

A.R.T.S. Anonymous Inc.
Conference Reports
1997

1997 CONFERENCE MINUTES

THURSDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

We read the 12 steps, 12 Traditions and the 12 Concepts of ARTS. We volunteered to time ourselves when sharing. Then we went round the conference table, and introduced ourselves, our service positions and did a feelings check-in.

Motion was made: to read the minutes the following morning as most of us hadn't read them yet and seconded. Motion passed.

AGENDA

Jane explained the Conference timetable. Abigail B wanted to be assured that there would be lots of time for financial issues. Jane stressed that the Conference Charter was of the utmost importance. Marilyn wanted us to set a strong foundation before dealing with Finances, Literature, Outreach and the Conference Charter as a whole to create a solid base for the future.

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Jill F said how glad she was ARTS was about process not about product. She talked about the difference between meetings in ARTS versus AA where they are able to pay for delegates to attend the conference and also their years of experience. We congratulated ourselves for going on 13 years.

HOTLINE

Jill stated aim was to go from where we were -- Abigail covering the hotlines from her home, to John's two year service answering the phone, to where we are now, having the Hotline answered from the WSO.

REGISTRAR

Jane gave the registrar's report.

EASTERN REGION

John T presented the Eastern Regional Trustee report.

INTERNATIONAL

Marilyn as International Trustee gave her report; she feels the program is finding a home outside of the country.

DISTRICT OUTREACH LEADERS (DOL's)

Topic: Redoing districts boundaries. We clarified need to redesign district regions and stated need for DOL's for the Western Region. Discussed the contents of the DOL's new standardized outreach package; the idea being unity is important.

WORLD SERVICE MEETING REPRESENTATIVES (WSMR's)

Looked at the WSMR's primary duties as a way of improving our service.

VISION FOR ARTS

We found some of the possible definitions of "vision" from the Twelve Concepts. One vision is the ability to make good estimates about our future. As a tentative idea, an experimental policy, Jill asked for feedback from our members as to what their vision for A.R.T.S. is and for it to be sent to

WSO. She clarified WSO's position as a carrier of the message.

Discussed Des' resignation and the importance of having a trustee from outside the program. We do not have a pool to choose from because we are in an early stage as a program. It was also clarified that Des would continue to help on an informal consultancy level. Abigail suggested going to AA to find the person who recommended Des. We discussed trustee position "ideal" years of service (8 in AA) and then put the subject on hold as we needed to go to

BY LAWS

(All of the changes to the bylaws have to be fully typed up in these minutes, what the wording is and what the motion calls for it to be changed to.)

Jill clarified the amendments. The definition of positions, correct new address and Abigail's new title. She voiced her appreciation that Abigail could be a moral authority for us.

Motion was made: to change amendments:

A Article IX Section 7, Board of Directors

B Article IX Section 3, Numbers

C Article IX Section 12, Terms of Office and seconded.

Motion unanimously passed for the 3 amendments (not clear what happened in these amendments - what was and what it now is) to the By-Laws and seconded.

Reviewed the suggested By-Law amendments and by group consensus decided to vote on them tomorrow.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Jane started by explaining why there was a \$3,800 error in the Treasurer's Report which came about because of money transfers when processing data into the computer. So we really grossed \$18,000 for 1996; we were in the red \$147; and are in debt for \$1,038.08. Jay's intention is to pay off the liabilities immediately after the convention as people have been waiting a long time to be reimbursed. Discussion revolved around the \$3,800 error and restructuring the way we track the financial sections of WSO, Public Information, Literature, Convention/Conference. Conclusion was that ARTS was not taking responsibility for it's finances. E mail was suggested as a viable alternative to postage costs. The group stressed the importance of World Service and suggested that the WSMR's present WSO's need to the meetings, to make clear WSO's purpose. Jay wanted us to think about whether we can afford a \$7 monthly charge for a web site.

