

September 15, 2009
(corrected copy)

Notice of Matters to Be Voted on
at the 2009 Annual Business Meeting of the
World Service Organization of Recovering Couples Anonymous

Description of Topics and Wording of the Proposed Motions

Prepared by the RCA WSO Structure Committee

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**2009 Annual Business Meeting
Friday, October 16, 2009 in Dania, Florida
at the 2009 RCA Convention**

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Introduction

1. Notice is hereby provided to the RCA Fellowship of the matters that will be considered at the RCA WSO annual business meeting on October 16, 2009. **This notice of the specific wording of each proposal to be considered is provided in order to comply with the notice requirements of the applicable Missouri law; that is, notice after August 17, 2008 but on or before September 16, 2009.**

2. In a document dated July 18, 2009, notice of the topics to be considered was provided by e-mail to the Group Contact Couples and was posted on the RCA website to meet the 90-day notice requirement of the bylaws so that by-mail voting would be permitted as to these topics. This notice was revised and re-posted on September 1, 2009, to reflect the fact that only 9 topics would be voted on at the 2009 business meeting since 3 topics appearing on the July 18 notice had been withdrawn

3. Ballots will be provided to those RCA member groups whose delegate couples cannot attend the business meeting and who wish to submit by-mail votes on the matters to be considered.

4. Each member group is asked to review the topics that are listed in this notice and to complete the process of determining the position, if any, that your group may wish to take on these matters. The primary purpose of the bylaw amendments adopted at the 2006 convention in Boston was to ensure that decisions made at the annual business meeting would be more reflective of the collective group conscience of the entire Fellowship, and not just be based on the views of those RCA members in attendance at the business meeting.

5. While we recognize that there are many demands on the time of RCA members and that priority must be given to continued individual and couple recovery, each member group is requested, if you are at all able, to review these matters and to determine the position your group wishes to take with respect to each matter listed in this notice. **Thereby you will help ensure that actions taken at the annual business meeting will truly reflect the collective group conscience of the Fellowship.**

6. We also recognize that some of these matters involve technical organization details that may be of little interest to many, if not most, RCA members and groups whose primary focus is appropriately on individual and couple recovery. But unfortunately details like these are important to the efficient and effective operation of the RCA WSO as it attempts to provide necessary support to the Fellowship and to the member groups. If your group is uncertain as to the meaning and significance of any of the matters listed in this notice and if your group wishes, you might want to seek advice from longtime and trusted members of RCA as to their views on the merits of the various topics listed in this notice or e-mail the Structure Committee at structure@recovering-couples.org.

7. For each of the four topics, there are four parts to the presentation that follows:
- a. Summary of July 19, 2009, Notice of Topics.
 - b. Wording of Proposed Amendment.
 - c. Additional Discussion Relative to the Proposed Amendment.
 - d. Recommendation of the Structure Committee

Category I: Proposed Changes to the Bylaws: Clarifications and Minor Corrections

Topic 1. Clarification of Board oversight of service providers (section 2.2 of the bylaws)

a. Summary of July 18, 2009, Notice of Topics.

As part of the revisions to the bylaws approved by the Fellowship at the August 2008 business meeting in San Francisco, a revised section 2.2 was added to cover contracting with service providers. A minor clarification to the delegation provision of section 2.2 will provide the Board of Trustees with the flexibility required to provide the needed oversight

b. Wording of Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws

The present bylaw provision covering Service Providers reads as follows:

2.2 Service Providers. The Board of Trustees is authorized to contract with services providers to furnish the Central Office services needed to support the Fellowship. The service providers shall be directed by the Board of Trustees through the Board Chair. With the approval of the Board of Trustees, the Board Chair may delegate the oversight of service providers to appropriate committees of the Board. The Board of Trustees shall at all times maintain responsibility for all W.S.O. service providers.

The proposed amendment clarifies an organizational reference in the first sentence and changes the third sentence of the section 2.2 so that the revised section would read:

2.2 Service Providers. *The Board of Trustees is authorized to contract with services providers to furnish the World Service Organization services needed to support the Fellowship. The service providers shall be directed by the Board of Trustees through the Board Chair. With the approval of the Board of Trustees, the Board Chair may delegate the oversight of service providers to appropriate committees of the Board, or to members of the Board, or to members of the Fellowship. The Board of Trustees shall at all times maintain responsibility for all W.S.O. service providers.*

c. Additional Discussion Relative to the Proposed Amendment.

