

Joint Steering Committee Meeting for 6 and 7 am virtual JFT Meeting Members

August 27 2022

Meeting Started 8:15 am

Opening

Responsibility statement said by all

Attendees

Jim s, Julia, Julie, Dan E, CarolO, Carol Chic, Kristine Peggy, DavidH, Tracey, Todd, Wendy, John b, Janice, Mark N, Lisa W, Don E, Barbara, Kevin P, Kit, Alyssa P, Charlie white, Mark J Eric, Todd Walker, Rebecca, CC, Annie G, Mary Anne, Mark Z, Trish, Elizabeth, Deb Parker, Mary Anne, Bray, Jeanette, Barrie, Scottie, Julie Q

Our Agenda:

- Hear background on proposal to separate onsite and virtual JFT groups and open up for questions/ clarification
- Hear initial list of logistical impact and open up for questions and additional input
- Hear what to expect at bus meeting and ask what else we need to be prepared for that
- Get a pulse on JFTV group conscience at this time

Roles: Julie Q as 6am JFTV Chair is facilitating. Barrie B as 7am JFTV Chair is taking notes. Wendy as JFT Secretary is providing content and process guidance.

Our goal: Hear the proposal, have an opportunity to provide input and ask questions, and understand what happens next. No decisions are being made today.

Proposal:

At a recent (7/23) Onsite Steering Committee Meeting of the JFT 6 am and 7 am onsite meetings, a unanimous vote was taken in support of separating the onsite and virtual JFT meetings into two AA groups. The Onsite Steering Committee requested that this recommendation be brought forward to the whole JFT group for consideration by the group conscience.

Background on what led to the proposal:

As you know, the virtual expressions of our group were begun as a service to our onsite members when the pandemic started. The virtual meetings continue to include long time members original to the onsite meetings and have expanded to include those from as far afield as Vermont, Thailand and many places in between.

These four expressions of our one group have made our structure, roles and processes larger and more complex and each group has developed its own culture and operational norms. At a high level, these are the main challenges we are facing:

1. Complexity of structure
2. Difficult communications; technology needed
3. Different cultures and operating norms
4. Role and process confusion
5. Representation
6. Impact on anonymity with use of web camera technology

We are not unique. In fact, many AA groups are going through this very thing. There is also AA Guidance provided on these types of issues.

Reiterate the purpose of the meeting to share, discuss information we have to date about the proposed separation of the group (details were shared in email to all of JFTI).

Goal- prepare group members for the September 24th meeting to arrive at a group conscience decision of whether to separate on site from virtual meetings and govern /administer separately or not.

Overview by Wendy - reiterating what was presented in email to the group about the on-site steering committee's proposal to split /separate the virtual from the on-site meetings

Julie opened the meeting for questions and clarification. Throughout the meeting Julie put updates in slack including the goals of the meeting, the reasons the separation was proposed, etc...)

David H. (Treasurer)

Expressed his perspective as treasurer on the financial implications and challenges of a shared virtual and on-site expression of JFT. It's complex, both groups express questions about use of funds.

Mark J

Thanked /appreciated David's presentation.

Clarifying whether there are resentments and hoping that there are not.

Bray

Acknowledged work going into this effort and raised the question of could we consider being 4 different groups.

In response, Julie clarified the question /option being considered is separating virtual and in person for now.

Wendy reviewed Logistical Factors Identified so far:

Financials

Tax ID

Bank acct

PayPal

Contact Lists

Website?

Register a group an dID with AA

Group name

District GSR / representation

Secretary, Treasurer and Clerk (Groupwide roles)

David added he would recommend a transition through the end of the year from a financial perspective. Roles and list for all service positions for each of the groups and filling them would need to be identified. And the evolution would take time

Peggy

Expressed concern about minority opinion —such as questions around “paying for coffee” driving this decision

Barrie

-Shared her journey with this proposal as long time JFT member and initially as a JFT member felt Hurt, Resentment and Disagreement with the proposal.

-Not curious at first- more hurt

“Storming

Forming

Norming”

-On-site perspective valuable to understand directly from members of on-site group.

-asked and heard that other groups are experiencing similar challenges, going through changes with hard feelings in some cases

-Compared us to growing organizations that have to go through Scaling /org design to optimize

Todd

-Expressed it has been a process for him as well as a long-standing JFT member to appreciate the reasons for separating the groups

Wendy

- Unanimity reached at onsite steering committee to separate groups (virtual and live)

Barbara

- Wants financial understanding
- Didn't appreciate the way it was handled
- Noted 40 people showed up that don't show up at bus meetings and don't show up at inventory
- Would like to understand financial plan /decisions

John B

- Appreciated the process in place.
- Go slow is his desire (don't move to look at separating 6 and 7 at this time)

Peggy

- Spoke of disagreement with John B's statements, concern about the coffee topic

Mark N

- Expressed appreciation for all of JFT, not in a position or desire to fight but rather appreciate.

