

**Just for Today
Ad Hoc Virtual Business Meeting Minutes**

This document contains decisions, votes, and action items from the JFT Virtual Business Meeting on 28 Mar 2020

8:21 AM The meeting was called to order by JFT Secretary (Jenny T [JT])

Part 1

Part 1 presents overall group business discussed at the business meeting.

Secretary's Report (JT)

Virtual meetings have been up and running for 14 days—we have accomplished a lot in short period of time. Secretary read from the Foreword of the Big Book (2nd edition). Secretary stated we need to agree in principle to continue the virtual meetings for the foreseeable future. We would reconsider this, when able to re-enter the usual JFT meeting room.

VOTE 1: DOES THE GROUP AGREE WE WANT TO CONTINUE WITH JFT VIRTUAL MEETINGS FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE?

PASSED: unanimous from 48 participants

Group members have stated they want a voice in future decisions that will affect the meeting formats. As of now, there is no effective way to obtain group conscience or feedback without coordinating a business meeting (in person or virtual). Since many decisions may need to be made in the future, the JFT secretary proposed that JFT service members be allowed to use various e-survey tools to obtain group conscience.

VOTE 2: DO WE AUTHORIZE JFT SERVICE VOLUNTEERS TO USE ONLINE TOOLS TO OBTAIN GROUP CONSCIENCE FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE TO GAIN TIMELY INPUT?

PASSED: 2 NOs from 48 participants

Discussion/Minority Voice

- #1: A member voted no since she does not know how to use the tools, but is willing to learn.
- #2: A member noted that there are 160 people on Google distribution list, not all of whom are regular JFT group members. Recommends we use the survey to advise and voting to made in Business meetings. This was agreed to by the Secretary but no record of a vote being taken.
- #3: A member asked if, when using the survey tool, do we need a quorum for the survey in order for it to be counted?

Secretary noted that we don't know exactly how a survey tool might be used since we have never used before but wanted to at least have an option for obtaining group conscience in the future in case immediate decisions need to be made. All seemed comfortable with the use of the tool without considering it a final voting measure.

Treasurer's Report (JL)

Treasurer Jennifer (JL) shared our current treasury status (stable income and no financial difficulties). JFT is paying ongoing/standing obligations including agreed to rent and service company. The Treasurer gave an excellent overview of different online platforms and asked the group to consider moving towards adding a virtual 7th tradition option, in addition to continuing the option to contribute in cash?

Discussion/Minority Voice

- #1: A member asked for clarification that cash and check can still be sent to JFT post office box along with Pay Pal option?
Answer: Yes—PayPal would be a 3rd payment option
- #2: A member stated that her church uses Zelle, which does not charge, can we use that? Treasurer noted that Zelle is usually used for person to person not to a non-profit (as is JFT) so suggested they continue the conversation one on one offline.
- #3: A member asked a treasury-related topic. He mentioned that he had ordered pamphlets, gave invoice to John, who said he would give to Jennifer. Jennifer says that works.

VOTE 3a: DOES THE GROUP AGREE TO MOVE TOWARDS ADDING A VIRTUAL 7TH TRADITION OPTION, IN ADDITION TO CONTINUING THE OPTION TO CONTRIBUTE IN CASH?

PASSED (unanimous from 48 participants)

Just for Today Business Meeting

VOTE 3b: DOES THE GROUP AUTHORIZE JFT SECRETARY TO MOVE FORWARD ON PAYPAL?

PASSED (unanimous from 48 participants)

JFT Contact List and JFT Email Distribution List (JT and Kit (KM)/JFT Contact List Service Volunteer)

JFT Secretary and KM gave the background: Group members have shared that they want access to the JFT Contact/Phone List . JFT has traditionally only shared the JFT Contact/Phone List by hardcopy in our meeting hall. We have not distributed the list electronically yet. Additionally, we created a JFT Email Distribution List (via Google Groups) to virtually communicate with JFT members and JFT meeting attendees and provide meeting information. Members were asked to volunteer to form a smaller group composed of JFT Group Members to be established to discuss these issues. KM, the current group member who has the service job of updating the JFT Contact/Telephone list, will lead the effort working with a small group of JFT members to present a proposal to JFT on how to handle the distribution of the JFT Contact List during our time of inability to exchange hardcopy versions.

