

Group Conscience Meeting (GCM) Minutes 4/26/2014

The meeting opened with Serenity Prayer.

*The Chairperson asked for a Minute Taker/Secretary for the meeting and a volunteer stepped up.

*The Chairperson asked for a Timekeeper and a volunteer stepped up.

*The Chairperson asked for the Phone Meeting Rep.'s to announce themselves and seven did so.

The Chairperson asked the past Minute Taker/Secretary to read the minutes from last month's (March) Group Conscience Meeting. Nobody had any corrections to make. The minutes were accepted into the record.

TREASURER REPORT:

The past Treasurer had a report to make today, "Even though I'm not the Treasurer anymore."

The past Treasurer explained that she was willing to stay on while people, "please think about

taking the position." She shared that the time spent on the Treasurer duties, "is only about an

hour a month." The past Treasurer provided her phone number for people who were considering applying for the position who may want to talk with her to get more information about the

position. She stated that the P.O. Box and the bank account were now closed but said that there was still money being donated from people into our current PayPal account. The past Treasurer

shared that there was a "current PayPal balance of \$292.40." She explained that the "ample

reserve requirement is set aside for the annual web fee and miscellaneous, that amt. totaling

160.00." She shared that there was \$132.40 left over "if we want to donate to the WSO." The

past Treasurer stated that the website hosting costs \$120.00 per year and is due in July. She

shared that the domain name fee is \$15.00 a year and is due in May. A member asked if she

filed the taxes and the past Treasurer said she did so in January. A motion was made by another

member to contribute all of the extra funds to the WSO. Another member asked, "How do the

funds get to the phone bridge?" The Chairperson explained, "The website and the phone line are

like a clubhouse and are separate from the WSO." She added, "We use PayPal now to pay for

the clubhouse." (To pay the rent of website fee and to pay the rent fee for the domain name of

<http://www.alanonphonemeetings.org>) The Chairperson explained that any donations made from

our clubhouse site go to our clubhouse. She described how, “Go to the “Contributions” button from the top of our Home Page of our clubhouse:

<http://www.alanonphonemeetings.org/7thtradition.htm> Then, scroll down until you see a little yellow button called “Donate.” If you click on that button you will be taken to a screen where you can make a donation by PayPal or by credit card.” These monies go to our clubhouse.

A second to the motion of contributing \$132.40 to the WSO was made and the votes were:

Yes 11

No 0

Abstain 2

The past Treasurer said she would transfer the funds of \$132.40 to the WSO. She added that Web Coordinator is serving as the “backup Treasurer” until a new Treasurer is found.

NEW BUSINESS:

The Chairperson moved on to say that we should all read the “Virtual AI Anon Meetings” PDF document found on the home page of our website/clubhouse. This document describes the current proposed process to address communication between groups on the phone bridge and to address the multiple, ongoing disturbances on the phone bridge.

The Chairperson then read the “Requested New Agenda Items for the Group Conscience Meeting 4-26-14” that had been posted on our website early in the week of the 20th. The Agenda Items that had been posted to the “Announcements” section of the website can be found here:

<http://www.alanonphonemeetings.org/announcements.htm> :

“ 1. Please post on the web site the letter from World Service that states that it is alright for Dual Members to serve above the group level on phone meetings because phone meetings are not part of the AI Anon service structure.

2. Is there monitoring technology that does not show the entire phone number? If so, we would like to have that implemented for monitors to protect anonymity.
3. Can we allow members to call into this phone bridge anonymously? Will this affect the ability of monitors to kick off people disrupting the meeting?
5. Change leader code.
6. Rotation of leadership.”

(NOTE: the number 4. was left out of the list on our website)

The Chairperson then proceeded to read each Agenda Item and immediately responded to each Agenda item. The Chairperson did so independently - as if the Agenda Items were a series of questions somebody had asked of her, individually. There was no discussion on any of the Agenda Item's from any of the AI-Anon members on the line:

*To the first Agenda item the Chairperson responded, “There is no letter from the WSO.”

To the second Agenda item the Chairperson responded, “I called Conference Owner who said the whole number is seen on the dashboard we have now.” (*Conference Owner was a guest at one of the past GCM's. He is an executive with the company that we rent the phone bridge number from).

*To the third Agenda item the Chairperson responded, “We are not able to allow anonymous numbers at this time.” She explained that it would affect the security monitors if a disturbance were made from an anonymous line.

*To the fifth Agenda item the Chairperson responded, “And the leader code? Again? We already just changed that. I don't see why we need to do that again.”

*To the sixth Agenda item the Chairperson responded, "I don't know what that Agenda Item means. All it says is 'rotation of leadership.'"

