

MINUTES SMR Business Meeting Study

August 2, 2023

Attendees: Name(s) 7 in attendance

I. Call to Order [9:05]

Jim R called to order the meeting of the Business Meeting Study Group, on the SMR Zoom account at 9:05 am Eastern, on Aug 2, 2023. We opened with the Serenity Prayer.

II. Call to Service

The following attendees offered to be of service as:

Meeting Chairperson – Jim R

Timekeeper* - none

Recording Secretary - Jim R

Other* - [Name]

**optional*

(Record the meeting) Not Recorded

III. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes have been posted to our website. They are found at:

[☰ MINUTES SMR Biz Study 23-7 Jul11](#) . The minutes will not be read into the record.

Participants may read the minutes and be prepared to voice any concerns.

Motion to approve - Boaz, second - Asa

IV. Unfinished business

NOTE: Today, and as needed in the future, we will take a break from our regular flow of efforts to open the floor for a brainstorming session. Participants will be given the opportunity to offer suggestions of improvements to the way we conduct business. Discussion encouraged.

V. Ideas and Suggestions

The Scope of Our Study

The following topics were offered at **our first meeting**. These issues and interests indicate the work we may consider to be in the scope of our group's tasks.

These were random concepts, placed on the virtual table, so to say. In the coming weeks we will refer to this list regularly to determine which items are on our agenda, which items have been addressed, which items have been reconsidered for inclusion.

Our business meetings could be regulated, effective, respectful and without surprise.

Topics: (to be expanded or contracted as agreed upon)

- Business Meeting Script
- Rules - important
- Safety. Clarity of business routine
- Accountability for inappropriate behavior

- Business meeting structure (when; how often)
- Process for proposing new ideas
- Explore other models of doing business
- Issues about maintaining business focus/ timing discussions

- Outline for taking Minutes / creating Agenda
- Website utilization / polling and voting
- Review Position Description (GC Chair) / qualifications / capable leadership

- Education - Explain how our business meetings operate
- Education - Explain to the newcomer

NOTE from July 11th: *The following ideas were offered for eventual discussion. They may not be addressed at the very next Study meeting, but will be addressed eventually.*

- a) Work the Business meeting into the SMR meeting time slot instead of our regular format. Perhaps do this once, as a trial or test, to see how well it works. Create a poll to ask the members.
- b) Have the business meetings on a weekend day.
- c) Alternate business meetings, month by month - reports one month / Group Conscience proposals the next month

Open Discussion:

Comment: Suggestion to start with the points a, b, and c above.

Create first a framework within which our business may be conducted.

Agreeable to dividing the content of the business meetings, monthly - committee and work reports one month; and proposals/issues/motions on other months

Or perhaps half-day business meetings, quarterly.

Comment: Framework - yes. Generally speaking, members could experience 'attention fatigue' if a meeting runs long.

As to separating reports from proposals, what if a report naturally leads to a motion?

We could utilize our technical tools - posting reports and proposals to our website ahead of our meetings. [Note: Reports are not always read ahead of the meetings]

Comment: What is the distinction between the terms 'business meeting' and 'group conscience'?

Our group, from our inception, used the terminology 'group conscience' rather freely.

Response: According to the BRB, a 'group conscience' is the decisions of the group. A 'business meeting' is the way to a group conscience.

Response: Perhaps the group can choose to label our meetings **clearly**.

Comment: BRB p. 595 - A 'group conscience' invites a loving Higher Power into our decisions. Perhaps we could **actively** await a Higher Power response. Maybe a moment of silent meditation could be formatted into the business process, before soliciting votes.

Comment: Is there anything the group would like to vote on at this time? Do we offer our suggestions/recommendations to the SMR meeting in small steps - offering small changes? Or do we create a business meeting package that is more complete?

- Perhaps offer a complete meeting package for the group to try.
- If we suggest the odd month/even meeting system, we will need to figure out the process of submitting proposals/issues.

Comment: Our group's situation is unprecedented - we are a Zoom meeting, entirely online; our size is very large (300ish); we have no role models.

How do we bring in the group's Higher Power? - stay quiet and curious.

The 'Set Aside Prayer' (*below*) could offer some guidance. Perhaps we could tailor that prayer for our own needs, becoming architects of a new business meeting format.

Comment: This seems to be our ACA journey - creating an internal structure - beyond 'what is best for me'. Entering into an interdependent and aligned relationship. Requires creativity.

The 1st Nations peoples have a practice that incorporates a silent consensus.

Comment: We are making progress. Let's note the benefits of a 1 hour meeting limit. And that singular issue Group Conscience gatherings, focused on one issue / proposal are successful.

Comment: Can we actually format meditation/silence into the business process?

Proposal: That we formalize no ideas at this time; that we ask for guidance from a Higher Power; that, after thoughtful meditation, each participant bring a suggestion for Sunday.

Comment: It's good to relax when it comes to establishing outcomes, conclusions. A reminder that the process is more important than the product.

Comment: Also, bring questions and comments for the next meeting.

VI. Announcements

VII. Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn: Eric Seconded: Inga

Closing prayer 10:07 Eastern

Next meeting: Sunday, August 6th, at 9:00 am Eastern, after the morning meeting

Minutes submitted by: Jim R

The Set Aside Prayer

What is the purpose of the set aside prayer?

This is a helpful prayer when you find yourself in a position where you think you know everything or when you start judging others or the way things are run. In this prayer you are asking your Higher Power to push aside your ego for a little while so you can learn and grow and have a new experience.

The SMR Business Meeting Study Group may consider editing this prayer for use specifically as an opening reading for our Business meetings. Here are some versions:

“God, please set aside everything I think I know about myself, the twelve steps, this book, the meetings, my disease, and you, God, so I may have an open mind and a new experience with all these things, please let me see the truth.”

“God, today help me set aside everything I think I know about You, everything I think I know about myself, everything I think I know about others, and everything I think I know about my own recovery so I may have an open mind and a new experience with all these things. Please help me see the truth.”

“God, please set aside everything that I think I know about myself, my brokenness, my spiritual path and You, for an open mind and a new experience with myself, my brokenness, my spiritual path and especially You. Amen.”