

MAICO Steering Committee minutes, April 10, 2007

Present: Dave S. (Chair); Diane B. (Office Manager); Chris H (Secretary recording); Pam J. (Vice Chair); Lila (AA member)

Opened with moment of silence and serenity prayer.

Reports:

Secretary's report: moved, seconded, and accepted as submitted, with minor changes.

Treasurer's report: Treasurer was not present, but review of the accounts to date reveals that we're \$500 in the black so far this year. This is an improvement over previous years. Moved, seconded, and accepted.

Office manager's report: Discussion followed the items listed on the office manager's report.

Old Business:

*PayPal:* Dave spoke with a Paypal 'account exec' who would be willing to 'put in a system' (subsequent discussion indicated that this is probably a full online order input page) to allow credit card purchases through the MAICO website. The cost quoted is 2.9% +.30 per transaction, and special pricing for products under \$12. Filling orders, packing, handling, etc., is a concern, especially because Diane is the sole worker. Dave explained some about how the Dallas, TX Intergroup website worked, and this was also discussed at the intergroup conference. We don't really have problems with shipping orders now. Right now we have people send checks. Pam asked Dave to make copies of the Paypal information, as well as the Dallas TX AA intergroup's setup for people to review before the next meeting, and it was agreed to consider this again next month.

*Non-conference approved literature:* Pam said she listened to some tapes coming out of the last Central Office conference, and Central Offices present that didn't finance through outside sales were either 1. in very wealthy areas with large contributions, or 2. had a large recovery bookstore in the area. She did not hear any discussion from the conference pertaining to the traditions and sales of non-conference literature.

She also stated that in general the information available (from GSO on Intergroup guidelines) seems to not say anything about traditions one way or the other on the topic of sales of outside literature.

Chris H said that he remains concerned that the traditions state that "an AA group should never go into business," and that we are supposed to be self-supporting through our own contributions. He also said that given the overwhelmingly negative response to the idea of discontinuing sales of outside literature, it seemed as though the 'group conscience' was against the idea, and he was thus no longer interested in pursuing this motion, such as it was.

Pam suggested that we might survey the groups to determine their opinion.

Lila—said that she thought the merchandise MAICO sells is really important to her sobriety, not "drunk junk" and hadn't really thought that there was much difference between conference and non-conference literature. She mentioned as well that she had recently learned that clubhouses were not AA as such, and was learning more about service work.

In general, members agreed that operating a business and selling outside literature were concerns, from the standpoint of the traditions: Dave and Pam both said they agreed with Chris' ideas about traditions 6 and 7. However, good business sense demands that we continue to sell non conference literature and merchandise. Dave indicated that this item would be kept on the agenda for the following month, and Pam also said that we had agreed to discuss it for three months. There has been no motion advanced on this topic, so no vote was taken.

*Literature price increase:* how do we do it? Some members felt that Diane should have some guidelines about how to raise prices. We raise prices parallel to AAWS, they raised books by \$1.00 so MAICO raised the retail price to customer by \$1.00. When Al-anon raised its book prices to us we then raised prices to customers as well, same with Hazelden.

*Conference calls:* Randy [Boscobel MAICO Representative] is still interested in seeing conference calls becoming a reality. We discussed but never agreed on unhooking the fax line to allow for a one-person conference call. Sue C. said that she too would like to be a MAICO rep if the conference call capacity were in place. Potentially we could ask about this question on the proposed upcoming survey of the groups. Lila said we can use a one-time conference call service available on the web. She will get MAICO details on service.

#### New Business:

*How do we update the 12 step list?* We don't have a policy. We can't give the list out to have some random AA member cull the list, but we'll discuss, next month, how to cull the list because it does need to be done. An AA member had offered to review the list and take out members [who were no longer active] and this is not permissible according to our guidelines. Any AA member can ask to see anything in the office at any time, with the exception of the 12<sup>th</sup> step list which is confidential.

*Mini-conference:* Lonny is going, and we'll ask if he can bring his truck.

*Eau Claire Intergroup:* Local AA members are starting an Intergroup in Eau Claire. They are having a workshop and would like a member of MAICO steering Committee to attend. They've met some resistance to forming one, and would like people to come talk about what a Central Office is and how it can carry a message, and to give people involved an idea of priorities and solutions. Diane read a list of questions the participants would like to discuss.

Dave asked if any original MAICO members are still around from the time when MAICO was founded, and no names were immediately apparent. But someone from the steering committee could attend the meeting. The meeting in Eau Claire will be on Saturday, May 12<sup>th</sup>. No one was available to go to Eau Claire so Diane will send them a copy of our by-laws and answer the questions asked by email.

The meeting closed with the Serenity Prayer.