



**MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING (Final)**  
**29 April 2018**  
3:00 pm Eastern Standard / Noon Pacific  
<https://zoom.us/j/251580624>

Call To Order by the Chairman at 3:00 pm Eastern Standard / 12:00 AM Pacific

Roll Call by the Chairman

Sam E. – Chair  
Martin D. – Vice Chair  
Joy R. – Treasurer  
Courtney S. – IT / Web  
Thomas B. – Outreach  
Dianne P. - Emeritus Member  
Geri B. – Secretary  
Nigel S. – Newsletter  
Jerry F. – at large - not present, (email resignation of 4.28.18 to Sam E.)  
Carol M. – Host Committee Chair – Toronto 2018 - not present (arrived at 12:40 pm)

Chair's opening comments

- Remember to be guided by our unanimously approved new 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 particular form of religion or belief system and operates in accordance with the Third Tradition of Alcoholics Anonymous: The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.”
- Adherence to AA Concepts, Traditions, Roberts Rules, AA Service Manual and our Bylaws as applicable.
- Committee process – Status reports at board meetings and set tasks to be done in committees. Board to function as oversight and hold committees responsible to the collective group conscious. Whenever possible work to be done in committee. Create opportunities to involve more of our full membership in service.
- Agenda - be prepared to table new topics if needed.

- Chairman reminded the Board of upcoming board meeting times (all to be confirmed; noted change to date of November meeting, and addition of special meeting 5.28.18)
    - 28<sup>th</sup> May potential special meeting, to either ratify new bylaws or discuss motions to amend.
    - 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2018 (Toronto, early dinner)
    - 24<sup>th</sup> August 2018 informal open membership at large Q&A during ICSAA 2018
      - ? confirm on program
    - 26<sup>th</sup> August 2018 Membership Meeting during ICSAA 2018
    - 26<sup>th</sup> August 2018 (Toronto with New Board after new board members are elected)
      - ? confirm on program
    - 24<sup>th</sup> November 2018 (Last board meeting of this board, pass off to new board) possible in-person option in Las Vegas Chair Reports/Updates
  - A. Approval of Jan 2018 Board Meeting Minutes - approved unanimously
  - B. Discussion of change to Vision Statement - Motion by Sam E (at the request of Jerry F.) and seconded to add the word "almost" before the phrase "anyone - regardless of their spiritual beliefs..." to our Vision Statement. After discussion, the motion failed by vote of 1 in favor, 4 opposed, 1 abstain. The Vision Statement remains as follows:
 

“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 the belief 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.”
  - C. Corporate housekeeping
    - 1) Events Liability Insurance - Nigel gave update on the comprehensive coverage through the hotel, and the events liability insurance, which will be dealt with closer to the event looks to be about \$600 to \$800. Motion to allocate up to \$800 to get the event insurance when appropriate passed unanimously.
  - D. Outreach - Thomas reported:
    - 1) Great Britain and Ireland central offices are still refusing to endorse or advertise ICSAA
    - 2) Other ICSAA outreach activities include being in "459" and The Grapevine, 832 emails sent to members of secular AA, Joe C. has been including advertising during his events, announcements have been sent to European GSOs, and several Regional conferences, and on online meetings. Nigel also was able to send flyers to local groups in England. Discussion on possibility of developing a data base of Intergroup to be able to contact. Sam will do further research to find a mail list.
- Carol M. joined the meeting.
- E. Newsletter - Nigel - Has had positive responses to the newsletters. Requests for information on Regional Conferences and requests for information on ride sharing and

room sharing. Note: We do not want to advertise room sharing until our room commitment is complete, but will keep it in mind.

F. IT - Courtney - See Attachment A with the full written report, including information on our website Blocking several Countries completely at the server level. Russia is our biggest threat. Blocking all intercepted IP's of hacking attempts(Permanent). Working on GDPR Compliance. May 28 is the deadline. The written report includes update on the following:

- 1) secularaa.net (Board Website)
- 2) Secularaa.com (convention website)
- 3) SecularAA.org (information, outreach and service website)
- 4) Coffee Shop
- 5) Online Meetings - Including a woman's meeting "Sober She Devil's" , and meetings at hours to accommodate different hours across the globe.

