

## **GTAI Intergroup General Meeting Minutes: Tues. Feb.26, 2008**

The meeting convened at 8 p.m. with a moment of silence followed by the Serenity Prayer. John M. (Thornhill) read the Twelve Traditions.

**THOSE MEMBERS PRESENT:** Amazing Grace, Aurora, Back to Basics (Richmond Hill), Beaches, Bellamy, Beverly Hills, Bloordale, Bramalea Care & Share, City Central, East York, Fellowship, Glenholme, Golden Mile, High Park, Hill, Keep It Simple (Scarborough), King City, Kingsway, Lakeshore, Last Chance, Long Branch, Markland Wood, Midtown, Mount Dennis, Mount Royal, New Anchor, Newmarket, One Day at a Time, Orleta (Polish), Pine Hills, Port Credit, Prince Edward, Principles Before Personalities, Reaching Out, Primary Purpose, Rexdale United, Richmond Hill, Saturday Morning Discussion, Scarborough, St. Clements, Stepping Stones, Sunday Northwestern, Sunnyside, Thornhill, Thursday East End, Trial & Error, Tuesday Night Discussion, Twelfth Tradition, Twelve Steps, U of T, Unionville, Welcome, Westmoreland, Woodbridge, Yorkville. **District Liaisons:** Districts 04, 18, and 22. **Subcommittee Chairs:** Archives, Corrections, Treatment, Public Information, Newsletter/Website, Access Ability, ORC 2008, and *ad hoc* Recommendation Committee.

### **ADOPTION OF MINUTES: January 2008:**

MOTION to adopt Minutes as presented moved by Fran H. (Kingsway); seconded by Glen J. (Sunday Northwestern). MOTION is CARRIED.

### **Chairperson's Opening Remarks: Harold Y. (Port Credit), Operating Chairperson**

*Harold outlined the following points, opining that "...there are quite a few exciting things going on" at present:*

- Due to the power outage on Yonge/Eglinton (which affected 234), there were some reports (Financial, etc.) that weren't available before the meeting for Reps; these will be copied down the street at a copy shop and will be available at some point during this meeting
- Carole (Executive Secretary) has retired recently, after over 25 years of service. Carole has some health issues that she needed to address, and therefore officially retired January 31
- The Proposed 234 Budget will be made available later this meeting, so the Floor can make a decision to pass this document for implementation
- The *ad hoc* Recommendation Subcommittee will recommend to put forth a Motion to the Floor tonight in order that GTA I can possibly "move ahead" with some proposed changes and issues [*see Position Paper Motion hard copy*]

**Collection of the 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition**, which totaled **\$131.41** after expenses.

### **FINANCE REPORT: Gregg W. (Rox Glen Traditional), Finance Chairperson**

The monthly Bar Graph was not made available; however, Gregg shared that January 2008 ran at a deficit. Banking on donations/group commitments was low this month. Gregg apologized for problems incurred with the 2007 Tax Receipts; these have been corrected with a second mail-out to those who donated (407 receipts were mailed out).

**Regarding the Proposed 2008 Budget:** this will be revisited at this meeting under 'Other Business'. Gregg took the time to thank Harold for his efforts, expertise and input on this proposed document.

### **Questions:**

Lynn B. (City Central), mentioned that, according to the October 2007 General Meeting minutes, there was an 8% difference in the financial numbers that needed to be investigated. Has this been done? Gregg replied that it had, and the appropriate adjustment has been made for 2008. Lynn then asked why it hadn't been reported earlier; Gregg answered that we had to seek out an independent accounting source to identify the discrepancy, and we only found out the information 2 weeks ago.

### **ACCESS ABILITY: Donna Mac Q. (Sunnyside), Chairperson**

This committee has no commitments for the month of February; there will be some next month. Donna reported that they have not had an Intergroup liaison reporting to their table in some months. The **next Access Ability meeting** will be held on **Sun., Mar.9 at 11 a.m. at 234** (one week earlier, due to the ORC).

**ARCHIVES:** Chair was present; no report. **Next meeting:** Fri, Mar.7 at 7 p.m. at 234.

### **CORRECTIONS: Niels B. (Hill), Chairperson**

The committee will have a table at the ORC. Each district will have their own pamphlets. **Next meeting:** Mon. Mar.3 at 7:30 p.m. at 234.