The substitution of *World Service Organization* in the first sentence has been made for clarity. Under the current version of section 2.2, the Board is restricted to delegating oversight to a committee of the Board. The third sentence of section 2.2 currently reads:

With the approval of the Board of Trustees, the Board Chair may delegate the oversight of service providers to appropriate committees of the Board.

The experience of the Board during the past year has been that there has not always been sufficient RCA members willing to serve on the required oversight committees. Therefore it has been necessary to assign the oversight function to individual Board members. The proposed revision to section 2.2 permits the Board to delegate oversight responsibility to either a

committee or an individual Board member, or an individual member of the Fellowship. Under the proposed revision, the third sentence would be changed to read:

With the approval of the Board of Trustees, the Board Chair may delegate the oversight of service providers to appropriate committees of the Board, or to members of the Board, or to members of the Fellowship.

While it is preferable to have a committee rather than just one individual provide oversight and assistance to a service provider, that has not always been possible. This proposed amendment recognizes the reality of the fact that there have been insufficient numbers of RCA members willing to serve on these committees.

d. Recommendation of the Structure Committee: While each member group must make its own decision on the proposed amendment, the Structure Committee, by a slight majority, recommends supporting this amendment with four members of the committee in favor of the amendment and three members opposed.

Topic 2. Clarifying the responsibility of the Board of Trustees for WSO contractual commitments (section 4.1.9 of the bylaws)

a. Summary of July 18, 2009, Notice of Topics.

To prevent any recurrence of a situation in which the 2006-2007 Board was faced with a large and unexpected bill based on parliamentary services provided to a prior Board without a written contract, the Structure Committee proposed the addition of section 4.1.9 to the bylaws. This provision was approved by the Fellowship at the August 2007 annual business meeting in St. Louis. The wording of provision leaves some ambiguity as to responsibility of the Board of Trustee versus that of the Executive Committee. For all other matters, section 5.1 of the bylaws covers the Executive Committee and its relationship to the Board of Trustees (the duties of the Executive Committee are assigned by the Board).

Since its adoption, the Board has consistently interpreted section 4.1.9 to require Board approval of all WSO contracts. To eliminate any ambiguity on this matter, the wording of section 4.1.9 requires minor changes.

b. Wording of Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws

The present bylaw provision covering Contractual Commitments reads as follows:

4.1.9 Care with Respect to WSO Contractual Commitments. The Board of Trustees shall exercise care when entering into contractual commitments, with special care required when contracting for professional services. All contractual commitments shall be made in writing and shall include an express limitation on the maximum dollar-value of the commitment. No contract shall be entered into without the written permission of the executive committee of the RCA Board of Trustees. The Executive Committee shall review all terms and conditions of the contract prior to granting permission.

The proposed amendment changes the last two sentences of the section 4.1.9 so that the revised section would read:

4.1.9 Care with Respect to WSO Contractual Commitments. *The Board of Trustees shall exercise care when entering into contractual commitments, with special care required when contracting for professional services. All contractual commitments shall be made in writing and shall include an express limitation on the maximum dollar-value of the commitment. No contract shall be entered into without the approval of the RCA Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees shall ensure that all terms and conditions of the contract have been reviewed by an appropriate committee of the Board, or by member(s) of the Board, or by member(s) of the Fellowship.*

c. Additional Discussion Relative to the Proposed Amendment.

For all other matters, section 5.1 of the bylaws covers the Executive Committee and its relationship to the Board of Trustees. Under section 5.1, the duties of the Executive Committee are assigned to by the Board. The present wording of section 4.1.9 is somewhat ambiguous and sets up the possibility of conflict between the Board and the Executive Committee.

To eliminate any ambiguity on this matter, the wording of the third sentence of section 4.1.9 is modified to specifically required approval by the Board. The fourth sentence in section 4.1.9 is modified to enable the Board to rely on review of all the terms and conditions of contract either “by an appropriate committee of the Board, or by member(s) of the Board, or by member(s) of the Fellowship.” This change recognizes the reality that members of the board often serve on a variety of WSO committees and that all the members of the board are not always able to conduct the detailed review that is required. Thus the Board is authorized to rely on a thorough review conducted by others in the Fellowship.

d. Recommendation of the Structure Committee: While each member group must make its own decision on the proposed amendment, the Structure Committee unanimously recommends supporting this amendment with all seven members of the committee in favor of this proposed change to the bylaws.

**Topic 3. Correcting error in the list of duties of the chair
(section 4.3.1 of the bylaws)**

a. Summary of July 18, 2009, Notice of Topics.

