

## **MINUTES FROM SECULAR SERVICE GROUP MEETING 08/10/2025**

Approx. 8-10 people in attendance

**Agenda item:** Literature Group update from Maude.

She states its going well. Last meeting defined what people should be writing and established good guidelines; realized should have done this before. Presently sending out letters to people to edit their 3<sup>rd</sup> Step. Meet again next week.

Amy: clarified with Maude what she's doing which is to have people write about how they work the 3<sup>rd</sup> step and putting it on website. Started on step 3; have not done steps 1 and 2 but will go back and do them.

**Agenda item:** Follow up on creating contact list and putting info in database of web manager – did all get done? And should we discuss issue of maintenance.

Kristina: I created list and sent it along to Maude and Ken.

Maude: And that is now on the website; however we don't have the meetings that aren't in English and we really need to have them. If anyone has contact with meetings in Russia or Brazil and can get that information please do. As far as maintenance, maybe we could do it once a month...I don't know.

Amy: clarified that this contact information is on the "web manager", and so that information is not available to the public, only the people who have access to the database and that is who? Just so we know....

Maude: Myself and Michael right now.

Maude: Ken has access to the documents that would give him ability to get into it.

Amy: OK. I just wanted to make sure that if someone contacts us and asks who they should get in touch with about another meeting we know who to send them to: you, Michael or Ken.

Ken: I wanted to offer a little insight into non-English speaking meeting; they are primarily in Brazil and France. Russia is I believe now primarily face-to-face. I don't know if the one's in Brazil are independent of each other or if you could just go to one meeting and get the contact for one, or all of them. That's all we need is someone to go to these meetings. I think they are all impossible times for me. France I think is 3 am. We need a volunteer to take this project on. You can just go to the end of the meeting and simply have a conversation and get some contact information.

Maude: I think that Eric goes to the French speaking ones. Cause he speaks French.

Amy: I was just about to say don't we need people who speak that language.

Ken: Most people in the world are bi-lingual. I'm pretty sure there will be English speaking people in those meetings. I went to a Brazilian meeting once before and they translated.

Can we have a volunteer to reach out to those groups?

Rushil: I am usually up at those times.

Amy: So are you volunteering to do the France meeting?

Rushil: What exactly am I getting from them.

Kristina: I can help you out with that Rushil.

Ken: And I'll do the Brazil meetings.

Amy: Excellent. Thank you Ken and Rushil.

**Agenda Item:** Solidarity Day Event/SMNA Virtual Convention (Ken and/or Kristina) Next steps?

Ken: We haven't talked a lot about this. We have talked a little bit about that I believe it has been ten years since at the very least the Melbourne meeting first registered with NA. I talked with Mike, and he talked with Todd about when Seattle meeting first started as in person meeting and I think it's a few years later. So I think we can take Melbourne as ground zero and it's reasonable to say this is the 10 year anniversary and combine it as Secular Solidarity Day.

Kris and I talked about date and time and looking at October and using the Beyond Belief International time slot on Sunday and working with them on that and whether we want to extend beyond the hour ; maybe a 90 minute time slot.

I think we need to get some more people involved in this. Make this a collective decision-making process.

MIKE: offered to be involved in committee planning the Event.

RUSHIL: I think it would be good to get the flyer for this as soon as possible.

AMY: Agreed. So what are the next steps. October is only two months away.

KRIS: Next step is setting exact time and date; Looking at October 18<sup>th</sup>. Deciding what format should be. Whether it will be an hour or more. Making flyers. We need a committee. We had one last year, only three of us, but it worked well so it would be nice to have that again. A planning committee.

Amy asked who would like to be on the committee.

Michael offered to be part of it.

AMY: Maybe we could announce it at meetings; announce what it is and if anyone wants to participate. And I agree with Rushil that we could start posting a flyer at our meetings a couple month's in advance and if it's the 18<sup>th</sup>....that's only a couple month's out.