**CPC:** no report. **Next meeting:** Mon. Mar.10 at 7 p.m. at 234.

Tues. Feb.26, 2008

**INFORMATION AA DAY: Brad H. (Bayview), Intergroup liaison**

The event theme is 'Experience, Strength, and Service' and will be held on Saturday, May 31 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Lansing United Church (Yonge & Sheppard). Tickets are \$5 (1,000 tickets printed in total) and available through group reps/GSRs. A Service Sponsorship panel has been added to the day's agenda. The event will also feature a GSO speaker and an address from our Area 83 Delegate, Dot D. An Info AA Day Chair is needed for 2009. Anyone interested in applying for this service commitment (or to volunteer for this year's event) can contact Brad at [b3hall@ryerson.ca](mailto:b3hall@ryerson.ca). **Next meeting:** Mon. Mar.31 at 7:30 p.m. at 234.

**ORC 2008: Rene T. (Silverbirch), 2008 Event Chairperson**

*(Report on file. This is Rene's address to the Floor:)*

It is hard to believe that the Conference is only 17 days away! We are very excited and looking forward to giving you the very best Conference we can!

The pre-registrations are on par with last year's numbers at this time...we have also sold almost half of the banquet tickets, so if you are planning to go to the banquet get your tickets soon...I guess we moved out of the 'rubber chicken' reputation last year; I was taught early in AA that if it works, don't fix it, so we are having the same meal with a change of dessert that hasn't been formalized yet.

**PROGRAMME:** The programme has been done for some time, with all of the speakers confirmed. We hope that you will like the additions to the programme. We did not take anything away, but did add some meetings so the rooms would not be so crowded [and also so that] anyone would be turned away or [that] there would be no times [left] where there was nothing to do. We added a few local speakers and we have discussion meetings scheduled. There is a 12-Step Workshop on Saturday. So, we hope that these additions will help everyone practice making decisions (!). I have sent programme information [out], hoping to get it on the website before the Conference.

**HOTEL:** We have walked through the Hotel many times, and have tried to identify heavily-traveled areas or spots where the hallways might be congested, and have made a few changes so that moving from one spot to another will be easier. The Ontario Room will be the designated Coffee & Social Room. There will be coffee on sale for most of the hours of the Conference. The times are to be finalized in the next few days. We get all the meeting rooms very reasonably, as we guarantee the Hotel that we will book so many room nights over the weekend. We have fallen short that last few years [on the room nights booked], and have paid a penalty for it. It looks like this may be the case this year [also]. So, if you can, please plan on staying at the Hotel. If we meet the room requirements, we will not have to pay a penalty, and will be able to keep the costs down.

**GRAPHICS:** We still have a few registration forms and poster boards left, so if you need them I have them with me. We also have ordered a couple of new signs to assist registrants in knowing where things are [located]. The programme [schedule of events] is looking very good, and will be done sometime this week.

**PUBLIC INFORMATION:** All the Withdrawal Management Centres and Treatment Centres have been notified about our self-support policy at the Conference. Hopefully, a letter will be going out to the media before the end of the week, also stressing our policy on anonymity. There are still a few Hosts and Greeters needed, so if you or anyone is interested, please let me know.

**NEWCOMER'S ROOM:** There have been a number of Big Books donated, but we could always use more. They are putting together packages of information suitable for a newcomer; [packages] include a Meeting Directory. So, if your group wants to donate any [of the above] it will be greatly appreciated.

**ENTERTAINMENT:** Hopefully this will be exciting and fun for everyone. With a dance on Friday night, and two [dances] on Saturday, we hope there is plenty of room for everyone to 'shake their booty'....the theme is "Happy, Joyous, and Free", is it not?? We have a couple of surprises that we hope you will enjoy. We the committee for 2008, and the shadow committee for 2009, have worked hard over the last couple of years and hope that this will be an exciting weekend for all, and we hope to see you all there. Until then, "*May the Fourth Be With You*"!!!

**PUBLIC INFORMATION: Bryan W. (Rox Glen Traditional), Chairperson**

*Bryan had the following report:*

We discussed the distribution of the [Beginner] Pamphlet Holders. These are cardboard holders with the 20 questions [pamphlet] that are put into doctor's offices, pharmacies, schools, etc. Holders are being sold at cost to cover printing costs. We feel members will be more responsible if they pay a minimum charge of \$3 a holder and \$4 per 1,000 pamphlets. P.I. members are asked to get their district table involved with the circulation of these items.

