

MINUTES SMR Business Meeting Study

Wednesday, Jan 3, 2024

Attendees: [8] - including Brian eM, Stephen, Terry, Marla, Sarah, Rebecca, Jim R

01. Call to Order [9:05]

Jim R call for the meeting of the Business Meeting Study Group, on the SMR Zoom account, on Jan 3rd, 2024.

We open with the Serenity Prayer.

02. Call to Service *(The following attendees offered to be of service)*

- a. Meeting Chairperson - Jim R
- b. Recording Secretary - Jim R
- c. Timekeeper - Stephen
- d. Other *(optional)* -

(Record the meeting) **Not Recorded**

03. Statement of Purpose - read by Marla

*We meet to discuss the various topics related to the business practices of the Strengthening My Recovery ACA meeting group. Our **GOAL** is to recommend to the meeting membership, for approval, standardized practices for conducting our business. All members are welcome to participate.*

04. Comportment Agreements - read by Terry; Stephen

- Raise hands to be recognized to speak
- Priority is given to those who have yet to speak
- If a point has been made, ask yourself if it needs to be repeated
- Be mindful - do not to distract others with written chats
- Anyone recognized and holding the floor may make a motion
- The Chair may ask if anyone has a motion around an issue
- We will have one minute of silent meditation after a motion has been seconded and discussed, just before voting
- A motion passes with a simple majority (50% + 1)
- We note those participants who voted in the minority and up to three of those members may offer an opinion. If anyone in the majority chooses to change their vote, another vote is taken - asking whether there should be a revote. A revote is final.
- A participant may ask, at any time, to have the Agreements read or may call for a one minute silent meditation break

05. Approval of the Minutes - Stephen, Second Terry - Approved without objection

The minutes of Dec. 10th have been posted to our website. They are found at:

<https://www.acamorning.org/study-business-meeting-practices/>

The minutes will not be read into the record. Participants may read the minutes and be prepared to voice any concerns.

06. Adoption of the Agenda - Motion to Adopt - Stephen, 2nd Marla - Unopposed

07. Open issues (*Old Business*)

Purpose. Develop a Statement of Purpose

- We began by editing the Welcome portion of a proposed business meeting script. Our goal is to incorporate the purpose of our business meeting as well as the values of our membership as determined by the Survey results from last summer, found here: [SMR Biz Survey - 1](#)
- To participate and offer suggestions, go to [this document](#)

Discussion:

- Sentence #3. 'Participating' could be changed to 'attending' - this could emphasize listening as opposed to speaking.
- #8. I'm allowed to have my 'personal preferences'. Perhaps we could find better wording.
- Concerned with the cadence - strike 'everyone' from the sentence #1.
- And strike the name of our meeting.
- It's good to pare this down - we won't take up too much time during the business meeting. Just, 'Welcome' - this is why we're here and how we are here.
- 'Will be chairing the meeting', change to 'volunteer to chair'. Reminds attendees that the Chair is just a volunteer and that others too can volunteer to do service as well.
- NOTE: The Business Meeting CoChairs position description was recently adopted by the SMR membership. These are elected positions which qualified members may step up for. The revised Position Description [is here](#).
- Question: The **bolded** words in the script, where they agreed upon by the Group previously? Could this be structured in a "this is how... this is why" format? The additional clarity could be really great for a newcomer in particular.
- NOTE: We looked again at the survey (linked above) that was undertaken last spring/summer.
- 'Solid meeting maintenance process' sounds awkward. Any ideas?
- Well, perhaps we could add something about it being 'values based', agreed upon by Group Conscious.
- ASIDE: Our next scheduled meeting was set for this coming Sunday. There is also a Safety Town Hall scheduled for that time. Would we be agreeable to postponing our next meeting till Sunday the 14th of January? Agreed, without objection.
- Unsure about 'we will be informed of the group's finances and of the various committee activities.' There is an aspect of a business meeting that we have not incorporated for many many months - suggestions and proposals of meeting

improvement from our members. This aspect has been put on hold and yet to be revived.

- How about saying 'our' finances. Creates a sense of ownership and community.
- I like that, and in sentence #2, 'our meeting' sounds more inclusive.
- Yes, it brings the focus home... to 'us'.
- Addressing the sentiment, when we talk about 'our' meeting and 'our' values... there are just a few of us here compared to the hundreds of meeting members... some of it feels...well, we don't bring our inner children to a business meeting... we may be trying to suppress differences of opinion... and substantial unanimity would be better than a simple majority... like 66.6%... and perhaps the language would best be business-like instead of trying to care for attendees emotions.
- To be clear, looking at our agenda, we are only focused on the Welcome at this time. We will look at the Rules and Guidelines portion of the business meeting script at a later session. And the 50% +1 stated in the agreements above pertain only to the working of this committee.
- And as a reminder, this that we are working on now, the Welcome, these are suggestions/recommendations that we will bring to the SMR Group, for the group to say, yes or no.
- I will add the word Proposals to work on the next time we meet. One thing that is not in this Welcome is mention of the fact that members' ideas and suggestions are also part of our business.
- Motion to extend to the top of the hour. Carried.
- Sentence #5. Remove 'we will be informed of'. How about 'we will hear reports from our Treasurer and various committees.'
- Maybe we don't need 'Here at the meeting'...
- I would like to raise the question, "Who is the audience for this Welcome?"
- It's a welcome statement that includes the purpose.
- Yes, the purpose and values are woven in.
- Where are the boundaries?
- Like, the Rules and Guidelines?
- Yeah, how long can members speak...
- Like, 'raise your hand'... that all comes later.
- But again, who's our audience? I think we have to remember there may be someone who has never been to our meeting before or never been to a business meeting - it's helpful to keep them in mind.
- NOTE; We looked over [the Agenda](#) that is presently on our website.
- This is what we have been going by and we are trying to improve. Some things this committee has talked about have already been incorporated.
- What we are creating will likely be a bit softer. I keep imagining the newcomer - where are they? This sets the tone. A lot of members will be coming with a background of business meetings that are combative. Argumentative. It doesn't have to be that way... by setting the tone... so I'd rather not throw out all the niceties. So long as we can read the welcome in a minute, maybe less. Then we would move into... 'Here are the Rules by which we conduct our business...'

