

# ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Thursday, March 23, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

The Chairperson Charles P. welcomed the Advisory Committee and started the meeting with the SERENITY PRAYER.

The Zoom participants were not able participate in the meeting.so the meeting proceeded with only members who were at the CDO office.

ROLL CALL: Cecilia said there was 22 members in attendance which was enough for a quorum.

MINUTES: Charles P. called for a motion to approve the Advisory Minutes from Wednesday January 25, 2023 (Minutes attached) and October 24, 2022 Minutes (minutes attached). The October 24, 2022 minutes were tabled for approval until March 23, 2023 Advisory Meeting. The motion was seconded and the Advisory Minutes from January 25, 2023 and October 24, 2022 were approved as previously read.

Chairperson Charles P. (Area 11) asked the s Operating Committee Members in attendance to introduce themselves. Rick T. (area 1), Dennis T. (Area 2), Alan K. (Area 3), Karin K. (Area 4), Pat C. (Area 5) Tim P. (Area 6), Sandy L. (Area 7), Lee L. (Area 8), Emilie W. (Area 9), and Charley C. (Area 10) introduced themselves to the Advisory Committee. Ruth said that Jason M. and Marilyn K. were on zoom and she introduced Cecilia P., Ralph T. and Bob M. who were in attendance. Ruth told the Operating Committee what each staff member was responsible for and that the CDO office was known for its ability to help members from all over the country because of the willingness of the staff to be helpful to our members. Ruth said many Intergroup Offices have still not been able to open after COVID because of their poor financial situation and many of their staff have moved on. The CDO office was able to continue to answer phones and help people especially through are deceased staff member David G. who passed away and came into the office every day.

New Business: Charles P. asked the New Operating Committee Nominees from Area 1, Area 2, Area 3 Area 4 and unexpired term for Area 8 to introduce themselves. Charles P. asked if there are any nominees from these areas from the floor (must have 3 years of sobriety and be nominated by their Home Group). There were no nominees from the floor so the following members stood up, introduced themselves.

**AREA/TERM 8:** 44001- Amherst, 44011- Avon,44012 -Avon Lake, 44039- North Ridgeville, 44054- Sheffield Lake, 44070- North Olmsted, 44116- Rocky River, 44126- Fairview Park, 44140- Bay Village, 44145- Westlake  
**Nominee ((Lee L). filling out unexpired term – Home Group: Unity 11<sup>th</sup> Step Mediation**

**AREA/TERM 1:** 44021 Burton,44022 Chagrin Falls, 44023, Chagrin Falls, 44046 Huntsburg, 44056 Macedonia, 44062 Middlefield, 44065 Newbury,44072 Novelty,44080 Parkman,44087 Twinsburg 44128 Cleveland, 44139 Solon,44146 Bedford, 44202 Aurora,44231 Garrettsville, 44234 Hiram,44236 Hudson, 44237 Hudson\*, 44241 Streetsboro, 44255 Mantua, 44265 Randolph and outlying area:

**Nominee: Rick T – Home Group Bainbridge Men**

**AREA/TERM 2:** 44101 Cleveland\*, 44103 Cleveland, 44113 Cleveland, 44114 Cleveland, 44115 -  
**Nominee: Dennis T. Home Group: Stella Maris Sunday**

**AREA/TERM 3:** 44104 Cleveland, 44106 Cleveland, 44120 Cleveland, 44122 Beachwood, And 44127 Cleveland  
**Nominee: Alan K. Home Group: Shaker Big Book Study/Allendale**

**AREA/TERM 4:** 44109 Cleveland, 44129 Cleveland, 44133 North Royalton, 44134 Cleveland, 44144 Cleveland, 44212 Brunswick –

**Nominee: Nominee: Karin K. Home Group: Women of the Falls**

Charles P. asked for a motion to accept the nominees from Area 8, Area 1, Area 2, Area 3 and Area 4. There was a second and the nominees were accepted as representatives of the Operating Committee.