We are having our annual 1<sup>st</sup> year U of T medical student workshop at 234 [12 students are booked]. This will be a 4-day outline, with speakers and discussions. The students are asked to go to two meeting types [different parts of the GTA] and write a paper on their observations.

We are sharing a table at the ORC with CPC. **Next meeting:** Mon. Mar. 17 at 7:30 p.m. at 234.

**RECEPTION CENTRE: Aaron K. (Yorkville), Operating Committee member**

**55 group reps, 3 districts, 8 Chairpersons, and 5 guests** were in attendance at tonight's meeting.

**TREATMENT FACILITIES: Mike C. (Beverly Hills), Chairperson**

*Mike had the following Report for Floor members:*

Present at the meeting were the following members: Mike C. (Chair), Gord H. (Area 83 TF Chair), Les R. (Dist.14), Patrick F. (Dist.18), and Phil R. (Dist. 22). **Reports:** For Dist.14, North York General Hospital may be allowing the district to start a second Service meeting. For Dist.18, they have purchased 5 Big Books and 20 Meeting Directories for East General Detox where they put on a Service meeting, and they are approaching East General Hospital about another Service meeting. For District 22, the Scarborough General Hospital Service meeting is running well. The district is approaching Heyworth House (hostel for the Homeless) about a possible Service meeting. Under New Business, the table discussed which literature to order and who would pay for it, as the committee has no budget yet. Gord H. (Area 83 TF Chair) said he might be able to supply some literature if the committee has no budget in time for the ORC. The committee also had a look at the ORC TF table volunteer schedule, supplied via e-mail by Elaine H. of Dist.06. **Next meeting:** Thurs. mar.20 at 7:30 p.m. at 234.

**TWELFTH STEP:** no report. **Next phone training session:** Sun. Mar.16 at 1:30 p.m. at 234. **Next committee meeting:** Fri. Mar.28 at 6:30 p.m. at 234.

**NEWSLETTER/WEBSITE: Marv W. (Streetsville Action), Chairperson**

There are 3 feature articles in the March 2008 issue. BT desktop publisher, John P. (Welcome) has rotated off of the committee; Marv thanked him for all his hard work in the past. The new BT desktop publisher is Dale W. (Saturday Morning Disc.). The BT committee still needs an Alternate desktop publisher, and a circulations person. **Deadline for copy/announcements/articles:** 10<sup>th</sup> of every month. Announcements are preferable via e-mail; however, all regular mail or phone calls to 234 will be forwarded to the Chair/HYH contact person for publication. **Website:** Steve L. (Meadowvale Fellowship) is the new Alternate Webmaster. **Next meeting:** Sat. Mar.8 at 1 p.m. at 234.

**OTHER BUSINESS: FINANCE**

Regarding the **2008 Proposed Budget** (*copies were now circulated to all Floor members for consideration/discussion*), Harold outlined the following assumptions regarding this document:

- That Income would reduce by 5% (includes individual Donations/Group Commitments);
- Issue with Receivables: we have incurred approximate \$3,000 in 'bad debt' regarding the receivables; "let's get rid of it, and start fresh"
- We have proposed to implement a new accounting system, as opposed to 'net accounting': for example, with the BT printing: "Tonight, Marv's going to collect some money; he's going to give Alexx this, along with the 7<sup>th</sup> from this meeting; the coffee [expenses] money comes out, we're left with X amount of dollars. We don't really know what the 7<sup>th</sup> was; we don't know what the sales of BT were...we don't know what our cost was to put this meeting on. So, what we're going to do from now on – not only with BT, but with all the committees – is do net accounting, so we get a true accounting of costs, etc."
- We currently have very old software/computers: WE NEED TO UPGRADE! We have allowed \$9,500 (hardware; \$22,400 for software) for this purpose;
- We have reduced the selling price of all literature coming out of the U.S. = a 10% reduction;
- We had trouble making a budget assumption for the ORC subcommittee. We put the number at \$8,000. We need to approach this subcommittee re: point 3 above (new accounting system) for further discussion;
- 2008 is a full audit year (this occurs every 4 years), so this will be an additional \$5,000 expense;
- **2008 Proposed Budget** gives us a **surplus of =\$241 total.**

