

Austin Al-Anon/Alateen Information, Inc.  
A Texas Nonprofit Corporation  
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**The (Unapproved at this time) MINUTES OF THE October 17, 2005 MEETING OF  
THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

On October 17, 2005, a regular board meeting was held at the Information Center. The following persons were in attendance:

John T - Chair	Anderson Mill (non-voting)
Kay C - Treasurer	Courage To Change (non-voting)
Charlotte T - Secretary	Courage To Change (non-voting)
Kitty G – Info Center Employee	Courage To Change (non-voting)
John L	Westlake (voting)
Randy M	Anderson Mill (voting)
Ann J	Serenity Trails (voting)
Betty F	Freedom to Recover (voting)
Beverly H	Steps to Freedom (voting)
Renate S	One Step at a Time (voting)
Heather W	Sunset Serenity (voting)

- 1) **Opening.** The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by John T. with a moment of silence followed by The Serenity Prayer.
- 2) **Introductions.** Those attending the meeting introduced themselves and stated whether they were a voting or non-voting participant (or visitor).
- 3) **Readings.**
  - i) The Al-Anon Preamble from *How Al-Anon Works for Families and Friends of Alcoholics* was read by Kay C.
  - ii) “Members Share Experience, Strength and Hope – Our Leg Work Is Participation” from *Paths to Recovery: Al-Anon’s Steps, Traditions and Concepts*, first paragraph, page 273 was read by Heather W.
- 4) **Announcement of a Quorum.** John T. formerly set the quorum at a number greater than 2.4 which is 40% of six, the number of voting board members present at this December meeting. 7 voting members were in attendance at this meeting.
- 5) **Acceptance of April 18th Minutes.** John T. requested all to review the Minutes submitted by Charlotte T., secretary. Corrections were made and the minutes were approved with a consensus vote.
- 6) **Chair’s Report.** John T. asked the group how comfortable they were with the email vote taken regarding the selection of a new server to host the Information Center’s website. He gave the background on this that from August to October the free host server we had been using was down, and so John L. researched other options for paid service. It was approved by 7over email which was considered a quorum (Renate S., Ann J., Lolly R., Linda M., Beverly H., Gloria L., and Betty F.). The cost of the new host server is \$97 per year and has been donated for the first year of service (2005). The next payment will be in September 2006.
- 7) **Treasurer’s Report.** Kay C. handed out the **Group Contributions, Profit & Loss** for the Center through the end of September. She reported that group contributions to the center have been down as they tend to be at the end of the year. The center did receive a big donation from Hilltoppers of \$1350 in September and Northland gave over their usual budgeted amount so their numbers look a little different this quarter. On the Profit and Loss report, the advertising bill was a large expense; it was for the Austin yellow pages and outlying area’s yellow pages for Southwestern Bell. This cost does not include website yellow pages. The information center can be found under three different headings in the yellow pages so that’s one of the reasons the cost is so high. Kay C. also checked the business

insurance that we paid this period and all directors (volunteers and employees) are covered under the insurance's theft clause. It has been the policy of the Board to make IRS payments on Kitty as an employee even though she's part-time, and penalties for not paying the IRS are also covered under this insurance policy. Insurance costs over all are up so that is also reflected in their payment. Third thing that was paid in this period was a three year subscription to the Forum magazine for the center. Kay recommended that the group add into its budget travel reimbursement for those attending as an Inter-group Rep. of the center to Area Assemblies, District meetings and WSO meetings. That is a new line item on the budget called "**Travel for AIS Rep.**" So overall, there was no profit in this period, due to these expenses, but the Center is still in good shape because of the year's income and literature sales. Kay C. has also added the Checking Account Balance to the meeting reports. We have \$9,144.68 in checking and \$23,718.40 in savings. The center is over budget for contributions for the year so that's healthy. At the December meeting, Kay will submit next year's budget. John T. suggested adding Heather W. to the Finance Sub-Committee. This was agreed by consensus. On the **payroll information**, Kay C. reported that most of the ones she investigated were cheaper than \$20 per pay period, although Quick Books was only \$18 per pay period and that computer program would require about the same costs to update regularly. Based on this information, Kay C. recommends that the Center not do a payroll service, but do hire a CPA to do the April taxes if the Treasurer desires that. Kay C. researched and found out that there were only three years that the Center did not file taxes and those were years when it was determined that they didn't need to file them. She also found it was very difficult for the Center to lose **non-profit status**. Whether we make money or not, we still won't be considered a for-profit business because our only purpose is to serve Al-Anon. By the end of the year, Kay C. recommends that we **give to other service arms** from our profit based on whether or not we have more than \$1000. She recommends gifts of \$400 each to district, area and WSO because that's the tax limit for gifts. And if this profit is not reached, then she would not give the donations. She also would prioritize the giving to district and area first since we buy literature from the WSO. Renate S. moved that if we have enough profit by the end of the year, to give \$400 to district, area and WSO service arms. Ann J. seconded the motion. All voted in favor and it passed.