END OF THURSDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

FRIDAY MORNING SESSION

DISCUSSION OF BY-LAWS

Abigail B informed us the lawyers would not accept the term "moral obligation" in Article (?) D Section 1 - Board of Trustees. Jill suggested the term "moral obligation" could be part of the conference charter. Lizzie suggested putting the term "moral obligation" into the charter and using the language of AA "right tradition."

Abigail moved the motion that we approve the paragraph names. One abstention. Passed.

Motion was made: to approve Article 1 - Names and seconded.

Passed with one abstention.

Motion was made: that (?) 1VB be accepted as read and seconded. Passed with 3 abstentions.

Motion was made: that we pass XIC as changed but Abigail said we needed to check with Harry who owns the office. jill withdrew the motion and said she would submit at a later date.

Motion was made: to change Section E as read and seconded. Passed with 2 abstentions.

Motion was made: to change (?) X14F.1 as read and seconded. (Outcome?)

(The above Friday AM motions have to be here in full, each one, what was and what it will become)

DISCUSSION.

Leonard wanted clarification. Abigail clarified that Jill's joint position as Executive Director and Trustee would no longer exist. The Trustees would be the visionaries. Leonard asked why do we need corporate officers and committees? Jill clarified that according to the Twelve Concept all of A.R.T.S.' staff and corporate officers have the "Right to Participate," as well as all the non-Trustee members of the "Executive Committee". Lou-ann asked if the delegates also have the "Right to Participate." " Yes," and Jill further clarified that each person has one vote even if they have two titles. Stan asked if each person's authority was proportional to their vote, and Leonard objected to the concept that he has only one vote when he represents 9 meetings but all the affiliated WSO people could vote. Abigail suggested we hold off making any decision until we read the Twelve Concepts. Jill clarified that every one here is a trusted servant of the group conscience and we got here to the conference - not each person proportionally representing their groups -- but to represent what is best for A.R.T.S. Abigail suggested we pull the paragraphs from the Twelve Concepts relating to this principle and volunteered Jay and Leonard to E-mail each other and bring it back to the '98 Conference. Arthur voiced his concern that the problem of under representation needed to be addressed. Nancy expressed her feeling that AA was a spiritual blue print, and we needed to be aware that their experience is valuable to us. Stan used the expression "sacred cow" as something to be aware of in regard to the Twelve Concepts. Jill said the advice from AA was that we could change the Twelve Concepts but prudence was advised. Marilyn voiced passionately her wish that we be a functioning committee.

Motion was made: D Section 4 and seconded.

DISCUSSION.

Leonard asked why only Traditions. Jill stated it was the business aspects of the Trustee authority. Leonard felt it was too specific to corner down "literature in." Jill said research needed to be done after Abigail's time. *(what are we talking about?)*

Motion was made: to (?) A11 Section 1 and seconded.

Leonard wanted to remove the last phrase as he felt it was redundant. Abigail agreed.

Jill moved that the amendment stand minus the Addendum 1.

Motion passed. One opposition. 2 abstentions. *(what passed? I'm totally in the dark.)*

John read the ARTS Attitudes.

Jill voiced relief that after 13 years, we have the Public Information Handbook, Twelve Concepts, By-

laws, etc.— in other words we have a service structure now. By consensus Jill asked if the Conference Charter Committee could leave the conference for 30 minutes to do their work. Doris asked for clarification of the committee's purpose and Stan explained that the Charter was set up to make clear the relationship of the Conference to A.R.T.S. Inc. Jane said the Conference Charter Committee needed to meet for 30 minutes to clarify their information before presenting it. Marilyn talked about the concept of trust and a leap of faith needed for all of us to break into separate committees and she suggested we were having separation anxiety. We all laughed. Marilyn asked the Conference Charter Committee to stand and leave. By consensus it was agreed we would all break into committees. We all pulled lots to find out which other Committees we were going to be on.

Conference Literature Committee was Don, Cassandra and Lucinda who met with Trustee Marilyn. Conference Outreach Committee was Doris and Lizzie who met with ?.

Jill suggested we all have a half hour meeting and then devote 60 minutes to reports. We discussed time management and how much time would be needed.