Other Discussion:

A. Update on a way to possible protect the passwords and other important information to maintain the sites through GoDaddy. Sam will investigate with GoDaddy about what is needed from the Board to give to GoDaddy to allow continuity and control by the corporation.

B. Facilitating horizontal communication between groups – Courtney reported he was working on how to have that be a part of the website, structurally. Sam suggested he, Thomas would work on the content.

G. Conference guidelines - Jerry F. is working on the guidelines. Issue tabled. Sam will follow up with Jerry F. to see if he will be able to continue. If not, Martin will help.

H. Sam reported on possible 2020 ICSAA Bids coming from Washington DC and Detroit. He encouraged Board members to encourage others so we have a third choice.

I. Treasurer's Report

- 1) Joy report on Quarterly Financial Statements - few changes since last report. Appropriate filings made to Nevada Secretary of State and will be sent to IRS.

Joy requested that verbiage be added to websites to let people know the websites are supported by donations. Sam suggested we'll be better able to do that after the Bylaws are approved because it will show clearly all the things done by Secular AA.

- 2) Budget - Nigel gave report (see also Appendix B)

- i. ICSAA 2018 - Nigel gave update on conference financials, registrations, hotel room, and food allocation, which is to adapt the food menu based on the number of registrants and money available. Registrations appear to be following the same as Austin, which had 40% of registrations come in during the last 2 weeks, but there is no information on where those came from, making it difficult to plan.
- ii. Discussed concerns about what to do about food commitment if we get many registrations at the last minute. Still being worked out.
- iii. Still need to narrow dietary requests.
- iv. Discussion of HSC, and how it works for the ICSAA conference.

- v. Discussion of the importance of considering the "Seed" money from Austin as a liability on the Budget, to be returned and passed on for the next conference. No motion made.
- vi. Discussion of request from Joe C. for partial reimbursement of expenses where he was promoting ICSAA during his planned personal travel. There is no current budget for travel for promotional activities. No motion made.

J. Report on 2018 ICSAA Conference – Inclusion and Diversity - Carol

- 1) Attraction/promotion - Discussion of Board members, and others, going to New York, and to local Toronto area groups and meetings as part of promotion
- 2) Update on featured speakers announced
  - i. Friday - Dr. Vera T. (from New York)
  - ii. Saturday - Diede
  - iii. Sunday - Ray Baker, M.D.
- 3) Discussion of John Witherspoon, from Grapevine, to have a special spot at the conference. Idea for having a "Tell Your Story" room, for attendees to make appointments & record their stories. Awaiting more information and input from Grapevine.
- 4) Update on panel topics - Still clarifying facilitators.
- 5) Martin is sending
- 6) Registration - early bird cutoff date?  
Motion to raise price of registration to \$150 on 30 days prior to the conference, passed unanimously.
- 7) Discussion about a Cancellation policy  
Motion: Cancellation Policy: Up to 2 weeks before the conference, cancellations are accepted with a total refund, minus \$10 processing fee. (NOTE: See Appendix D for corrected Motion)
- 8) Discussion on requests for One-day fee (with or without meals)  
Motion: Friday evening will be open for anyone to attend, and there will be a Donation Bucket by the coffee, or wherever appropriate. Passed Unanimously.  
Additional discussion on whether to have a "No Food" option for attendance on Saturday and/or Sunday is tabled for further discussion via email.
- 9) Discussion on ICSAA Donations fund  
Motion: The Donation Fund should be allocated by lottery to people who say they cannot afford the cost. Carol will come up with a plan on how to advertise the availability of the funds.
- 10) Discussion on having Hospitality Suite - The hotel gives us 1 room (or cash credit) per 40 rooms booked.

Motion: We will have one hospitality room for two days. Carol will organize a method for using the room, using local groups as a possible resource.