Chairperson asks for Committee Reports –

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS –

Financial: Ruth gave a brief Financial Summary for month ended February 2023- February Statement: attached

Pledges	2/28/2023	\$27,044
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Pledges	2/28/2022	\$20,326
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Increase of		\$6,718
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The pledge drive has just started: At the end of February CDO had \$27,044 in pledges and \$47,029 in expenses. That leaves the CDO with a deficit of almost \$20,000 for the last 2 months. Ruth said the CDO has a healthy Prudent Reserve so we do not have to go to our groups and ask them to make up this deficit. We have a reserve to be able to pay our responsibilities. We get the bulk of our yearly operating costs from the March Fund drive and know our financial shape at the end of May when most of our pledge money has been deposited. Ruth said the May statement will show a big increase in revenues over expenses but it has to be divided by 7 months June through December to give us the monthly amount we can spend throughout the rest of the year from the current Fund Drive and the deficit will be paid out of our Prudent Reserve. Ruth gave the example of when someone gets their paycheck deposited in their account and it seems like a lot of money until you have to pay your mortgage, utility bills, car payments, gas or maybe your child needs something unexpected and you see it disappear very quickly. We cannot be totally clear about what our financial situation is until the end of the year when all monies are in and all bills paid.

Ruth said we keep our Literature at breakeven so we can keep our prices low and make literature available to our members at only a small mark up. In order to do this, the CDO does not charge any overhead costs that would normally be charged to the literature department: office supplies, a portion of rent, phones etc.

The special events programs which include the software updates so far reduces the liability from the bequest we got for this project and so is at a breakeven.

Corrections: Next Corrections Committee meeting will be at the CDO Monday April 3, 2023

6:30 p.m. at CDO Office. Ruth said we have a cabinet full of literature from the pink can money but not all facilities are open now but we have literature available when they let us come back fully.

Activities: The Secretary Workshop will be held Saturday, April 15, 2023 from 10 am to noon at CDO. Ruth said that a flyer and a copy of the workshop materials are on the table and encouraged members to take them. Ruth said the first half is the groups' relationship to the office on group business like literature purchases and group updates; the second half is about what the relationship of the group is to carry the A.A. message. Allan K. talked about our purchase of Guardian tickets and we will give further information when we have the exact date and time.

Archives: Bob McK., Bob gave the history of the Intergroup Dinner Dances. The dance started in 1952 as only dinner and a lead and the dance was then added. 1500 tickets were easily sold and there was a raffle for a free table. There were many reasons that it started failing: location change, increasing costs and changes in what members chose for entertainment. Bob mentioned some of the famous people who led at the dinner dance.

There have been attempts to revive it but they have failed. Bob said he was going to try and put together a CD of the dinner dance leads. He would have to remove last names and get Operating Committee approval.

Communications: Charles P. said that there was a number of items under communication: how we are carrying the message by keeping our traditions and making sure our group information is up to date. Charles said that we had a big crowd at our last workshop and this is where we learn about how to communicate in our groups, in the office and with each other. He encouraged members to come the April 15<sup>th</sup> workshop.

Old Business:

Software update: Ruth said the CDO had the opportunity, through an unexpected bequest to us, to update our outdated software system. Our current system was not compatible with the General Service Meeting Guide App that our members were asking us for. We are in the final stages of Jason signing off on this project and we are hoping it will go live within the next couple of weeks.

Outreach: Ralph T. reported that the CDO has been getting calls from facilities that want us to bring meetings into their facilities. One is a senior citizen long term facility which we now have members going into. Ralph said he has been taking leads once a week into North Coast Behavioral Health Facility. Ralph said this happened because a resident called and Ralph checked into it and the facility invited him to continue the meeting and it has been going on since October. Ralph has recruited 5 new people to rotate going into the facility. North Coast has been very appreciative of our efforts. Ralph said there are more facilities that are asking for our help and the CDO is trying to recruit volunteers to be temporary contacts to support people as they go into regular A.A. meetings.

Ruth said AA started in hospitals with the man on the bed but there has been a change in the attitude of hospitals and treatments centers with the rise of MAT (Medically Assisted Treatment) which they say treats the whole person including substance abuse, depression and trauma. Ruth said A.A. treats those too through the steps. Ruth said her and another A.A. member working with outreach Terry G. started going to facilities letting them know that A.A. has no opinion on outside issues and that we are complimentary to treatment not antagonistic to it. Ruth also said that hospitals often think A.A. is a religious organization and we reaffirm we may be spiritually based but not religiously aligned.

