Westside Central Office Formation Committee Meeting Minutes

10am-11am, September 3, 2011

Opened meeting at approximately 10am with Serenity Prayer

Introductions: Mark L (Chair), Nathan N (Nutbuckets), Joe S (Hope No Smoke), John W (Treasurer)

Approved minutes from last meeting

Treasurer Report (John W)

- Treasurer $708.05 in treasury at start of meeting.
- Treasurer contacted our CPA and received some suggestions for improving the reporting of our literature sales in our treasure report (i.e., separate inventory from cash in the financial statement). John will add these suggestions to the treasurer report in the next month or two.

Chair Report (Mark L)

- Chair spent most of his time this past month working with Legal Subcommittee and Ad-Hoc Committee.

Logistics/Facility Subcommittee Report (Chair Vacant)

- No news

Legal Subcommittee Report (Chair Vacant)

- Mark L reported that our CPA was not able to get the late fee in our filing with the Oregon D.O.J. waived. We will have to pay $10 plus a $20 late fee to Oregon D.O.J.
- We received a renewal notice from Oregon Secretary of State. In order to renew our nonprofit status for 1 year, we need to file a report plus a $50 filing fee to the Secretary of State by September 24, 2011.

Finance Subcommittee Report (John W)

- No news

Outreach Subcommittee Report (Mark L)

- Subcommittee chair plans to attend the September Area 58 Assembly September 16th through the 18th. He will also submit a WCO report to Area 58 for inclusion in their business meeting minutes.

I.T. Subcommittee Report (Mark L)

- Subcommittee chair is looking for a web developer for our website. Please send any interested folks with web design experience our way.

Literature Subcommittee Report (Joe S)

- We sold out of our literature this past month.

- Subcommittee chair discussed his next literature order/

Ad-Hoc Committee Report (Joe S, Mark L, Nathan N)

- Ad-Hoc Committee investigated telephone number for WCO.
- A separate report was submitted to the body by the Ad-Hoc Committee.

Old Business

Elections: Secretary, Logistics/Facility Sub-Committee Chair, Legal Sub-Committee Chair, Co-Chair

All vacant positions remained open.

Seventh Tradition observed

New Business

Motion #1

To: Westside Central Office

From: Mark L, Chair

Motion: Approve $50 fee required to renew our Domestic NonProfit Corporation status with the Oregon Secretaty of State.

Current Practice: Westside Central Office (WCO) paid $50 to Oregon Secretary of State last year to establish our NonProfit status with the state of Oregon.

Intent and Purpose: By paying the $50 to the Oregon Secretary of State, WCO will keep its Nonprofit status with the State of Oregon for another year. Failure to pay this fee by the due date, 9/24/2010, forfeits our NonProfit status and requires us to reapply.

Budgetary Impact: $50

Motion seconded by Nathan. Motion passed.

Motion #2

To: Westside Central Office

From: Joe S, Literature Subcommittee Chair

Motion: Establish a local telephone number through freedomvoice.com for Westside Central Office.

Supporting Statement: GSO will not list WCO in their *Central Offices, Intergroups and*

Answering Services directory until WCO has a telephone number. Therefore, establishing a telephone number appears to be the next logical step in our formation.

Intent and Purpose: Establish a local phone number, preferably with a Beaverton exchange, for WCO as recommended by the WCO Ad-Hoc Committee in their report dated September 3, 2011. The Ad-Hoc Committee recommended using the provider freedomvoice.com which charges $9.95 a month for 300 minutes and 4.9 cents for each additional minute (a 15 day free trial is also included after we sign up). The phone system will be maintained by the WCO I.T. Subcommittee.

Current Practice: None

Budgetary Impact: $9.95/month for first 300 minutes, 4.9 cents for each additional minute.

Seconded by Nathan N. Motion Tabled.

Meeting closed at 11am with the Responsibility Statement.