### Old Business

- A. Discussion on giving consideration to adopt this statement to be read at ICSAA panels and workshops and posted as a guideline for sharing on the coffee shop:

Motion: We accept the following statement to be read before each panel or gathering:

*Express what works for you in recovery. As we say in AA, share your own experience, strength and hope. Celebrate what works for you. Learn from others' differing experiences by "taking what you want and leaving the rest". We recognize and value that each of our paths to sobriety is unique. We strive to adhere to our AA code of love and tolerance.*

Motion passed unanimously.

### New Business

- A. Discussion of having a Hospitality Suite at AA International 2020 in Detroit whether or not we decide to have an ICSAA 2020.

Motion: If we don't do ICSAA 2020 in Detroit, we will present to our membership meeting of ICSAA 2018, the proposal that we have a hospitality suite at the AA International 2020. Approved unanimously.

- B. Discussion of draft bylaws, including clarification of the Board rotation policy.

Motion: We accept the draft bylaws at their exemplary state of development to this point, understanding that we will be going through a continuing review and possible amending process as outlined, as follows:

1) 28<sup>th</sup> of May board to vote to ratify bylaws by simple majority, bylaws take effect immediately.

2) 28<sup>th</sup> May through 16<sup>th</sup> of July maintain the confidentiality of the bylaws to the board level and give the board members ample time to live with the new bylaws (obviously we won't be able to effectively put all the new provisions into practice until after Toronto) and during this time we may entertain additional motions to amend the bylaws. I think this is a very important part of the process and will give us time to work with the new bylaws and see what could be better BEFORE we present them for the scrutiny of the entire membership.

3) 16<sup>th</sup> of July publish new bylaws on [secularaa.org](http://secularaa.org) and inform the membership via newsletter and press release (aabeyondbelief, aaagnostica) that the new bylaws, which will be subject to ratification in Toronto, are now available for review. And also inform them of the bylaws workshop we will be having in Toronto prior to the membership meeting.

Motion passed unanimously.

## **Appendix A - Report from Courtney**

**All Websites:** Extensive hardening of all sites and servers. Upgraded and re-provisioned Apache to handle HTTP/2 Internet communication protocol. Blocking several Countries completely at the server level. Russia is our biggest threat. Blocking all intercepted IP's of hacking attempts(Permanent). Hardened our mailers. Working on GDPR Compliance. May 28 is the deadline. We have been under heavy attack since the beginning of the year and the daily onslaught is staggering. Our response requires daily input to indicate "friendly from foe"...we have big barricades in place, but have to be vigilant from blocking real inquiry's. We have also added a custom 404 redirect Page with a little humor and help to all websites. Webmaster Ed W. continues his daily task of meeting data updates and requests. Our multiple contact forms are very busy with inquiries and requests directed to Webmaster, Carol & Nigel, and Ed W. I am a Google, Bing, and Yandex Webmaster. All Websites are being constantly adjusted and optimized for these search entities (Think website ranking).

**Secularaa.net:** Added page to display Registration Data. Significantly upgraded our Document Vault. Upgraded login system. Hardened Security at the website level and began Permanent blocking of Hacker IP's and added trigger usernames to block attempted logins. We can be very aggressive on this site, since we know our audience.

**Secularaa.com:** Getting some resistance from email programs rejecting our Registration Confirmations. Our logo on the Confirmation may trigger some email programs to block "images". Have received several major upgrades to our Gravity Forms Module. "QR" code interface is "third party" and began corrupting registrations; it has been permanently removed as suggested by Gravity. The 'resources' page occasionally triggers some browsers to not display the items until a "Refresh" is done. This is because of animations in the Gallery.

Sessions <a href="#">1,037</a>
Users <a href="#">692</a>
Page Views <a href="#">3,174</a>
Bounce Rate <a href="#">38.09%</a>
Organic Search <a href="#">129</a>
Pages/Session <a href="#">3.06</a>
Time on Page <a href="#">00:01:25</a>
Page Load Time <a href="#">1.72</a>
Session Duration <a href="#">00:02:58</a>

Secularaa.org: This site is our biggest hacking target. Using same strategy as above. Newsletter comes from here and our mailing list has **955** subscribers. Meeting Directory has: **440** meetings **357** locations **249** groups. This website is our main contact vehicle (Contact Forms).