KEN: I'll get together with Kristina and we'll get an online committee together within a week and work out some of the details in a collective decision making way, and get a flyer made. That's our aspiration.

AMY: Sounds great! Thank you all so much this is really exciting.

**Agenda item:** Tradition 7 and using any extra funds for convention.

AMY: Michael – you sent me this. Do you want to talk on it?

MIKE: You have the wrong Michael. There's a Mike C. You can call me Ohio Michael. There are four or five Michael's out there now.

AMY: Well that's interesting that the Michael who asked me to put this up isn't here.

KRIS: This kind of discussion would also involve Bob as the treasurer; cause that's the money that we're talking about that is extra that exists right now. I suppose if we started raising money for the event we would probably use this account. Whether we would want to make it separate so that people know if they are donating to the 7<sup>th</sup> tradition of a meeting or the 7<sup>th</sup> tradition of a convention might be something that we should talk about as well.

BOB: Yes, correct. I think I was actually at this meeting where Mike C. brought this up and he was asking if...for a long time we have said in the 7<sup>th</sup> tradition statement that any extra donations we have will be donated up to World Services and he asked if we could use that extra money for a convention. I think the answer to that is yes. We have five or six groups using the same zoom account and the same treasury so it would be a matter of having a group conscience from all of those group to agree that this is something we would want to use extra funds for. And of course if you wanted to use that account to fundraise specifically for the event that is something we can think about too. Right now there is about \$422.00 in that treasury and I believe we have always said when it gets up to around \$500 We would kick it up to World Services. So that's where it stands now. But I think that whatever happens with that money it's a matter of a group conscience with all the groups.

Maude asked if the website needs money?

KEN: No I don't think it needs much.

BOB: That's actually in the budget. That's what we pay for out of that paypal fund. The expenses from that fund include the website and the zoom account are about \$360 / year. That's our target. It all comes out of the same fund.

Amy brought up the question of how taking a group conscience would work logistically amongst all the secular meetings. Conversation was tabled and Ken pointed out that the "committee" for the event can address that issue once it is convened.

### **Other Business or Issues:**

Ohio Mike brought up the topic of having a live, secular, physical convention sometime.

Ken pointed out that no-one outside of America would likely come.

Amy mentioned that it would be a big idea and difficult, but very sweet.

Mike mentioned the possibility of renting airb&b for 16+ people; doesn't have to be a convention at a hotel with lots of bells and whistles; can start small. It could be a camp out; we could have a zoom link if we have speakers or a round table so people can participate internationally as well ...it's just an idea. Somebody else might have another solution. I think it would be good for secular NA to plan some kind of an event where we could all come together.

MARK: For a small group of people a get together may not be the easiest thing, but I was just online looking at the AA Atheist/Agnostic one that we had people go to and participate in. Maybe we could piggy back on that; but if I'm reading the website right the next one is not until 2026.

AMY: That's a great idea Mark. I know a couple folks who have been to the AA Agnostica Convention and said it was incredibly inspiring to be around all those heathens talking about secular recovery! Intriguing idea we should keep kicking around. I love the idea also Michael of getting together live; one of the major drawbacks of being on zoom is that we never see each other live; I think it would be wonderful for some of us to try to meet live. Maybe a more casual thing rather than a formal convention. Let's keep talking one on one with each other and mulling it over and see what we come up with.

MARK: AAs international convention was just in Vancouver and according to the agnostica site, they were invited to host a hospitality suite and three panels.

AMY: Are there international NA Conventions?

MIKE: There won't be one for awhile. The last one was Washington.

### **Other New Business:**

KEN: I wanted to raise an issue: A number of people have brought up to me the need for a queer-friendly meetings. I've spoke to Kris and I don't want to lead on this, but we did have one once that fell apart, not sure why. I think its something that's really needed, as queer people and particularly trans people are under a lot of pressure in the US with the current regime. I think it's really a good time to offer particular support for that community. I also thought that maybe we should have it be more secure than the regular meetings, so that for example perhaps the password is not in the public domain and try to protect them. I'd like to defer to Chris to talk about it.