VOTE 4: DOES THE JFT GROUP AGREE TO CREATE A SUBGROUP TO DISCUSS AND THEN PRESENT PROPOSALS BACK TO JFT GROUP FOR DECISION?

PASSED: unanimous from 48 participants

Virtual Meeting Service Jobs (JT and all)

We now have myriad new service opportunities and jobs we have to create, document, and rotate. Proposal is to create a Virtual Service Jobs Coordinator who will work with other JFT Group members to sort out the ongoing service needs for managing both virtual meetings, work together to create mini descriptions and guidance for doing these jobs, communicate with the JFT Secretary on these jobs. Wendy volunteered. A new email has been established for this purpose so any virtual meeting-related service job requests/queries should be directed to JFTServiceJobs@gmail.com. Volunteers were obtained to assist this work. It was noted by the JFT secretary that all JFT committees should try to have a balanced representation of 6am and 7am meeting attendees.

JFT Virtual Meeting Tips + Tricks (JT and all)

The JFT Secretary noted we are all learning and there is a lot of accumulated AA experience from which to draw. A volunteer was requested to lead the development of a *JFT Virtual Meeting Tips + Tricks Guide*. Todd volunteered and other group members offered to help.

Proposed Virtual Meeting Option Going Forward (JT and all)

Establishing virtual meetings unexpectedly created many new issues and service jobs; the issues continue to multiply! Overall, it has been extremely time-consuming and we need group input and to share the workload. Some group members want a voice in choosing which settings/tools are used for the virtual meetings. Some group members have shared they would like autonomy to allow each meeting (6am and 7am) to make meeting-specific choices on how the virtual meetings are run—specifically, the settings and the format. There are many decisions to be made and it will be very challenging to reach consensus. Therefore, a proposal is made to establish smaller groups to allow the typical 6am meeting attendees to discuss and decide settings/format for the 6am virtual meeting and allow the typical 7am meeting attendees to discuss and decide settings/format for the 7am virtual meeting.

Discussion/Minority Voice:

- #1: A member stated that it seems we are setting up two different meetings when we have always had two exactly same meeting format. Secretary response: Up to each meeting subgroup.
- #2: A member asked, are we just setting up a steering committee or making decisions? Secretary response: Up to each meeting subgroup.
- #3: A member asked, do we want different meeting formats? Secretary response: Suggest both subgroups/steering committees to discuss.

VOTE 5a: DOES THE JFT GROUP AGREE TO ESTABLISH 2 STEERING COMMITTEES (ONE EACH, 6AM AND 7AM) TO ALLOW EACH MEETING TO MANAGE TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF THE MEETING AS EACH MEETING MEMEBRS PREFER?

PASSED: unanimous from 48 participants

Discussion/Minority Voice:

- #1: A member noted we should use the term “settings” to clarify what we are establishing here, it’s not the overall format necessarily but more focused on Zoom settings. Secretary response: The vote asked for “technical aspects” of the virtual meetings and any decisions would be up to the subgroups/subcommittees.

Part 2

In Part 2 in the business meeting, group members selected to join one of two subgroup meetings to allow the typical 6am meeting attendees to discuss and decide settings/format for the 6am virtual meeting and allow the typical 7am meeting attendees to discuss and decide settings/format for the 7am virtual meeting. Following are the notes from the 6am Subgroup Meeting, followed by the 7am Subgroup Meeting.

Part 2 6AM Virtual Meeting Subgroup Discussion Minutes/Notes

JL led this discussion and NM assisted with notes. JL led the 6a subcommittee meeting (with aplomb!) The subcommittee met approx. 9:25 - 10:40. Attendance changed slightly over the course of the meeting and settled in at 20 members for most of the meeting. There was some question about how many should constitute a quorum for the purpose of taking votes to resolve agenda items. It was noted that there had been adequate notice of the meeting and the topics that would be addressed. A considerable majority agreed that there were enough members present to take final votes on agenda items affecting the 6a meeting.