When Article II of the Bylaws covering the Central Office was revised at the August 2008 business meeting in San Francisco, the requirement in the bylaws for an office manager was deleted. Due to an error of the Structure Committee, the term “Office Manager” was inadvertently left in item (3) of the enumerated duties of the Chair in section 4.3.1.

b. Wording of Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws

The present bylaw provision covering the Duties of the Chair reads as follows:

4.3.1 Duties of the Chair. The Chair shall:

- (1) preside at all Board of Trustees meetings;
- (2) preside at the annual R.C.A.C. and throughout the Board meeting at the annual R.C.A.C., (thus the outgoing Chair shall preside throughout the R.C.A.C.);
- (3) direct the Office Manager as directed by the Board;
- (4) sign such papers and documents, upon proper authorization by the Board, as may be necessary.

The proposed amendment changes item (3) of section 4.3.1 so that the revised section would read:

4.3.1 Duties of the Chair. *The Chair shall:*

- (1) preside at all Board of Trustees meetings;*
- (2) preside at the annual R.C.A.C. and throughout the Board meeting at the annual R.C.A.C., (thus the outgoing Chair shall preside throughout the R.C.A.C.);*
- (3) ensure that adequate service-provider oversight is provided in accordance with section 2.2 and as approved by the Board of Trustees;*
- (4) sign such papers and documents, upon proper authorization by the Board, as may be necessary.*

c. Additional Discussion Relative to the Proposed Amendment.

This proposed amendment simply corrects an error in the listing of the duties of the chair.

d. Recommendation of the Structure Committee: While each member group must make its own decision on the proposed amendment, the Structure Committee unanimously recommends supporting this amendment with all seven members of the committee in favor of this proposed change to the bylaws.

Topic 4. Clarification of the time by which a member must provide notice of proposed amendments to the bylaws (section 6.2 of the bylaws)

a. Summary of July 18, 2009, Notice of Topics.

While it has not been a frequent occurrence, every member of the Fellowship has a right to submit proposed changes to the bylaws as long as proper notice is provided. The current description of the required notice in section 6.2 is ambiguous and has not been updated to reflect the notice provision covering by-mail voting (section 3.6.1.1) that was added to the bylaws at the August 2006 business meeting in Boston. In addition to the provision of the bylaws, the applicable Missouri law specifies notice requirements for changes to the bylaws of nonprofit corporation such as the World Service Organization.

b. Wording of Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws

The present bylaw provision covering Amendments to the bylaws reads as follows:

6.2 Amendments. Amendments to these bylaws may be made at the annual open business meeting at R.C.A.C. Written notice of the proposed amendments must be filed with the Board of Trustees at a Board meeting preceding R.C.A.C. An affirmative vote of 75% of all delegate couples of R.C.A. Member Groups voting shall be necessary to adopt any amendment to these bylaws.

The proposed amendment changes second sentence of section 6.2 so that the revised section would read:

6.2 Amendments. *Amendments to these bylaws may be made at the annual open business meeting at R.C.A.C. Written notice of the proposed amendments must be filed with the Board of Trustees not later than 150 days prior to the scheduled date of the annual business meeting of the next scheduled R.C.A.C. An affirmative vote of 75% of all delegate couples of R.C.A. Member Groups voting shall be necessary to adopt any amendment to these bylaws.*

c. Additional Discussion Relative to the Proposed Amendment.

The 150-day requirement has been chosen to enable the Board to have a reasonable time, 60 days, to prepare and to issue the required notice so as to meet the 90-day notice requirement of the bylaws. The committee has found that time may be needed to work with the member suggesting a change to properly develop the wording of a proposed change. A 30-day period for this process is not sufficient so a 60-day period has been chosen.

d. Recommendation of the Structure Committee: While each member group must make its own decision on the proposed amendment, the Structure Committee unanimously recommends supporting this amendment with all seven members of the committee in favor of this proposed change to the bylaws

Topic 5. Clarifying the term on the board for nonvoting couples filling vacancies on the Board (section 4.1.7 of the bylaws)

a. Summary of July 18, 2009, Notice of Topics.

A problem with section 4.1.7 became apparent during the term of this year's Board of Trustees, the 2008-2009 Board, and during the term of last year's Board, the 2007-2008 Board, when vacancies occurred on the Board.. The reason for the election of nonvoting couples is to have them available to fill vacancies that may occur among the voting couples on the Board. But, the present provision can actually discourage a nonvoting couple from filling a vacancy on the Board because their term on the Board is unpredictable.

b. Wording of Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws

The present bylaw provision covering the term of a nonvoting couple filling a vacancy on the Board of Trustees reads as follows:

4.1.7 Replacement. If a voting couple directorship becomes vacant prior to the expiration of their term, the first non-voting couple shall fill the vacancy and become a voting couple for the un-expired portion of the term of the vacating couple.