Prudent Reserve: Tim P. a member of our Finance Committee said he has been on the Operating Committee for 2 years. Tim explained he has been sober 20 years and a sponsee encouraged him to get active in service. Tim said everyone but the CDO Staff is a volunteer and the Operating Committee oversees the office but all of us are trying to make the right decisions around the office and service. Tim said that we are all trying to figure what the right decisions are and that nobody is necessarily an expert at it but just trying to do the right thing. Tim gave the example of when he first got sober members were putting a dollar in the basket and some members thought with the passing of time we should be putting \$2.00 in the basket so he wondered if there was a formula for actually figuring what each group should be contributing. Tim said Ruth makes herself available to answer all questions regarding the office finances so I asked her how do we know how much we should contribute. Tim gave the example of when you go out to dinner with friends you don't donate to the bill you contribute your share. Tim said he and Ruth sat down and tried to come up with a way of figuring out what would work for each group to contribute to keep the office going. Tim said he and Ruth based it on 850 groups in the area and the operating budget of \$300,000 which includes salaries, utilities, insurance, rent, etc. Tim said that he then ran the numbers so that he could go to his home group and say this is what our group should be contributing to the Central Office. Tim said that his group figured out that each member of his group should contribute \$2.30 each week.

Their group had about 50 members so they decided they should contribute \$5.00 to cover a member that may miss the group one week. Tim said he has been thinking about this for some time on what is the right number is, not just more but what was enough. In our own personal budgets they say you should have 3 to 6 months so if you need \$3000 a month to live you should have at least \$9,000 tucked away because if one month you only have \$2,500 you can take \$500.00 from that reserve and then put it back to \$9,000. Tim said a member asking about our Prudent Reserve made the CDO determine what we think is a good number. If a personal budget should be three to six months and we applied that to the CDO budget of \$300,000 that would mean millions and millions of dollars as a reserve which would be way too much. The CDO Operating Committee determined that 1 ½ times or 150% of our budget would be a good number which would be \$450,000 as a Prudent Reserve. So we should have no more than \$750,000 in total. Every year the budget could change up or down depending on circumstances as inflation. The first thing to disclose is the 1 ½ times number which is based on the Budget that the Operating Committee by the 11 elected volunteers from the CDO 11 Areas. After we replace any deficit spending we have to that number, it is then determined on how we should distribute any funds over that 1 ½ times number. What do we do with the money over what the Operating Committee has determined is our Prudent Reserve is the next question Tim said. We have already put Area 54 and the General Service office in our budget and that we could look for other ways to distribute excess funds: corrections, conferences, support for other offices, outreach work, helping groups with literature.

Edgar, a member who has been concerned with the Prudent Reserve asked if this formula was in our Constitution or By-laws and it was just determined by the Operating Committee so it is not. The Operating committee voted to establish this 1 ½ times formula but there will have to be further discussion on putting it in the By-Laws. Edgar said he trusted the office 100% but still thought we should be more transparent with the balance sheet. Tim said we have given the number and again reiterated that anyone could come down and ask Ruth. We've been talking about this for the last year and the number of the Prudent Reserve did not take into account that money was also being spent during the year so that the figure of funds for the Prudent Reserve of course would not be as big as we thought. There was a discussion on our disclosure of finances. We publish our income statement every month and distribute it at each Advisory Committee Meeting and Ruth is available to discuss our Balance Sheet with any member who comes down to the office. One of the members of the Advisory Committee said she did not realize that the office was under the direction of 11 members of the Operating Committee who determined the budget, oversaw the office and made all financial decisions regarding the office. The first quarter of every year, the CDO will make a determination on funds, if any, should be distributed. Ruth also reminded the Advisory Committee that the CDO is audited each year and our tax disclosures are online for anyone to see.

Bob McK. said that the Chairperson of the General Service Board was asked to resign. She was the first female chair and there was no discussion. They did it immediately. Bob said he felt this was not a fair practice and asked the Groups to consider holding the recommended 30% groups give to the General Service Office be withheld until there was more information. Alan K, an Operating Committee member and also a GSO delegate asked for judgement to be withheld until more facts were known.

Charles P. asked for more ideas from the Advisory Committee for activities that would promote group unity.

Charles P. asked for a motion to adjourn, there was a motion, a second and the meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Next Advisory Meeting: at 7:00 pm Tuesday, June 27, 2023 at the CDO