

Ottawa Area Intergroup Meeting Minutes

May 13, 2009

Welcome:

The meeting was opened with a welcome to all Intergroup reps and AA Members present.

Voting Intergroup Reps and Non-Voting AA Members Attending:

28 Voting Members
18 Non-Voting members

Executive Members:

Chair - Brian M. - Heritage Group:
Vice-Chair - Shaun D. - Venture Group and Lunch With Bill
Secretary - Mary K. - Uptown Group
Treasurer - Pat B. - Beacon Hill
Webmaster - Mark W. - Serenity Group
John G. - Literature Coordinator
Rich W. - TAS Coordinator (not present for this meeting)
Ozzie L. - Newsletter Editor - Beacon Hill

Housekeeping:

- The Intergroup Email list was circulated requesting those present to identify if they are voting or non-voting members.

Minutes of the April 7, 2009 Meeting:

- Kay made a motion to accept the April meeting minutes and Bevan seconded the motion.

Outstanding Business from the April Meeting:

- David asked for information on Archives and the upgrading of the Internet Office. The Chair advised that this matter would be covered in the financial report.

Treasurer's Report:

- The Treasurer advised that there were two pressing issues that required discussion; 1) the Intergroup Credit Card and 2) Accumulated debt by Intergroup. He made a brief statement summarizing why he believes it's necessary for Intergroup to have a credit card. He summarized that we owe \$10,000 on our credit card because of large literature expenditures, Fall Conference and Springathon advances, and a Revenue Canada payment for GST owing. He recommended that a good portion of the GIC be cashed to pay off the balance owing on Mastercard.

The Chair opened the floor to discussion of the two issues.

Credit Card Issue:

There was substantial discussion by the Intergroup Reps, Alternates, and AA members on the need for a credit card by Intergroup including the need for the purchase of literature from New York, guaranteeing the Hotel for the Springathon, convenience in purchasing office supplies etc.

There were obviously two different belief systems present during the discussion, some people who believe in buying on credit and others who believe in only buying whenever you have the cash to pay for the item. Many Intergroup Reps, Alternates, and AA members expressed their personal opinion on Intergroup having a credit card. Issues relating to paying \$548.00 in interest to mastercard during the past 4 months was raised. Control and signature of the credit card was discussed. The Treasurer advised that Intergroup being an NGO is not able to get a credit card and so the card is in his name and he has the only signing authority on the card. He also stated there are no governing rules for the credit card. The need for a credit card to be able to function in our society today was raised by many. The following motions were raised.

MOTION: Sasha of the Uptown Group moved that the credit card for Intergroup be eliminated and nobody seconded the motion. Therefore Intergroup reps did agree that a credit card was required by Intergroup to be able to function effectively.

MOTION: A motion was made by Hector and seconded by Susan that a good portion of the GIC be cashed to pay off the balance owing on the Mastercard. The Intergroup Bylaws do not stipulate how much of a prudent reserve is required and therefore the motion proceeded to a vote. The motion carried.

MOTION: Michael made a motion which was seconded by Jeff that “ the balance of the credit card must be paid off in full each month”. The motion was carried. Any expense to exceed paying the credit card in full had to be presented to the Intergroup reps for a formal approval prior to the expenditure of funds.

The Chair did advise that this might limit the Board's ability to undertake things that the groups request.

Outstanding Debt:

- The Treasurer advised that the renovations of the Intergroup office did cost approximately \$12,000 and that this is a one time cost and will not reoccur. There was some discussion of the Archives being included in the Intergroup offices but it was quite limited. He stated that he did not envision any unusual expenses for the rest of 2009.

Literature Coordinator's Report:

Concern was expressed regarding the overdue receivables from a number of groups. One Intergroup Rep stated they had a member picking up literature at the Intergroup office, charging the group, but keeping the literature himself. Some expressed opinions that small groups have limited funds and that they need 2-3 months to pay for literature. Others expressed the view that each group is to be self-supporting, as stated in our Traditions. The final sense was that we are in support of the suffering alcoholic and the supply of literature is an integral element of this support.

MOTION: A Motion was made by Hector and seconded by Susan that Intergroup Reps go back to their groups regarding the outstanding debt and that they make a report on the debt owed to Intergroup for literature at the next Intergroup Meeting. The motion did not carry with many abstentions by Intergroup reps. Many intergroup reps were uncomfortable with this approach.

- The Coordinator advised that prices for literature are going to be increased in July by New York and that this price increase would have to be handed on to the groups.
- He advised that new Meeting Lists had been ordered.
- Intergroup Office will continue to carry the Grapevine magazine but will not carry the other Grapevine books or literature.

TAS:

- The Chair filled in for the TAS Coordinator who was unable to attend.
- We had 55% coverage in April.
- Intergroup Reps were encouraged to tell their group members to take sponsees to the Intergroup office to answer telephone, to give them solid mentoring in TAS.
- Terry of the Westboro Saturday 11 AM Group offered with another member of his group to participate in a focus group on TAS. The TAS Coordinator has been given this information and will proceed to coordinate a TAS Focus Group.

Newsletter:

- The Editor advised that June 20th is the deadline for birthdays for the next edition.
- A supplemental page to the Newsletter will be provided online for additional information after the printing of the Newsletter.
- There will be two versions of the Newsletter, a black and white in hard copy and colour on the AA website.
- The Editor sought guidance from Intergroup Reps on whether a two page supplement of the fall conference should be included or not. The Reps told the Editor to make a reasoned decision himself.
- The Editor raised the possibility of providing the Newsletter online without any hard copies being printed. He stated groups could make copies of the online version for distribution in their groups.

Loud hissing and booing from Intergroup Reps greeted to this suggestion and the Editor quickly retracted his suggestion.

SPRINGATHON REPORT:

- The Chairperson of the Springathon advised that the Springathon for 2009 was successful and that Intergroup would be receiving its advance back shortly, and that excess funds of approximately \$4800.00 would also be returned to Intergroup.
- There was one recommendation regarding coffee for next year. It seems that they stopped serving coffee at 5PM and it was recommended that coffee be served in the early evening for future Springathons.

FALL CONFERENCE:

- The Chair of the Fall Conference advised that all speakers and panels are now finalized.
- He brought fliers for distribution to the groups.
- He requested that groups reserve tables to ensure a good attendance at the dinner. There is some concern since attendance at the dinner has decreased in the past few years.

Closing of the Meeting:

- The Chair closed the meeting with the Responsibility Pledge.