- 8) **Information Center Report.** Kitty G. said donations to the center went well this period because of the generous amount from Hilltoppers (mentioned earlier). Kitty gives **many thanks** to the groups who donate to the center. The center brought in \$2233.03 total; bought \$1355 in literature, and sold \$3129.16 in literature. The number of phone calls has been down this period averaging 5 calls a day, and 1 walk-in per day which Kay attributes to the heat. The Center is in **desperate need for afternoon volunteers!** At this time there is only one volunteer coming all week – on Wednesday afternoons, so Kitty asked that we announce this to all groups. Kitty does have one other on-call volunteer who comes in when stamping of new literature needs to be done, and there's a possibility that one Alternate may start on Saturdays as a volunteer. But otherwise, please announce this need. Kitty is working on thank you notes to those who **staff the answering machine**. They serve once every six weeks for one week. During their week, the answering machine message says "if you want to talk to someone, then call \_\_\_\_." If anyone is still interested in the **Forum Humor Contest**, Kitty will mail the interested group forms to participate. Remember these stories can't be about the alcoholic, but only about the Al-Anon storyteller. **Inventory** was done this month on the literature by Ellen C. and Kitty G.
- 9) **Secretary Report -** Charlotte T. asked the group to sign in with their initials if they are in attendance and check the personal information on the sign in sheet. Also, she asked the Board to check the corrected length of service as a director report that she circulated. She offered apologies for writing Al-Anon on the exterior of envelopes being mailed out with minutes and will use **AFG** from now on. She asked the group what the **subject line of the email** should say for these same anonymity issues. John L. recommended sending these emails by blind copy so that others can't see their names, and Kay C. recommended that the subject line read "Information Center Minutes" so that it wouldn't have to say Al-Anon. Charlotte T. also offered apologies for not sending out a reminder via email about this meeting. Charlotte announced that people can send their email addresses to the center via the website now, and John L. added that soon directions will be added to local Al-Anon meetings (via Google maps), and a meeting list/calendar will be posted. John L. will keep us up-to-date on email properties of the new server as he discovers them. He suggested that in the future we will have the ability to create either an order sheet or an on-line store so that orders could be prepped for groups in advance of pick up. Kitty didn't feel very positive about this plan. The group also discussed combining the Volunteer Committee and the Meeting list Committee into one **Communication Task Force**, but Randy M. pointed out this would mean changing the By-Laws which requires extra paperwork with the state records. Kay C. pointed out we can keep these two names and have the committees work in tandem as a task force as needed. Renate S. will bring the Secretary a copy of the Board's insurance policy to the next meeting.
- 10) **New Business:**
  - a) **Review of nominations for officers** – Two nominations have been received for officers – Heather W. for Treasurer and Charlotte T. for Secretary. Qualifications will be reviewed in December. Kay C. pointed out that these

qualifications require only that you have been in Al-Anon for two years and have some skill with the job before them, and not be a member of Alcoholics Anonymous. The group is still seeking nominations for Chair of the Board.