Westside Central Office Ad-Hoc Committee Report

September 3, 2011

At the August 2011 WCO business meeting, an Ad-Hoc committee was formed to investigate and/or recommend a telephone answering service for WCO. Establishing a telephone number appears to be the next logical step in forming the WCO. GSO requires us to have a telephone number in order to be registered as a "Central Office" with them. Also the WCO can operate as a virtual office with a telephone number until a physical office is established.

The scope of the Ad-Hoc committee was to investigate and/or recommend a telephone answering service. Joe, Mark, and Nathan served on this committee. We held a meeting at Mark's house on August 18th. The scope of our committee included investigation of service providers, type of phone number (e.g., local or toll free), fees, and service positions required for maintaining the telephone service.

Below is a summary of our findings and recommendations:

Type of phone system – We could go with a "virtual" Private Branch Exchange (a.k.a. PBX), a professional answering service, or a combination of both.

A "virtual" PBX is an automated phone system that forwards calls to volunteers' personal telephones. The system is considered "virtual" because all of the hardware is owned by the provider. The system is configured through a web interface. The web interface allows us to program each extension to forward to a certain phone number based on the time and day of the week. This allows several volunteers to help man the phones. Because the system is automated and there is no hardware to purchase/maintain, this option is relatively inexpensive. One provider, called freedomvoice.com, charges only $9.95/month for 5 extensions, 300 minutes, and 4.9 cents for each additional minute. The one disadvantage is that a volunteer may not always be available to answer the call.

A professional answering service allows phone calls to be screened and forwarded by a human, rather than through an automated system used by the "virtual" PBX above. The main advantage to this service is that someone is always available to answer and forward the call. However, because a human is involved, this option is more expensive than the "virtual" PBX. The cheapest provider we could find was answeringservice.com. They start out at $29/month and $1.75/call. To help alleviate costs, some Intergroup/Central Offices use an answering service only when a volunteer is not available to answer the call. The more phone coverage they have by volunteers, the cheaper their phone bill. The other disadvantage is that some members might be apprehensive to talk to someone at a call center versus dialing directly to a member of our fellowship.

After weighing in the pros and cons of the type of phone system, **we recommend going with a "virtual" PBX**. As for the provider, **we recommend freedomvoice.com**.

Type of Phone Number – freedomvoice.com allows us to choose a local or a toll-free phone number. **We recommend using a local phone number**. In particular, we suggest getting a number with a Beaverton exchange. Having a toll free number may intimidate/discourage a newcomer from calling because they may feel they are calling "AA National Headquarters" instead of a local intergroup. Because we want to portray a local image, a local number makes sense.

Service Positions required for maintaining the phones – A telephone number opens up several opportunities for service to AA. Besides volunteers to answer phone calls, many Intergroup/Central Offices have chair positions to coordinate the "AA Hotline" and the "12th Step Calls". We feel WCO can also benefit from establishing these chair positions. Therefore, **we recommend establishing an "AA Hotline Chair" and a "12th Step Call Chair".** Below are job descriptions for each of these positions:

Job descriptions

AA hotline Chair- 2 years sobriety requirement, 1 year commitment

- Seeks volunteers and groups for the WCO Hotline shifts.
- Trains volunteers how to handle calls and forward contact information and location to the 12 step call chair.
- Makes written report at WCO monthly business meeting, reporting what days and shifts are open.
- Failure to report at or attend 2 consecutive WCO business meetings will result in an open position.

12 Step Call Chair - 2 years sobriety requirement, 1 year commitment

- Maintains and seeks a list of 12 step call volunteers and groups available to 12 step calls based on their geographic location.
- 12 Step call chair is forwarded contact information for the AA hotline volunteers where they will then coordinate a group or volunteer based on the 12 step callers location.
- Makes written report at WCO monthly business meeting.
- Failure to report at or attend 2 consecutive WCO business meetings will result in an open position.

Yours in Loving Service,

Telephone Ad-Hoc Committee