Discussion Topics

1. Steering committee

Picking up on the suggestion made at the end of Part 1 of the business meeting, the 6a subgroup created a steering committee. The following members volunteered to be on the steering committee: Jim, Liz, Lisa, Mary Anne, Tricia, Cheryl. Kit, Phillip.

2. Chat—enable or disable

JL solicited pros/cons of making the chat function available during meetings. Summarizing very generally:

- Pro enable chat: strong views that chat is important to increase connection in a virtual setting, and when many are already feeling the strain of isolation; particularly acute for people in early sobriety; ability to connect privately during meetings has been a vital part of in-person meetings (e.g. in the kitchen, back of the hall, outside) and it is no less important virtually
- Pro disable chat: strong views that “zoom bombing” (i.e. interlopers sending pornographic, obscene or otherwise inappropriate chats) is a serious concern and the harm that would come from people having to see such material outweighs the benefits of chat; chat is a distraction, it gets in the way of paying attention, cross chatting is discouraged in live meetings
- Middle ground? Can we enable chat before meeting, or after, or both? Is there a solution that is not either/or, chat on/chat off?

Resolution: Steering committee to explore pros/cons/alternatives and report back

3. Screenshot—retain or disable

JL opened discussion. Kit clarified that screen-sharing refers only to the ability of a meeting member to display, to the rest of the meeting, open screens/docs on their computer, and does not affect whether we will all continue to see other members’ faces. Concern again expressed about zoom bombing. There was consensus that only the meeting host needs to be able to share their screen; individual meeting members do not need this function.

VOTE: KEEP SCREEN SHARING THE WAY IT IS (ONLY HOST CAN SHARE THE SCREEN)

PASSED: Unanimous

4. Password—retain or disable

JL opened discussion. Some noted the potential benefit of being able to guard against zoom bombing by making the meeting password-protected. Even with that benefit noted, all seemed in agreement that the counter-benefit of keeping the meeting accessible to those who need it (including to those who may need to dial in on a traditional phone line) outweigh the privacy/security interest.

VOTE: DO NOT REQUIRE A PASSWORD

PASSED: Unanimous

5. Time limits—retain or disable

JL opened discussion. Comments reflected a strong interest in maximizing the opportunity for sharing by as many people as possible. This did not translate into broad agreement on how to make that happen. It was suggested that the host use a chime of some sort to alert speakers when they reach 2 mins or 3 mins. A vote was taken on each of those suggestions, with approximately 7-9 in favor of each, but the majority opposed. It was also suggested that instead of time limits the group might consider changes that would encourage new or infrequent speakers to share (e.g. “if you have shared in the past week, we request that you give others a chance to share today” or reserving some time for burning desires, or for newcomers, etc.).

Resolution: Steering committee to consider ways to ensure as many voices as possible are heard while also ensuring individual speakers have adequate time to share what is on their mind.

ACTION ITEM: Steering committee to report back with proposals.

6. Open Discussion (both before and after the meeting):

Jennifer opened discussion about whether to continue to permit members to speak on topics generally related to recovery and fellowship before and after the meeting.

Resolution: The group unanimously decided to keep the virtual meeting space open before and after the meeting, as it has been functioning to date.

7. Duration of 6a meeting - 45 or 60 mins:

Jennifer opened discussion. There was support expressed for both formats. 60 minutes would allow more speakers. 45 minutes is helpful to some members who try to join their family’s morning routine by 6:45 and don’t want to miss the end of the meeting (closing, serenity prayer, etc.). Other considerations: if we change to 60 mins, we need a second zoom account so we can have the 6a open and continuing for a few minutes after 7 while the 7a is opening up (6:45); also a 60 min meeting means host opens at 5:45 and stays until 7:15 -- 90 mins is a big ask.

VOTE: Keep meeting at 45 minutes.

PASSED: Not unanimous, but clear majority

7. “Other topics”

The group agreed to send additional miscellaneous issues to the steering committee to consider and report back:

- Whether AA recommends a specific duration of sobriety to contribute to a Steering Committee
- Whether the virtual meeting host can anonymize names
- Change the format to use different readings and/or different topics (gratitude, chairperson’s topic, etc)
- Other settings to consider...
 - -“Join Before Host” so people can’t use the meeting room before or after the host arrives
 - “Co-Host” so others help moderate.
 - “File Transfer” so there’s no digital sharing (and can share digital viruses as well)
 - “Allow Removed Participants to Rejoin” so booted attendees can’t slip back in.