The proposed amendment changes section 4.1.7 to read: as follows:

4.1.7 Replacement. *If a voting couple directorship becomes vacant prior to the expiration of their term, the first non-voting couple shall fill the vacancy and become a voting couple. The starting point of the term of the couple filling the vacancy shall be measured from the convention at which they were elected as alternates and shall comply with the term specified in section 4.1.5 based on this starting point.*

c. Additional Discussion Relative to the Proposed Amendment.

The problem with the current provision is with the last phrase in section 4.1.7 that states: "for the unexpired portion of the term of the vacating couple." This becomes a problem given the limitation of terms provision, 4.1.5.1 of the bylaws, that was added at the August 2007 annual business meeting. Remember that the term of the two alternate non-voting couples is nominally one year, from one convention to the following convention (see section 4.1.5 of the bylaws).

If a vacancy occurs on the Board, under the current provision the term of the nonvoting couple moving up to voting status on the Board is unpredictable. This is due to the term being defined as the remaining portion of the term of the couple leaving the Board. Thus the term could be for less than a year if the couple leaving the Board is in last year of their nominal three-year term. Or the term could be for almost three full years if a newly elected voting couple resigns from the Board early in the first year of their term.

If a non-voting couple were to move into a very short term of less than a year, once this short

term is up they would not be eligible to serve on the Board for nominally five years (see section 4.1.5.1, five consecutive annual conventions). Because of this, an alternate couple may choose not to fill the vacancy if the unexpired term of the couple leaving the Board is only for a short period.

The purpose of this proposed amendment is to take the uncertainty out of the term to be served by an alternate couple moving up to voting membership on the Board while at the same time honoring the Fellowship's desire to prohibit long terms of Board membership. Thus the term of an alternate couple filling a vacancy on the Board would not be arbitrarily determined by whatever the length is of the unexpired term of the couple leaving the Board. Under the proposed amendment, such a couple would have a term covering at least two consecutive conventions (nominally two years). But in no case would their term exceed the term of three consecutive conventions (nominally three years) that is the term of couples directly elected to voting membership on the Board.

d. Recommendation of the Structure Committee: While each member group must make its own decision on the proposed amendment, the Structure Committee recommends supporting this amendment with six of the seven members of the committee in favor of the amendment and one member abstaining from taking a position on the proposed amendment.

Topic 6. To avoid ambiguity as to whether the Fellowship or the Board has the authority to modify the RCA steps and traditions.

a. Summary of July 18, 2009, Notice of Topics.

Currently there is an ambiguity as to the appropriate authority for making changes to the wording of RCA's 12 Steps and 12 Traditions, if at some point in the future any such changes were to be proposed. The reference here is to what some members refer to as the short forms of the Steps and the Traditions.

Does authority to make any future changes to the Steps and Traditions reside in the Board of Trustees or does it reside in the Fellowship? The proposed amendment to the bylaws resolves this question by adding the Steps and Traditions as an appendix to the bylaws. Thus any future changes will require Fellowship approval by means of bylaw amendments.

b. Wording of Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws

The proposed amendment adds an appendix to the bylaws which reads as follows:

***Bylaw Appendix:
The 12 Steps and the 12 Traditions of RCA***

1.0 The 12 Steps of RCA. The Twelve Steps suggested for recovery in the Fellowship of Recovering Couples Anonymous are as follows:

- 1. We admitted we were powerless over our relationship—that*

- our lives together had become unmanageable.*
2. *We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to commitment and intimacy.*
 3. *We made a decision to turn our wills and our life together over to the care of God as we understood God.*
 4. *We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of our relationship together as a couple.*
 5. *We admitted to God, to each other, and to another couple the exact nature of our wrongs.*
 6. *We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character, communication and caring.*
 7. *We humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.*
 8. *We made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.*
 9. *We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.*
 10. *We continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it to our partner and to others we had harmed.*
 11. *We sought through our common prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out.*
 12. *Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to other couples, and to practice these principles in all aspects of our lives, our relationship, and our families.*

1.1 ***Changes to the Wording of the 12 Steps.** The provisions of section 6.2 of the bylaws apply to any modifications made to the wording of the 12 Steps of RCA.*