- ASIDE: If you have not been getting any correspondence and would like to - put an email in the Chat.
- We may run a bit over, but I would like to take a moment to hear any comments - we are 6 people presently... Are we going in the right direction... do you have any questions... comments?
- You are doing an outstanding job for our meeting.
- Thank you. I gain a lot from this type of service. I learn how to speak, and how to hold space, and how to be inclusive, and how to gently guide. So there is a lot of experience that I am gaining. And I do value our Meeting.
- Any other comments?
- - Pause -
- Shall we finish sentence #5? 'Here at the meeting we will hear the Treasurer and committee reports.'
- We can return and 'take it from the top' and continue our efforts.
- And this here - sentence #6 - Proposals. This will reference that we have a process by which members may bring ideas to the business meeting. (The details of that process is something we will be looking at as the Business Meeting Study group.)
- Just an observation - when we bring this to the larger group, some moan and groan about being left out of the process.
- I see that. And when we worked out the revised Business Meeting CoChairs position description, we held a Town Hall for members to become informed and to raise concerns. I think we will do the same process for this.
- I think it's important to reiterate that information is available, that it's posted on the website and in chat. I often hear people complain that they never heard anything about this. Sometimes we have to go back over material we have already worked on because members initially chose not to participate.
- Do you have a creative solution to that?
- Perhaps a comment: This is what we've done and why. Just say, "This was discussed and we made a decision, and we welcome your input going forward."
- Very good point.
- See on the screen, the text with the cross outs and colors... it may be good to include a copy to show all the work that's been done. People could see the process. We have been very transparent.
- As a counterpoint - regardless of what is decided, I still have the right to disagree and participate., and interject my opinions.
- I wouldn't disagree, but then what's the point of coming here? We put a lot of work into developing this document. What's the point, if it's going to be rewritten.
- Well, being here you get to learn about the process.
- To be clear, this will be presented for an up or down vote. The business meeting is too busy a setting for editing. If the script is not adopted, it comes back to us and we hammer it out a little more.

NOTE: These are the edits made to the WELCOME part of the Business Meeting script. It is good to remember that this section sets the tone and can be especially impactful for those

members who are new to our morning meeting, or new to business meetings. We will keep the newcomer in mind.

First Version	Edits 1/3/24
WELCOME:	WELCOME:
"Welcome everyone to the business meeting of the <i>Strengthening My Recovery</i> , ACA meditation meeting.	"Welcome everyone to the our business meeting of the Strengthening My Recovery, ACA meditation meeting.
My name is _____ , and I will be chairing the meeting.	My name is _____ , and I will be chairing the meeting. and I have volunteered to chair this meeting.
By participating in the business meeting, we learn how to work together in a healthy manner.	By participating in attending the business meeting, we learn how to work together in a healthy manner.
The purpose of the business meeting is to create a solid meeting maintenance process, with appropriate rules and clear boundaries.	The purpose of the business meeting is to create a solid meeting maintenance process (?), with appropriate rules and clear boundaries. (work in - "values based")
Here at the meeting, we will be informed of the group's finances and of the various committee activities.	Here at During the meeting, we will be informed of the group's our finances- we will hear the reports from our Treasurer and various committees. reports. and of the our various committee activities.
Proposals (?)	We may also hear of Proposals from our members (?)
Our meeting members place a high value on respect , remaining mindful of our words and	

expressions as we avoid gossip and certain crosstalk.	
We aim to maintain safe spaces in which all members are welcome to participate without, or in spite of, fear.	Inclusion and Diversity ?
We set aside personal preferences in order to stand in unity with our group.	We hold personal preferences... perhaps “we stay open minded”.
We value transparency , ensuring the membership is kept informed of organizational developments and upcoming proceedings.	
And we value focus , so that the business at hand stays on-topic.	

Email any suggestions about the WELCOME to 12steps4jimr@gmail.com, subject line: SMR Script. You may also include general comments about business meeting practices.

With a Welcome in place we will then look at the rules and guidelines we will be suggesting. We will consider which readings we feel are best suited to a business meeting. We may also consider including a message to the newcomer - whether new to ACA or new to our meeting.

NOTE: With 4 members remaining the conversation moved to a general discussion about business meeting practices and the concept of opinions on outside issues. No formal motion was made to adjourn.

08. Adjournment 9:12

Motion to Adjourn: Seconded:

Closing prayer

Next meeting: **Sunday, Jan 14th, at 9:00 am Eastern**, after the morning meeting.

Minutes submitted by: Jim R