	Visitors	Visits
Yesterday:	<a href="#">174</a>	<a href="#">475</a>
Last 7 Days:	<a href="#">1,333</a>	<a href="#">3,395</a>
Last 30 Days:	<a href="#">5,258</a>	<a href="#">14,239</a>
Last 365 Days:	<a href="#">32,694</a>	<a href="#">96,619</a>
Total:	<a href="#">32,694</a>	<a href="#">96,619</a>

Coffeshop: The tenor of the reparte' has been lowered considerably and temperate discussion has ensued. We have **894 members**. Most of the News surrounding SecularAA is conducted here. Board Member Nigel S. and Joe C. have been assisting in moderation and have taken point on ICSAA 2018. FB sites and Twitter sites are also active regarding ICSAA 2018. Joe C Moderates ICSAA Twitter and FB feeds. Nigel is also on the ICSAA FB feed.

On-line meetings: SecularAA host's three on-line meetings: **Secular Saturday**, **Secular Sunday** and **Sober-She-Devils Women's Meeting** Monday evening. Hosts are **Courtney S.** on Saturday and **John C.** on Sunday, **Maria T.** Monday. We have spawned two other meetings: **Manic Monday** from Paris with hosts **Finn** and **Katie** and

**International Trudgers** from South Africa (Mozambique) with **Kate B.** on Thursday. We were asked to host these meetings and I felt it would be better to assist them in start-up, and let them do it on their own. This weekend we had visitors from Belgium, Brazil, France, South Africa, Turkey, Morrocco, Canary Islands, Portugal, Canada, USA.

## Appendix B - Treasurer Report

10:24 AM  
04/29/18  
Cash Basis

### Secular AA Balance Sheet As of March 31, 2018

	<u>Mar 31, 18</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
City National Bank Las Vegas	2,321.05
PayPal Acct - Secular AA	0.38
Total Checking/Savings	<u>2,321.43</u>
Other Current Assets	
Hotel Deposit	4,000.00
Total Other Current Assets	<u>4,000.00</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>6,321.43</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b><u>6,321.43</u></b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	
Equity	
Transfer from WAAFTIAAC	6,744.29
Unrestricted Net Assets	-422.86
Total Equity	<u>6,321.43</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b><u>6,321.43</u></b>

10:23 AM  
04/29/18  
Cash Basis

### Secular AA Profit & Loss January through March 2018

	<u>Jan - Mar 18</u>
<b>Income</b>	
Donations	50.00
Total Income	<u>50.00</u>
<b>Expense</b>	
Organization Costs	50.00
Total Expense	<u>50.00</u>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b><u>0.00</u></b>



## **Appendix C - Nigel Report**

Hi everybody,

Here is my budget for discussion at the board meeting on Sunday.

I have stuck to the minimum financial commitments laid out in our contract with the Marriott Hotel.

Basically the following points are relevant.

Minimum room night allocation 300 but no financial penalty for over 240. (DONE)

The inclusion of the \$5,000 from Austin in our expense calculations.

The inclusion of HST in everything.

The payment of \$10,000 deposit to the hotel by 6/30/18 (Can do NOW)

The MINIMUM food commitment of \$10000 (\$13334 including service and taxes).

We also have to pay \$7910 for the conference rooms, extra.

The food costs at \$125 per person including service and taxes.

This is the same regardless of how many registrants over the minimum expenditure

The recovery of HST after the event.

Hotel room credit (7 rooms at \$220) to be paid back after the event.

We ignore the \$99,000 complete cancellation of the event penalty as everything out of our control is covered by the hotel's liability.

## **Appendix D - Revised Cancellation Policy**

Per email vote of the Board on May 1st, the final cancellation policy is:

Up to 2 weeks before the conference, cancellations are accepted with a total refund, minus a \$10 processing fee. Within 2 weeks, there is no refund, however, registration may be transferred to another person one time. Special consideration will be given on a case by case basis for severe extenuating circumstances such as a death in the family.