JL ended the meeting at ~10:40 AM.

Part 2 7AM Virtual Meeting Subgroup Discussion Minutes/Notes

Lisa (LW) led this discussion and JG assisted with notes.

1. Chat—retain or disable

Lisa (LW) described the chat functions and reviewed the pros and cons based on the comments received previously. She called for a discussion. General discussion ensued including the following:

- What was the general sense from the poll? Answer: Poll was split.
- Disable chat. Without chat, we are better able to pay attention. Chat is distracting.
- Chat is Distracting.
- All of the above and it is against the tradition of not having cross chat
- Also seems like the technical aspects of the meeting are complicated. Seems like having chat on would add to that.
- Is chat a vehicle for Zoom bombing?
- Zoom bombing comes up during Screen Share. Can we turn on chat at the end of meeting to share?
- We can turn on chat at the end of meeting if we want to
- We have an opportunity to be thought leaders now. Chat is distracting. Let's encourage all to reach out.
- Agree. Impossible for meeting host to deal with chat AND run the meeting.
- Agree with what has been said. Chat takes away from the practice of respecting the speaker.
- Turn on chat at end of meeting.

VOTE: KEEP CHAT DISABLED

PASSED: 6 no votes from 24 participants

2. Screenshare—retain or disable

LW gave background. Right now only the host can share the screen. Do we give other people the opportunity to share the screen? Polling indicated that only the virtual host should be able to share the screen.

VOTE: KEEP SCREEN SHARING THE WAY IT IS (ONLY HOST CAN SHARE THE SCREEN)

PASSED: 5 no votes from 22 participants

3. Password—retain or disable

LW said polling was split. She asked for a show of hands of who wanted the meetings to be password protective? Four people said yes, they wanted the meetings to be password protected. A long discussion ensued:

- The arguments can be summarized: The Cons (traditions of openness and the only requirement for membership.) The Pros is Tradition 11 about public relations, including the Internet. (Attraction, not promotion.) "Going live in a TV studio." General Service AA has clear guidelines on the need for a password for any AA group.
- Answered the question of how do we get the passwords to people by saying through the Google group.
- We are a closed group.
- As a closed group of AA, a password is in keeping with our tradition. However, where does the new person go? Answer: there is so much information out there, they will learn about online meetings and find out website with directions on how to join.
- Resonates with JFT being a closed meeting. Suggests no password until the in-person meeting are back, as this would add another level of complication for the technology challenged members.
- Like the password idea and suggests this be posted on St. C's door.
- Don't want to preclude anyone from joining a meeting. Against the password idea.
- Anonymity is important. There is an issue of hackers. On the other hand, closed meetings are open to all people with a desire to stop drinking. No password.

LW noted that there was no decision and suggested forming a subcommittee to discuss and bring recommendations back to the group. Todd volunteered to chair. Other volunteers included: Amy, Barrie, Geoff, Vanessa, Lee, and Kathleen.

ACTION ITEM: Subcommittee members to discuss and return recommendations back to the group.

4. Time limits—retain or disable

LW asked for a show of hands if we should enforce time limits. 5 people said yes out of 22. Discussion:

- There are a lot of people at the meetings.
- Massive group. I often wonder if I should speak?
- Maintain what we already have.
- A need for a timekeeper.
- Some in person meeting have a timekeeper who uses a timer.
- Has seen this in virtual meetings.

LW noted that there was no decision and suggested forming a subcommittee to discuss and bring recommendations back to the group. Volunteers included: Amy, Dan, and David F.

ACTION ITEM: Subcommittee members to discuss and return recommendations back to the group.

5. Open Discussion (both before and after the meeting):

LW asked for a show of hands if we should have the virtual meeting space only open from 7am to 8am with no “open time” before and after the meeting.

Resolution: With no discussion, the group unanimously decided to keep the virtual meeting space open for an unspecified length of time before and after the meeting.

LW ended the meeting at 10:29 AM.

POST MEETING NOTE:

An email with the names of the two steering committee members and the lead will be communicated to all separately.