*Discussion among Floor members.* Sharole G. (Midtown) inquired about the budget for the Phones: this figure seemed very low to her, considering there are problems with the current phone system that need to be addressed. Why is the figure so low? Harold replied that this figure was for *monthly phone bill charges* – not hardware. The cost of a new phone system is included in the budget cost for upgrading of new computers. Nino (Stepping Stones) asked how old the 'bad debts' were; Harold replied that they are about 3-4 years old. Peter (Markland Wood) asked about the bank charges, and why the figure was so high. Harold answered that these are credit card commission fees (incurred through the use of our VISA machine in the Lit. Dept.). We pay 2.7% currently on every credit card transaction. He is going to try to get these charges lowered if he can. Peter also had concerns about the audit process currently in place.

**MOTION to accepted proposed 2008 Budget** moved by Bryan W. (Rox Glen Traditional) and seconded by Lou (Rexdale United). **MOTION is CARRIED; the 2008 Proposed Budget is passed.**

**OLD BUSINESS:** no Old Business.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Item #1:**

Carol (Tuesday Night Discussion) shared that her group had some concerns and she read the following Motion to the Floor for consideration (*no hard copy of Motion provided to recording secretary; wording may not be wholly correct due to poor tape reception*):

‘Whereas, it is widely recognized that Greater Toronto Area Intergroup has had problems with finances over the past several years and issues of trust have arisen time and time again. Despite the efforts made to correct this perception, it remains of utmost importance to the groups of the GTA to have an effective and viable Intergroup Office, notwithstanding the effort over the past few years of the *ad hoc* Committee [that was] set up to investigate and address these issues. The fact remains that, respective of the Tuesday Night Discussion Group, little has been done to correct these problems either from the past, or moving forward.

We the members of Greater Toronto Area Intergroup [request to] add a Mandate to implement the needed changes by agreeing to remove the majority needed to make the changes. All we have seen has been consequences on insurance and incorporation. These do not seem relevant to the problem at hand.

We the Tuesday Night Discussion Group believe that the fundamental issue is one of trust. The money is there to correct the financial problem; the people are there to do the work. There is a perception problem that Intergroup is not acting in the best interest of the members. We do not believe that anything other than the best efforts of the various officers have been made in good faith to serve the membership having been made. However: perception is reality. We need to change that perception, and the time is running out to do this.

So, we’re **putting forth a Motion:**

The Tuesday Night Discussion Group wishes to put forth a **Motion** at this time **to create a special long-timer’s panel.** This panel will be composed of three AA long-timers selected by the Floor. This panel will have no Executive power. Intergroup will remain in control of its decisions. The long-timer’s panel will be available as a resource to give its opinions on any issue directed to [tape unclear]...the Floor or the Committees... [Tape needed to be changed: no recording]...

After this Motion was read, Harold shared that “we intend to do this [recommend to Floor members to make a Motion to implement changes] at this meeting”, using the Position Paper Motion. “What we’re asking for is a Floor vote that they [the members] want us to proceed with these changes [outlined in the Position Paper]. That does not mean we’re changing the Procedures and Guidelines; what it means is we’re going to move towards changing the P & G, and each one of those [proposed changes] need to go to a Referendum. That’s the Motion.”

Harold further attempted to clarify the situation by asking the *ad hoc* Subcommittee Chair, Lynn B. (City Central), to come to the front and give a report along this line. **Discussion and questions ensued.** As a result, **there was a vote on the Floor to table Carol’s Motion** for the time being (until after the ad hoc report); **this was passed.**

**Ad hoc RECOMMENDATION REPORT: Lynn B. (City Central), Chairperson**

Lynn referred members to the **Position Paper Motion** document made available for tonight’s meeting (*attached to hard copy Minutes*), and mentioned the following:

- All of the Position Paper has been written in one Motion;
- 15 of the items outlined in this document **would require a Referendum Vote process** (each item requiring a written Notice of Motion, then a Motion, then sent to all the groups in the GTA for a 90-day Referendum vote), as they require changes to the GTAI Procedures and Guidelines *Procedures section*,

- 8 items could be handled without a Referendum voting process (changes in the GTAI Procedures and Guidelines *section*, which only requires a Motion from the Floor then a direct vote at the same meeting)
- The ad hoc subcommittee is **therefore recommending that a Motion be made from the Floor in future to address the items in the Position Paper Motion.** Motion(s) have to come from a Floor member(s).