2.0 ***The 12 Traditions of RCA.** The Twelve Traditions of Recovery Couples Anonymous are:*

1. *Our common welfare should come first; couple recovery depends upon RCA unity.*
2. *For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority, a loving God as known in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.*
3. *The only requirement for RCA membership is a desire to remain in a committed relationship.*
4. *Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or RCA as a whole.*
5. *Each group has but one primary purpose, to carry its message to recovering couples who still suffer.*
6. *RCA ought never endorse, finance, or lend the RCA name to*

any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

7. *Every RCA group should be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.*
8. *Recovering Couples Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.*
9. *RCA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.*
10. *Recovering Couples Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the RCA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.*
11. *Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, TV and films.*
12. *Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.*

2.1 *Changes to the Wording of the 12 Traditions.* The provisions of section 6.2 of the bylaws apply to any modifications made to the wording of the 12 Traditions of RCA.

c. Additional Discussion Relative to the Proposed Amendment.

The wording of the Steps and the wording of the Traditions are fundamental matters that define the Fellowship. The proposed amendment clarifies the approval authority for changes to the Steps and Traditions and should prevent any conflict that might arise in the future if changes to the *short forms* Steps or Traditions were to be proposed.

The solution that is covered by the proposed amendment to the Bylaws is based on that used by two other 12-Step Fellowships: Overeaters Anonymous (OA) and Co-Dependents Anonymous (CODA). Both of these 12-Step Fellowships have included their Steps and Traditions in their bylaws. Thus any changes to their Steps and Traditions are covered by their well defined procedures to modify the bylaws. This proposed amendments implements a similar procedure for RCA.

d. Recommendation of the Structure Committee: While each member group must make its own decision on the proposed amendment, the Structure Committee recommends supporting this amendment with five of the seven members of the committee in favor of the amendment, one member opposed to the amendment and one member abstaining from taking a position on the proposed amendment.

Category II: Proposed changes to the Bylaws Adding a New Provision Covering the Board of Trustees

Topic 7. Add a provision the Board of Trustees to establish, publish, and maintain a policies and procedures manual

a. Summary of July 18, 2009, Notice of Topics.

To provide transparency and to aid in the continuity in the operation of the Board of Trustees, a new provision is proposed for the bylaws for the Board of Trustees to establish a Policies and Procedures Manual and to maintain this manual on-line on the members-only portion of the website. The Board of Trustees passed a motion at its March 2009 Face-to-Face meeting to establish a Policy and Procedures Manual. By adding this as a bylaw requirement, the Board will have additional incentive to undertake and complete the effort required to establish this manual and to keep it updated.

b. Wording of Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws

This proposed amendment to the bylaws adds a new section 4.1.10 to the bylaws that reads as follows:

4.1.10 *On-line Policies and Procedures.* *The Board of Trustees shall establish, publish, and maintain a Board policies and procedures manual in accordance with the following requirements:*

- 1. The policies and procedures shall be available on-line on the members-only portion of the RCA website.*
- 2. The Board shall keep the manual current with all changes and additions to the policies and procedures of the Board..*
- 3. This provision shall not be interpreted to invest the Board of Trustees with any additional authority other than that delegated to it by specific provisions of the bylaws. The Board of Trustees is a subordinate board, subordinate to the Fellowship. The Board also is required to comply with the provisions of Robert's Rules of Order unless a specific provision of the bylaws provides differently.*
- 4. The policies and procedures adopted by the Board shall comply with the various provisions of federal and state law that are applicable to the operations of the World Service Organization including: federal law applicable to tax exempt organizations; Missouri law applicable to nonprofit corporations; and other laws applicable to the business operations of the World Service Organization.*
- 5. Consistent with the status of the Board of Trustees as a*

subordinate board, the Fellowship shall have the right to modify or invalidate any policy or procedure adopted by the Board of Trustees. The Fellowship may exercise this authority by majority vote of the Fellowship taken at the annual business meeting or taken by means of by-mail voting.

6. *The Board shall retain on the website the original text of any policy and procedure that has been superseded by a new or modified version of that particular policy or procedure.*

Proviso: It is the intent of this provision that the Board of Trustees establish as a goal, the publication of the initial version of the required manual by the time of the 2010 annual business meeting. It is also the intent that the various sections and provisions of the manual be posted on the website as they become available.

c. Additional Discussion Relative to the Proposed Amendment.