Motion was made: to meet in committee for 60 minutes. Motion passed, 2 opposed and 3 abstentions.

And the Trustee Finance Committee composed of Trustee Jill, Treasurer Jay and Founder Abigail met as well.

SECOND FRIDAY MORNING SESSION

Abigail presented the Trustee Finance Committee report which was on a newsprint tablet and pinned it up on the board. The Committee's suggestions on ways to raise money were:

- pass separate WSO basket at every A.R.T.S. meeting
- Educate the fellowship about WSO, do not beg for funds
- fund raising plans, including a White Elephant Sale.
- An ARTS Halloween Party for 13th birthday.
- Convention fund raising plans.

DISCUSSION

Fred objected to an A.R.T.S.'s Halloween Party as a celebration. Jill explained it was the NY's autonomous group's decision. Leonard wanted answers as to what the WSO does for the West Coast. Stan found the plan for expenditure more limited and more confusing. Jane requested setting up financial corporation statements. Set up constants (i.e. lit and phone). Jill said that Jay worked voluntarily and that we appreciated everyone's feedback and that we would take their comments under advisement. However, we should also appreciate Jay's volunteer services which were extensive and all for us. Cassandra asked for specifics about what WSO spends its money on. Lucinda shared that from her experience raising money in the theatre for AIDS, donations doubled when specifics were listed. Treasurer Jay listed WSO expenses and services: picking up and answering mail; literature printing and distribution; maintaining up to date financial records and banking; hotline telephone and inquiries; overseeing staff and volunteers; preparing annual report; producing annual convention/conference.

Discussion moved on to unity of literature, how to support loners, the convention and conference, and the importance of having an office separate from Abigail's home, and now we need to pay rent. Dot said it was important to TRUST in the face of these years of selfless service by Jay, Abigail and Jill. Jay said the reason for paying for a WSO worker was to have a committed and consistent worker.

Frank proposed: could Warranty 2 be included for the DOL's and WSMRs? Arthur seconded. (*huh? specifics please*) Abigail endorsed the idea that something could be put together to show the meetings. Jane suggested it should come from the Finance Committee. Jill wants to postpone voting. Frank withdrew his motion.

Jane reminded us that we needed to pass last years minutes. We all became aware that we were overtime and that lunch was ready. Abigail suggested the Treasurer work with WSMR's via E mail as adjuncts to the Finance Committee. Leonard, Arthur, Don, Jay, Stan and Cassandra would gather information. Abigail talked about the importance of spiritual giving.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON MINUTES

We opened with the Serenity Prayer. Read the Attitudes. By consensus agreed to have reports and the discussions.

Conference Charter Committee:

Frank shared his report. Discussed how we would report voting numbers and decided to voice count opposing and assenting voices. Frank wanted continuity of membership in all conference committees. Jill suggested rotation of members so that there would always be both experience and two vacancies for new members. We discussed numbers on committees and it was remembered that 6-9 was the traditional amount. Jill wants to address this again in the end session. Frank continued his report and brought up the question of rewording our purpose statement of the Conference Charter to cover why we exist as a group, to possibly reword "guardian", and whether to include Twelve Concepts and also Twelve Steps. He read various re-wordings. The consensus was to keep it simple.

Conference Literature Committee:

Main issues discussed were ways in which the fellowship could give feedback - the logistics and expenses of postage and copying. We needed to look at E-mail as a way of communicating. Agreed to research how other fellowships develop their literature.

Conference Outreach Committee

Someone named it "Public Information Squared."

Importance of having professional artists in the meetings, who are doing their art, that they share that with other members. Also we discussed the communication system between various groups -- DOL's and Trustees. The idea of letting Hazelden be an outreach source for us to let others know of our existence. Also, that we contact the medical community that we exist. Jay reminded us we could use the internet.