Then the Chairperson added, "I know that member from New York wanted an item put on the Agenda and has been waiting patiently...about a sponsorship workshop."

The Chairperson then shared that she could stay on the line until 3:30 (EST).

The Chairperson then proceeded to ask an open question, "Have any meetings rejected the idea of Security Monitor?"

Security Monitor replied, "I am planning on monitoring the upcoming business meetings because the disturbances on the line have prevented most business meetings from even happening. And so far I haven't received any notice at

alanonphonemeetingssecretary@yahoo.com that any meeting has rejected Secondary Security Monitors for their meeting."

The Chairperson asked, "We don't have the three volunteer Secondary Security Monitors anymore?"

The Security Monitor responded, "No. We don't have anybody monitoring now."

The Chairperson asked, "Why?"

The Security Monitor replied, "Some were tired. Some were sick. I, personally, do not have 20 extra hours a week to do it all. This is why we need some secondary Security Monitors."

A member of Al-Anon said, "The issues that came up for my group that I am Phone Meeting Rep. for...well, first of all, our individual group did not decide if dual members could serve."

She went on to say that her individual group wonders "about the guidelines for a Secondary Security Monitor" and "how" they would find a trusted servant to be the Secondary Security Monitor. She said her group was "mainly concerned about safety when it comes to the issue of Secondary Security Monitors and that's why he haven't elected a Secondary Security Monitor for our group."

This writer then shared that her group that she was elected as Phone Meeting Rep. for "decided

to table the idea of a Secondary Security Monitor until guidelines had been set up - which is why we all had

the meeting this past Saturday... to start hammering out some of those guidelines. The minutes from the All Groups Meeting 4/19/14 detail everything we discussed.”

(NOTE: The minutes are posted on our website - in the “Announcements” section.)

An AI-Anon member shared that she felt that one of the guidelines “should be that a person have 2 - 3 years before service.”

The Security Monitor said, “The idea is that each individual meeting will decide if dual members can serve. The idea is that each individual meeting will decide the length of time needed before a person can serve as Phone Meeting Rep or as a Secondary Security Monitor...”

At this point, an interruption came from a member who shared her concerns about “language” that has been used in the past on meetings and in documents to describe the problems we have been having on the phone bridge. She stated that she objects to the use of language that “is not in line with the suggestions in the AI-Anon Service Manual.”

The Chairperson said, “I have an exercise we can do...”

Another member interjected and said, “I was part of several discussions about a Secondary Security Monitor. I am not yet comfortable with the idea. I have not yet heard a system that I feel safe with.” She concluded, “I do not feel safe with what is being proposed.”

The Security Monitor said, “I can understand your concerns but I have the IP addresses of any person who will be serving as a Security Monitor. I will monitor and supervise the Security Monitors. The IP address is like a GPS location. It provides the exact address of where the Secondary Security Monitor’s computer would be.”

The Chairperson said, "The options so far, as I have heard... as I understand them, are that (1.) We have Secondary Security Monitors elected by each individual group. Or that (2.) we elect 5 - 10 monitors who are trusted servants who we elect and who will serve for 1 year." The Chairperson went on to say that she felt that a bonus to the second option "would be that nobody will know for sure who blocked them - if the decision came from a group of 5 - 10 Secondary Security Monitors."

An Al-Anon member said, "I think we are making this way more complicated than it needs to be. I think we need to set up a committee that will set guidelines for the leader code AND for the Secondary Security Monitors. Both issues need to be addressed."

Another member interjected, "I don't like that we give this illusion of safety to people!" She went on to say that she did not think that people knew that a Secondary Security Monitor would "have access to all their information. This is not confidential!"

The Chairperson said, "This is from the Factsheet for Electronic Meetings on page 2..."

(NOTE: The pamphlet "Factsheet for Electronic Meetings" S-60 can be found by following these steps:

1. Go to the main Al-Anon Family Group's website. Here: <http://www.al-anon.alateen.org>
2. Then look at the top of the page. See a little box that says "Member?" Click on that. Now you will be asked for a password. Enter hopeafg

Now you will see a lavender sign that announces Al-Anon and Alateen and you will see a 'Yes' or a 'No'

box. Click on Yes because you are a member of Al-Anon.

3. Now you have access to all kinds of information for Al-Anon members! This is how our Chairperson found the documents she read from at the meeting - such as <http://www.al-anon.org/pdf/S60.pdf> S-60 as well as G-39.

4. After you are logged in as a member, for your convenience, this writer has put the exact location <http> address in the notes so you do not have to spend time searching for the documents.

Our Chairperson is about to read from this S-60 document below...).