As recognized in the express proviso to this provision, it will take time for the Board to establish and publish an initial version of the policies and procedures manual. The goal is to have an initial version by the time of the 2010 annual business meeting in July 2010.

d. Recommendation of the Structure Committee: While each member group must make its own decision on the proposed amendment, the Structure Committee recommends supporting this amendment with four members of the committee in favor of the amendment, one member opposed to the amendment and one member abstaining from taking a position on the proposed amendment (also the position of one member of the committee is not currently known).

Category III: Topics for Approval of Fellowship that do not involve changes to the bylaws.

The topic in this category is a general matter for the consideration of the Fellowship at the Business meeting and does not involve changes to the bylaws. A motion on a general matter requires a majority vote for approval.

Topic 8. There are two separate parts to this matter: First, to authorize a Swedish Translation of the New Fourth Edition when is approved by the Fellowship; and Second, to provide financial aid to RCA Sweden to help cover the cost for the translation of the Fourth edition of the Blue Book into Swedish\.

a. Summary of July 18, 2009, Notice of Topics.

RCA Sweden held its annual convention on March 29-30, 2009. During the convention we also had our business meeting and the question was raised if it was possible to ask for economic contribution to translate the new blue book into Swedish from WSO, RCA.

History

RCA Sweden was founded in 1997. Four couples got together and started a meeting. Since then we have grown slowly and today we have five groups in Sweden. The number of participants in the groups vary. Each year we organize a convention on the last weekend in March. This year approximately 20 couples attended the convention. Throughout the last couple of years there is a board that works to improve RCA Sweden and how we best carry the message to other couples. Of course that board does not work without the groups participating.

Economy

As in most other countries the Swedish fellowship is fighting with its economy. We have earlier been contributing to WSO but lately we have seen that we need the seventh tradition for translations. A lot of literature we have translated by ourselves but now we have made the decision to wait until the new blue book will be approved in the US. We have also had a group conscience on letting a professional translator – with a lot of twelve step-knowledge, do this work for us. He has offered us a good price for this work and we have accepted. On top of that we will have to pay for printing as well. That's why we will ask people in the fellowship to pay for the book beforehand and also to ask the groups contributions to be used for the translation.

Now we, the Swedish fellowship, want to ask if WSO would consider contributing to the translation of the Blue Book.

b. Wording of Proposal for Consideration at the Annual Business Meeting.

In consultation with members of RCA Sweden the proposal has been formulated in two motions that are to be voted on separately.

First Motion:

Provide Fellowship approval to translate the finished 4th edition into Swedish. The translation shall be done in accordance with the recommended guidelines of translation quality and copyright to be established by 2009-2010 Board Trustees and will be completed within a prudent time frame upon completion and approval of the English 4th edition.

Second Motion:

Provide financial aid to RCA Sweden, in an amount not to exceed \$2,500, for the translation of the Fourth edition of the Blue Book into Swedish, when the Fourth Edition is approved by the Fellowship and to the extent that WSO funds are available.

c. Additional Discussion Relative to the Proposed Motions

First Motion:

The first motion covers the Fellowship authorizing the Swedish translation. This motion also recognizes the need for the Board of Trustees to establish guidelines addressing translation quality and copyright policies to be followed in agreements covering translations of RCA literature.

Second Motion:

The following additional information has been provided by RCA Sweden. Sweden has a translator ready to translate the 4th edition as it comes off the press. They have budgeted \$7,500 US for this and have currently saved about \$5,000 US for the translation. Sweden is asking for WSO financial support.

Addition matters to be considered include the fact that the actual decision on Fellowship approval is likely to be at least eight months in the future. It is hoped that it may be possible to achieve Fellowship approval of the Fourth Edition of the Blue Book by the time of the 2010 annual business meeting in Niagra Falls.

It is not possible to predict at this time the amount of WSO funds that might be available to support the Swedish translation at that time. The “extent that WSO funds are available” to aid in covering the cost of the Swedish translation will depend on many factors including the costs of the approval process and of the printing for the Fourth Edition in English as well as the financial needs for other translation efforts including Spanish and possibly German.

The decision on the availability of funds to support the Swedish translation is a matter to be decided by the Board of Trustees at that time. That decision will require the Board to consider the matters discussed here as well as the other financial needs of the WSO in light of the funds then available from Seventh Tradition donations and literature sales.