After Lynn's address, Harold gave further comments on this item, and re-read the MOTION INTRODUCTION LETTER that was handed out to members for discussion (*attached to hard copy Minutes*), and reiterated that **a Motion has to come from the Floor** to this effect; stressing that we need clarification in order to go ahead with these objectives.

Wes B. (Long Branch): "The lady that brought forth the Motion earlier is saying, basically: 'We haven't seen anything happening, and we want something done'. We're here now; we're trying to get something happening, and is not the *ad hoc* Committee proposing that tonight. This seems to have been a long process, but we are making a decision. This is not a vote on changing the Procedures and Guidelines. This is what the *ad hoc* Committee has come up with for a direction that we might want to pursue...in other words, nothing will be changed as of this [Position Paper]; this is the direction that your *ad hoc* Committee has come up with to look at...this is a direction to the Floor to look at changes for this area...these people have come up with a least a bit of a plan to move forward..."

Harold re-read the **MOTION, seconded by Gord B.** (Port Credit): do you want us to move forward to [go ahead and] write individual Referendum [Motions] to change the GTAI Procedures & Guidelines for this purpose? *This is with the understanding that members will have a chance to vote in future on all P & G changes via Referendum votes.*  
**A vote was taken. MOTION IS CARRIED** (3 opposed votes noted).

**Item #2:**

Judy C. (Aurora) asked about Carole retiring: have there been any plans to hire a new Executive Secretary, and who does the hiring? Harold replied that the Finance Committee is in charge of hiring/office staff. A volunteer has been in doing Carole's duties in the interim. The job will be posted accordingly. Alexx (administrative assistant) has been offered assistance in the meantime, should she require it. We are currently in the process of hiring a librarian for the literature department. *Discussion.*

Bryan W. (Rox Glen Traditional) shared that Carole "will be missed". As a non-alcoholic, Bryan shared that Carole had a really good grasp of the AA Traditions, and this aided in her ability to do her job well. He added that, in his opinion, a non-alcoholic would be best suited for the Executive Secretary position. *A Motion will be made to the Floor to this effect at next month's General Meeting.*

**Item #3:**

Rene T. (Silverbirch), ORC 2008 Chair, had concerns about the "disturbing comments" made regarding the ORC in terms of the 2008 budget. Is the ORC meant to be a 'money-making' venue? She understood that this event was in place to "provide members with a good time in recovery"; not to "make money". She requested clarification on the objective of this event. Harold answered that the thrust of the proposed budget was that "we are trying to get Intergroup to be more responsible finance-wise". In order to do this, we "need to have a plan". We need to approach the ORC subcommittee and have a dialogue about this issue. For the current budget, the financial numbers were taken from the last 4 ORC events and averaged out to the current figure, as the ORC committee has been busy getting the Conference together and Harold hadn't had an opportunity to approach this subcommittee with budgeting questions along this line.  
*Discussion.*

**Item #4:**

Carol (Tuesday Night Disc.) re-read her groups' previous Motion (*see Item #1*); Mike C. (Beverly Hills) seconded the Motion/Notice of Motion (?). There was some discussion as to whether this was a Motion or a Notice of Motion. ***Further discussion and comments ensued.*** Wes B. (Long Branch) suggested that a Motion be made to withdraw this Motion/Notice of Motion, in light of the Previous (*Item #2*) Motion. This did not happen. Harold called for a vote:

So, we're **putting forth a Motion:**

The Tuesday Night Discussion Group wishes to put forth a **Motion** at this time **to create a special long-timer's panel.** This panel will be composed of three AA long-timers selected by the Floor. This panel will have no Executive power. Intergroup will remain in control of its decisions. The long-timer's panel will be available as a resource to give its opinions on any issue directed to [tape unclear]...the Floor or the Committees... [Tape needed to be changed: no recording]...

*Are there any members in favour of the Motion made by the Tuesday Night Disc.? 3 members were in favour of the Motion. Therefore, MOTION IS WITHDRAWN.*

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

**Next General Meeting: Tuesday, March 25 at 8 p.m. at Glebe Rd. United.**