**b) Website Postings** – The group considered **how the website content should follow Al-Anon traditions 6, 3 & 4.** Specifically, John T. understands that only Al-Anon things should be posted on the website – the district conferences and meetings, the two area assemblies, the two WSO meetings, and the All-Texas Conference since it is an approved Al-Anon conference. AA postings should only be there if they are speakers from Al-Anon or if they are jointly hosted. Kitty suggested noting that these conferences were AA with Al-Anon participation and that people understand us as not promoting these meetings. Woman to Woman, Heart to Heart, Man to Man, Friend to Friend, and the Lakeside Conference for example are not approved conferences, so can be listed as having Al-Anon participation. The Board, this group of directors should decide if we post these as an Information Center. Randy pointed out that we could use the same code for posting that the Forum lists in the back of each magazine. John L. presented different thoughts as website manager. In his eyes, the website is a clearinghouse of information like a bulletin board. He lists all that is sent in. John T. replied that it was clear what Al-Anon hopes us to list – since tradition 6 says we cooperate with A.A. but let their websites promoted their own events. He recommended that we only promoted Al-Anon approved conferences because we can't be sure what information people might get about Al-Anon from non-approved conferences. Kay C. read a flyer distributed by WSO on this very tough topic. The flyer pointed out that linking to other positive sites is a valuable resource but links might be changed and lead to sites that aren't to the benefit of the group, and not known. The bulletin suggests strong caution when linking to sites. John T. suggested that the group think about this and decide if they want to decide tonight or take more time on the issue. Ann J. asked for more time. Heather W. asked for the Forum list of requirements. John L. said we could have a box that pops up as people leave our site via links on it that says "Now leaving an Al-Anon approved site, do you want to continue." But John L. also urged the Board not to isolate ourselves but to try and be as useful as we can to people seeking information. He feels passionately that many people find the website to be just the information they needed while this is the first complaint we've received about it in the two years he's been managing it. The group might review website guidelines created by the Meeting List Sub-Committee and Kay C. pointed out that the issue that caught our attention recently was A.A. and Recovery Center links. John L. added that these already state with Al-Anon participation on the website, but the concern was that free tapes were offered from those links. Kay C. suggested the group review the web pages at the December meeting. Renate S. suggested that we should include a quarterly review of these pages to monitor them as a Board. The discussion was **tabled until the December** meeting when these webpages could be in front of us as we discuss.

**c) Travel Pay** – The group considered this request from Kay C. that we add it to the budget. It was decided that Renate S. would represent the Information Center at the Area/WSO meeting coming up since John T. can't attend. Randy M. moved that the Center cover her expenses for the banquet, room and travel. (Heather W. pointed out that for the rest of the year the reimbursement for gas has gone to .485/mile.) Ann J. seconded the motion and all voted in favor of it. The motion passed.

**d) New Website Address** – The old website address will work for the indefinite future – a long time. But still, eventually it could be changed permanently to [www.austinalanon.org](http://www.austinalanon.org) and [www.austinal-anon.org](http://www.austinal-anon.org) Kitty G. agreed to see about changing the stamps we put in books and the message on the answering machine.

**e) Officer Elections and Annual Meeting** – The December meeting will be our annual meeting where we elect officers and have the possibility of changing the by-laws, as well as setting quorum for the following year and considering a year end bonus for Kitty G. Discussion followed about whether or not this was to be the first meeting of the year for new directors. The secretary is tasked with keeping track of how many years the directors serve and yet directors are placed on the Board by their groups at different times through the year. So this task may be futile. Officers Kay C. and John T. officially started their service to fulfill unexpired terms so are eligible to serve as officers one more year. Renate asked if John T. would be willing to serve another year and John indicated that he would serve at the Board's pleasure. The secretary will prepare written ballots for the next meeting for officers and leave write-in spots for new nominations.

**f) Randy M.** new district representative – Congratulations were shared with Randy.

11) **Read the By-Laws** –7.07 Tabled until our next meeting.

12) **Group Reports.** Time did not allow for group reports at this meeting.

11) **Adjournment.** motioned to close the meeting and seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. All closed in saying:

LET IT BEGIN WITH ME  
When anyone, anywhere reaches out for help,  
Let the hand of Al-Anon and Alateen always be there,  
And let it begin with me.

Board of Directors Meeting  
April 18, 2005  
Page 4 of 4

Next Meeting –December 19, 2005– 6:30 pm at the Information Center.

Respectfully submitted:

Charlotte T  
Information Center Board Secretary