The Chairperson stated, "This is from page 2. <http://www.al-anon.org/pdf/S60.pdf> She read from the factsheet S-60. It said we have to bear in mind when we go online or join a telephone meeting that not everybody is going to really be a member of Al-Anon. She read, "Online meetings are in reality open to anyone with access to the Internet." The Chairperson continues reading from S-60, "Anonymity cannot be guaranteed with the same degree of certainty or sense of commitment as face to face meetings." She said we have to consider this before we dial in to a phone meeting. She added, "This should really be addressed at each meeting."

An Al-Anon member interjected at this point to say, "I think that this is like any problem in my daily life. Say I have a problem. I call a person and discuss it. Then I call a few more people. Then I go to the Lord. This is a spiritual program but I hardly ever hear the word 'God.'" She went on to say we need to call a prayer meeting to discuss the disturbances. She said, "When the disruptor calls in I just get off the line. I do not have the solution. We do not have the solution. Only God has the solution."

Another member of Al-Anon said that there had been an idea “floating around” that she thought was a good one. She said, “We should select a committee of long timers to decide who is trustworthy enough to be a Secondary Security Monitor and then they can come up with a set of guidelines.”

A different member of Al-Anon said, “I think, based on what Joni just read, that we should say right on our Home Page...there should be a clear disclosure statement.”

The Security Monitor said that he agreed.

A member of Al-Anon said, “I think we need more time to talk about all of this. Before next month’s meeting. Can we have an extra meeting? There is a slot open on Wednesday at 10:00 p.m.”

Another Al-Anon member said, “I’m reading pamphlet G-39 here. The Electronic Al-Anon Meeting Guidelines and I have a concern.”

(NOTE: Here is G-39 <http://al-anon.org/members/pdf/guidelines/G39.pdf>)

She said, “It says here that ‘No individual, member or non-member, has the authority to block or screen participants, such actions should only be taken by a group conscience of the meeting members.’”

The Security Monitor said, “That is what we are doing here...acting as a group conscience.”

An Al-Anon member said, “Sounds like we are asking that each individual meeting votes for what they want. A Phone Meeting Rep. and and/or a Secondary Security Monitor. Then the Secondary Security Monitor’s will be trained by Security Monitor.”

The Security Monitor said, "The options are that each individual meeting elects their own Secondary Security Monitor OR that we pick a group of people who we want to be Secondary Security Monitor's for all the groups."

Another member of Al-Anon said, "For my individual group we elected a Secondary Security Monitor and we have some questions." She went on to address some concerns her group had such as, "How will we know that the person who becomes a Secondary Security Monitor on any of the other meetings...what if they are the intruder?"

The Security Monitor stated, "I will have their IP address, the IP address of the Security Monitors. It is like a GPS. Over time it will show if it's the intruder by the behaviors."

A different Al-Anon member shared, "I don't see the link there... between knowing the IP address of the Secondary Security Monitor" and knowing where the disturbances are coming from. She said that she felt that a person acting as a Secondary Security Monitor "could have a spoofing device on their phone and they might have a way to not reveal their location." She concluded, "Criminals have ways."

A motion was made to put a disclaimer up on the website at the top of the Home Page where everybody could see it.

The Chairperson said, "We need to draft the message..."

An Al-Anon member interjected and said, "Time is of the essence. Let's vote on the motion."

Another Al-Anon member said, "We could put the disclaimer on the phone, too. So that when people call in they will hear it."

A different Al-Anon member said, "The disclaimer could say something like: 'When you call in to a phone meeting your anonymity cannot be guaranteed. Also: you may be monitored by a Security Monitor/Secondary Security Monitor while you are on a call...'"

Another Al-Anon member interjected, "We could have it in the format of the meetings, too."

The Security Monitor said, "To put the disclaimer on the phone message - that will cost

money.”

An AI-Anon member said, “Sounds like we have 3 different votes here: (1) To put the disclaimer in the format. (2) To put the disclaimer on the phone recording and (3) to put it on the website.”

Another AI-Anon member said, “We could form a committee to come together to write this disclaimer.”

A different AI-Anon member asked, “How much will it cost to do the phone message addition of the disclaimer? Could _____ (Security Monitor) find out for us?”

Another AI-Anon member said, “And format changes have to happen per individual meeting.”

The Chairperson said, “The motion is on the floor to add a Disclaimer to the website...” She proceeded to say that we could work on the wording later but we could vote yes or no to putting a disclaimer on the website now.

Yes: 25

No: 0

Abstain: 3

The Chairperson said, “We are now ½ hour past when the meeting should have ended. But, I did have an exercise I wanted to do, so if people want to, they can stay after the meeting to do the exercise.”

A motion was made to close the meeting. None were opposed.

The Serenity Prayer was said and the meeting was concluded.