KRIS: I think this idea is definitely overdue. There's a trans meeting that I help host and co-host that takes place on Saturdays and I've talked to a couple of people behind the scenes about that one. The trans community actually has an umbrella; they belong to an area of South Florida and they have their own website, and the people that I've talked to mention that that would be a safe place for us to advertise the meeting on. It does become open to the public sometimes, but not as much as advertising on the secular NA website would. Carly and Rose spearheaded this idea a few years ago and they just didn't have enough people to be of service. If I could ditch the Saturday meeting, I would be willing to be one of the hosts to open up a queer meeting.

AMY expressed enthusiasm for this idea and asked Kris if she knew anyone who might be interested in taking the project on. Ken pointed out that there is already a WHATSAPP Group for people interested in that, so we could put it out there to people to contact Chris and have some sort of planning meeting.

RUSHIL: Great idea. Do you need to be part of the community in order to be of service.

KRIS: No. I don't think so. This question has come up before. I'm not trans but I run and host a trans meeting. I'm not even non-binary. I'm a cis-gender woman. I am a member of the LGBTQ community though. But I don't think that you have to be. The most important thing is that the meeting space is safe for the community, so as long as you are a "safe" person for the community, you are welcome there. Ultimately we still have "the only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using", so if it has an NA name on the meeting anyone can come as long as they keep it a safe space....that's all that matters.

Amy thanked Michael for his work creating the pamphlet re "not god" and his efforts and ideas on this topic. Amy reiterated that those who have been on this path for awhile of promoting secular in conventional, and are more familiar with how NAWS works, they know best and we are taking their lead on this. Trying to normalize atheism and secularism and have it accepted in the NA community is important and we will continue to try to keep the topic alive as we are able. Asked if his pamphlet will be put on website. Mike said he

was hoping for feedback from others before finalizing the pamphlet. Maude offered for him to bring it to literature committee next week for further feedback. Amy also asked him to send a copy to her.

RUSHIL: Read a section of last meetings minutes re-iterating our conversation on this topic last time. (See last meeting minutes)

MAUDE: I believe that we should keep trying; pointed out that LGBTQ community was not recognized 20-30 years ago, but they never stopped; and kept saying in essence “we’re here and we’re not leaving, and we should do the same. By doing this thing with Michael and putting up the literature, that’s a good way to start.

KEN: concurred that it’s a process and somehow we need to organize a campaign so that next time NAWS asks for input in terms of what should be developed as literature, then we should get everybody who attends secular to make a submission somehow. But there also needs to be some kind of lobbying with delegates; it’s a really funny process, not sure how it works but I know people who have been board members and I can certainly talk to them and find out what the best strategy would be.

AMY: From last meeting: we were talking about sending Bob info. re settings to exclude AI options on a meeting website... should we put this info. on our website so all know how to turn it off.

KRIS: It’s not a bad idea although it would probably get around better if someone was an ambassador and went and spoke to folks at other meetings about the issue. Or we could send out a group email letting people know how to do that.

RUSHIL: You would need zoom level access. That is why it was important to send information to Bob. We would need to know who has the owner level access.

RUSHIL: Michael was supposed to get in touch with Rushil about training him to assist on website. But has not yet.

AMY suggested he reach out to Michael.

RUSHIL: Brought up maintenance issue of database (ie contact and times of meetings) and needs to be a service position with trusted servant.

MAUDE: That would be me. I am in charge of the BMLT – we only go through it once a year to make sure meetings are still going. We’ve had problems with getting in touch with one of them (Ken: NA Agnostica); it’s horrible. We try to tell them that meetings have changed and they don’t seem to care. But Rushil if you are ready just let me know and we tell you what you need to know and will put you to work.

Rushil and Maude said they would get in touch with each other.