Discussion moved on to literature prices. Leonard wanted to know why the pamphlets are so expensive and suggested that they be brought down to 50 cents. Jay said the income from literature helped ARTS. Abigail said to do away with the ten-pack would cause more office work. Leonard wanted justification for the 75 cents. Arthur suggested an explanation as to why the literature costs what it does be sent to LA Intergroup. Jill said that it costs money to pay the WSO workers. Aim is to maybe lower price of literature to 60 cents. Leonard suggested vision of having a copy machine to make literature copies. A heated discussion followed about the actual cost of literature, to be aware of the hours of work that go into creating literature, phone calls back, copying, postage, graphic design, etc. which all contribute to the cost of literature. Leonard said he would tell his home group the cost of the literature and that some A.R.T.S. members were being paid. John clarified that that was not what we had said; rather that Trustees and committee members needed to be reimbursed

for expenses incurred as opposed being paid for their time.

Motion was made: to offer a bulk discount of 20% on all ten-paks and to sell literature in units less than ten and seconded.

Discussion revolved around the price for bulk rate and single unit sales. Stay with single copy price of 75 cents for a year and if labor goes up, the price can be changed. Frank pointed out the hidden costs of literature, phone calls, stamps and hours, shipping and handling. Marilyn wanted to address the issue that the smaller meetings would be affected by this motion, that they could buy more variety in literature. Arthur said we need better communication between the East and West coast.

Motion passed with one abstention.

**Motion was made: that we approve the minutes from last year and seconded.
Unanimously passed.**

**Motion was made: all members of Standing Committees be allowed to return to the '98 Conference as Delegates whether or not they are still WSMR's or DOL's and seconded.
Motion passed with two abstentions.**

Motion was made: to approve the existing Trustee slate and seconded.

John T -- Eastern Regional Trustee

Beverly B -- Central Regional Trustee

Jill F -- sustaining

Jane -- sustaining

Marilyn -- International Trustee

Des T -- Class A Trustee at Large

Motion passed with one abstention.

Frank questioned whether the convention will be here next year as there will be a new owner of the Sampler Inn. Leonard asked about Committee work.

SOBRIETY AND THE NEWCOMER.

We needed to clarify for our organization "what is sobriety?." Lucinda expressed her concern that a lot of people came to the meetings a couple of times but soon leave and she felt our lack of clarity over what sobriety was contributed to this. She asked people to give feedback.

Some of the explanations were:

Expressing our common problem (Jay)

Art as a by-product of working the steps (Marilyn)

The promises come true (Jill)

Doing our art every day (Abigail -- who added she worried about this lack of a sobriety standard too)

Slipping into our disease (Linda)

Using the tools and bookending (Stan)

To do something when I need to even when I don't want to (Frank)

It's an issue of not being compulsive (Cassandra)

Getting rid of your ego voice and compulsions. Not relating to family or becoming a family. Lack of balance and not being grounded is the disease. (Arthur)

Being present in our own lives (Linda)

Abigail asked do other Intergroup have a quorums from their meetings. NYC Intergroup does not have enough meeting reps from all the meetings in New York to have a quorum -- asked how it was

Kathy, (V.O., Chair of NYC Intergroup , who could not be present, had wanted to chair a Tri-State District meeting with Arthur, the DOL from this District, to plan for a District meeting in July.

I wanted to make it clear that to make more detailed financial records would take much more time. He felt it would be a waste of time to nit-pick ourselves into spiritual oblivion. Abigail talked about A.R.T.S.' debts not being paid. The "prudent reserve" for WSO was clarified to be set at \$600. Marilyn brought our attention to the gold meeting pamphlet on the what the WSO does and the Fourth Step inventory pamphlet which she will be using when she chairs the Fourth Step meeting on Saturday -- all are invited. .

In the 12 minutes left -- went around the room and shared briefly our feelings and gratitude which included:

The effortlessness of service

Seeing under the hood of the car (as a metaphor for our workings)

The pioneering spirits of all who have gone before us

Bill W

The sea

Being able to express ourselves

Tears

Each other

Contributing and being useful

The untidiness of a business meeting

A business meeting grounded in a spiritual approach

All the work that went on from before

International representation (Lizzie from London)

"This spiritual thing going on"

We sent a card to Carol because she was ill -- telling how we missed her.

END OF 1997 MINUTES