The purpose of the second motion is for the Fellowship to endorse the request of RCA Sweden so that Board will consider providing financial aid for the cost of the translation “to the extent WSO funds are available” given all the needs of the WSO. The amount of such aid, if any, is left to the sound discretion of the Board of Trustees.

d. Recommendation of the Structure Committee:

As to the First Motion, Authorizing the Translation: While each member group must make its own decision on the first motion, the Structure Committee unanimously recommends supporting this motion with all seven members of the committee in favor of authorizing the Swedish translation.

As to the Second Motion, Providing financial assistance to the extent funds are available: While each member group must make its own decision on the second motion, the Structure Committee recommends supporting this motion with five members of the committee in favor of the second motion and two members opposed.

Category IV. Substantive Changes to the Bylaws proposed by Individual RCA Members.

Three of the four proposals in this category have been withdrawn. What remains is topic 12 which is presented below.

Topic 12. Proposes amendment to the bylaws to require Fellowship approval of all RCA literature including pamphlets.

a. Summary of July 18, 2009, Notice of Topics.

The initial comments of the member submitting this proposal and the initial comments of the Structure Committee are contained on pages 9 and 10 of the July 18, 2009 Notice of Topics (revised September 1, 2009) that is posted on the website. Interested individuals are referred there to review those initial comments. The most recent comments of the member proposing this amendment and of the Structure Committee are included in subsection c below.

b. Wording of Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws

Add a new article to the bylaws as follows:

Article VII. Approval of RCA Literature

7.1 Approval Process for RCA Literature. Any literature that carries the RCA name shall be treated in a uniform manner regarding the process of approval for use in the fellowship. Any proposed literature, defined as editions of the RCA Big Book, RCA pamphlets, RCA workbooks or guides and RCA reflection books, shall be subject to a process of review that would treat all said literature equally, whether it is literature currently in use, or created and offered by members of RCA or from any source outside of RCA. This process would include 3 steps.

Step 1. Any of the above listed literature shall be subject to a process of review, and edit regarding content quality, re-review and presentation to the board for preliminary approval before advancing to Step 2. This work should all be done at the committee level.

Step 2. The proposed literature upon completion by the committee process shall then be reviewed by the board for approval to advance to Step 3. The board process shall consist of an agreed upon review time frame to make any additional edits before a simple majority vote is taken. The majority vote shall either allow the literature in question to advance to the next level of voting that would be at the fellowship level, or if a majority vote is not reached, the literature shall go back to the Step 1 process for further reworking.

Step 3. The proposed literature upon receiving a majority vote by the board shall then be presented to the fellowship for approval using the Special Rule 1 of the RCA Special Rules of Order regarding literature approval by the Fellowship. The proposed literature at this stage may not be amended, but is voted on in the form it is presented.

c. Additional Discussion Relative to the Proposed Amendment.

(1). As submitted by the RCA member proposing this amendment.

The purpose is to provide greater clarity in definition of RCA Literature and to create a level of safety within the process that reflects the will of the fellowship as opposed to the will of a lesser number of people. There are no direct monetary costs associated with this proposal. The cost of time is to help ensure that the process takes place in a timeframe that ensures room for proper examination, comment and reflection, and response and action.

Reasoning behind this proposed amendment is to assure that we are upholding the best spirit of the 12 traditions. “ That no personalities will be served above the best interests of the fellowship.” It is also to provide a standardized format for the development and approval of RCA literature. It is also to assure that there is a layered process that provide the necessary levels of safety and care in producing literature that will reflect on the whole RCA program. It is important that no small group be empowered to the point that they would make lasting decisions that may not be in the best interest of RCA. It is also to protect RCA from outside influences that may be served separately from RCA. Our work is not only for today is for the future and is precious. Our decisions will have lasting effects. Let us act responsibly and be about the task with care and concern.

Allan S., Nokomis RCA – Mpls

(2) Comments from the Structure Committee.

- The requirement in this proposal for Fellowship approval of all RCA literature regardless of its purpose, scope, and the length of its prior use by the Fellowship is a major problem with this proposed amendment to the bylaws. In his discussion the member asserts that: “There are no direct monetary costs associated with this proposal.” This is clearly not the case.
- **Monetary Costs Associated with the Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws:**
 - The only reasonable way for a member group to evaluate an item of literature is to have at least one printed copy for review by the members of the group. Trying to review a document on a computer screen is not a workable method for most individuals.
 - There are two ways to allocate the costs of printing a copy of an item of literature to be reviewed.
 - Either an electronic copy can be sent to each group and each group can bear the expense for printing out a copy.
 - Or the WSO can have copies printed and mailed to each group. This of course adds the cost of mailing to the printing costs. This is process approved by the Fellowship at the 2007 annual business meeting for use when the Fourth Edition is sent out for Fellowship approval.