Deb Parker

- Early bird in Gloucester Also separated
- Pretend teenager belongs to a neighbor
- A lot of feelings were pandemic related and family related
- Different representation of different meetings (rent issue described), Sneak meetings, (defiance), A lot of feelings, Control issues

Who we are at JFT

- Zoom meeting supporting in person meeting
- Believes in AA and in sharing the message
- What is hope of AA - make sure everyone gets pulled onto the life raft
- We will be okay

Barbara

- Feels it is not black and white
- Wants to be part of a home group with 4 expressions
- Loves being in Unity

Mark N asked:

- Brought up concern about anonymity
- What happened ? Did something happen?

Julie clarified

-People on site were not getting decisions for the whole group bc of the heavier virtual/digital representation during Covid

Other on site concerns-

Complexity of organization

-Challenges with online /technology

Wendy clarified sentiments of on-site group:

-Anonymity question raised

-On-site home group people don't feel like it's appropriate for cameras to be in a meeting.

-They would not attend if there is a camera in the room

-May be a misunderstanding of what it means to be anonymous

-On the other hand - arrival of AA in our homes now invites us into each others homes and that can open us up to people not in AA

David additional on-site group points for consideration:

-On-site people expressed that virtual was a huge success

-Some said they would not attend meetings where voice and picture could be recorded

Understands why some are not comfortable

-He's Concerned about perceptions about one group contributing more than other- JFT are all contributing financially - not one more than the other.

-No anger expressed by on-site group

-Minority opinions always can come off as angry

-Be wary of minority opinions

Jim S represented as member of both virtual and on-site

- group came from a place of love and appreciation for zoom JFT during a time if needed

- complexities of being two different entities under one administrative/service body were felt more by those on site, didn't feel represented as they were small group for a long period, as they grow back wanting to simplify, always refer members to zoom and grateful for it as a resource to the group, technical aspects not appreciated by many members and lack of representation as digital was more heavily represented.

- feels strongly on behalf of both groups

Maryanne

-Could be an Answer to our prayers

-Things have been Unwieldy to manage for the larger/combined groups and interests

-Finding service providers would be challenging for the larger combined groups

-We are structured already to work separately

-These are Luxury problems

Scottie

-Hard feelings at first

Grateful for the structure and glacial pace

-Feels (her feelings) get dealt with in context of steps and service

-Has a structure to not bring feels to the group

-Spoke to her town church separating experience she had had and it was painful for the community at first but ultimately two groups are thriving.

-Sad hard divorce and realized Wanted to have it go a certain way and that's not always possible.

Alyssa Shared:

-Reverence For JFT culture

-Strong Sense of knowing what they want and who they are

-However we proceed - I hope we can celebrate and appreciate

-We don't have to lose anything

Lisa W

-Expressed appreciation

-“Great sobriety in this room “

Main concerns mentioned included:

- Safety - onsite concerned about web security and anonymity; virtual concerned about safety, covid,
- Online allows for safety from direct physical interaction (safety)
- Work/Effort to separate
- Concerns about filling the jobs

Checking the pulse” on group conscience we asked who supported the forming of two separate groups and who supported remaining as one, the majority was inclined at this time to support the forming of two groups with a minority opinion also recognized.

25 hands for supporting split

2 one group

1 abstain

12 did not raise hand for any option

Those not in favor or abstaining spoke:

Mark N (?)

Thinks and hopes the unity is possible as both groups have been an important part of his recovery story and has benefited greatly by the group offering both on site when he first got sober and the virtual once he moved away.

Peggy

Expressed Sadness, concern that so few are in the minority (not in favor of the split) Expressed her safety concerns in person (Covid, etc..) and are we Reinventing the wheel ?

Janice

We've come along way as a group. This meeting was so well done.
Concerned about the work here that it will call for separation And whether people are going to step up to the plate .

Next Steps: Guided by AA's traditions and the AA processq for discerning group conscience JFT will address this proposal to separate into two groups at the regular JFT Group Business Meeting scheduled for Saturday, September 24, 2022 (8:15 to 10:15 am); onsite at St. Camillus and Online via the 7 am virtual meeting

Close : Unity statement said by all

Meeting adjourned at 10:10 am