked. Sam determined the message comes to an email in Sam's office. Sam will have someone re-record the message, including providing the email of SecularAA@gmail.com.
- 2) Discussion on WHO will be monitoring the email ongoing? Currently goes to email in Sams account. Sam will determine who currently is getting the emails . Geri volunteered to monitor emails once Sam confirms where/how to access.

Archives (John)

No report at this time.

Old Business - The 2020 Virtual Conference

Gregg reported that there are no confirmed speakers as of now. Discussion on the date in November or having it the first weekend of December. Discussion on what we want to do at this conference; maybe start with a "Hold the Date" and work forward based on the interest. Joe reported working with webinar version of Zoom which is not too expensive.

Consensus reached for December 5th, 12 - 4 EST and to put out requests for what people are interested in seeing/doing. Also, we could have short pre-recorded "teasers" from possible 2021 speakers. Discussed possibility of recording the event to post on the AA secular website. Discussion on the theme possibilities. Gregg committed to putting together ideas for John to post on website. Will need moderators for questions, especially for the chat.

Pre-conference call scheduled: November 14th. Sam will send out zoom link

New Business - None