Structure Committee comments (continued)

- Whichever way is chosen, the cost to print approximately 130 copies of each item of literature so that it can be reviewed is a significant monetary cost (there are about 130 member groups).
- A good example of the costs involved is the current estimate of the cost of providing each member group with a review copy of the 4th edition of the Blue Book, a copy currently scheduled to be sent out to each group early in 2010. The estimate cost for printing and mailing each copy is \$20 per review copy. The total for sending a copy to each of the 130 groups is estimated to be \$2,600. To these costs the hours of the merchandise service provider must be added. As a result the total cost is estimated to exceed \$3,000.
- **Non-monetary Costs Associated with the Proposed Amendment:**
 - The non-monetary costs involve the time and effort for each member group to review an item of literature. There should be a real need before each member group is asked to undertake this effort..
 - Many of the RCA pamphlets are simply extracts from the Blue Book. When the Fourth Edition receives Fellowship approval, many of the current pamphlets can be updated by extracting the required information from the approved Fourth Edition. Review by the Board or by a committee of the Board to ensure that the extraction has been done accurately is all that should be required. It makes no sense to require each member group to review the updated pamphlets and then vote on approving an extraction from the Fourth Edition which will already have received Fellowship approval.
 - In the very near future the Fellowship is already committed to a major literature review effort. It is expected that early next spring, the Fourth Edition will be distributed for review and approval by each member group. This will be a major effort for the member groups. Yet the proposed amendment will add substantially to the workload for each group by sending out all other RCA literature for review and approval by the member groups. The focus of the Fellowship in the near term should be on the upcoming review and approval of the Fourth Edition.
- **Requiring Review and Approval of the Third Edition of the Blue Book**
 - Under the proposed amendment, the WSO will be required to send out the 1996 Third Edition of the Blue Book out for Fellowship approval. This also makes no sense. Some groups are already using the various drafts of the Fourth Edition and have no interest in the Third Edition. Some other groups have continued to use the third edition as they have been doing for many years.
 - At the 2006 annual business meeting in Boston, the Fellowship directed the WSO to print additional copies of the Third Edition for use by the Fellowship. Those 1,000 copies have since been sold by the WSO and it was necessary to re-order additional copies in early 2009.

Structure Committee comments (continued)

- What legitimate purpose is to be served by requiring all the member groups to review the Third Edition, as well as other literature items that have been used for a long time, and then to require a vote on whether to approve them? Yet this is what the proposed amendment requires.
- **Precluding the Member Groups from Submitting Comments on Proposed New Literature**
 - Another problem with the proposed amendment is that it precludes a process that has been used as part of the Fellowship's review of drafts of the Fourth Edition. There have been two prior rounds of soliciting comments from the member groups on drafts of the Fourth Edition. This was done for both the 2005 and the 2006 drafts of the Fourth Edition.
 - The proposed amendment precludes the process of getting comments from the member groups on proposed new literature. The member groups must vote yes or no and are not permitted to address specific issues that may be of concern to them. This gives up a feature of the literature-approval process that has been used by the WSO in recent years and does so without any discussion or justification.
- **What is needed is a flexible process that recognizes various approval processes.**
 - The proposed amendment lacks the flexibility that is needed in the WSO literature-approval process. Much of the current RCA literature has been Board-approved literature. This approval method needs to be retained but would be eliminated by the proposed amendment. Other Fellowships, such as Overeaters Anonymous have both Board approved and Fellowship (Conference) approved literature. This flexible approach should be retained by RCA.
 - Currently the Fellowship has the authority to approve or disapprove any item of literature that has been approved by the Board of Trustees. The Board is a subordinate board. By a simple majority vote at an annual business meeting, the Fellowship can disapprove any item of literature that the Board has approved. Moreover, by a simple majority vote the Fellowship can direct the Board to submit any particular item of literature to the Fellowship for approval. Given this present authority of the Fellowship, there is no need for imposing the proposed amendment on the RCA literature-approval process..

d. Recommendation of the Structure Committee: While each member group must make its own decision on the proposed amendment, the Structure Committee recommends not supporting this amendment with the seven members of the committee voting unanimously against the amendment.

Final Reminder: If your group is uncertain as to the meaning and significance of any of the matters listed in this notice and if your group wishes, you might want to seek advice from longtime and trusted members of RCA as to their views on the merits of the various topics listed in this notice or e-mail the Structure Committee at structure@recovering-couples.org.