

Submitted Minutes from BDA Intergroup Business Meeting

June 28, 2020

9am pacific / 12pm eastern — Open with Serenity Prayer plus BDA and DA readings

Review business meeting agenda

During our kick off meeting six weeks earlier, we agreed that we would put together a BDA Intergroup Service Handbook, which we're treating as a letter of agreement between all of us who volunteer or are elected for service now and those who join us later. We had met weekly over the past five Sundays, spending a total of eight hours together, and had a handbook ready except for fifteen items. For those items, we wanted to have direct discussion with the larger group because they are often departures from what other Intergroups do.

We also had four pages of the handbook to review in detail together. Those pages covered the roles of our special events coordinators, which covers two positions, and our tech and web chair and vice chair, also two positions, for a total of four position and four pages.

From there, we would move on to approving the handbook. Once the handbook was approved, we would talk a little about how we wanted to do our first elections for the BDA Intergroup. Then we would elect a chair and potentially the other officers based on the details in the handbook.

Member introductions

Name, solvency date, BDA home group, and geographic location:

- ✓ Bob A; August 8, 2014; Sunday BDA Phone; Seattle
- ✓ Janie; July 2003; Sunday BDA Phone; New York
- ✓ Morganne; August 20, 2005; Tuesday in-person BDA meeting in Menlo Park, California, and the phone group, BDA Numbers and Record Keeping, Saturday morning at 7am, also a member of BDA workshops; Northern California
- ✓ Bill J; BDA solvency date in March 2001, DA solvency sometime before that; Sunday BDA Phone; Northern Virginia
- ✓ Nancy; April 1, 2020; home group is Thursday evening in Walnut Creek; Walnut Creek, California
- ✓ Ingrid; in DA since 2008, solvency date in 2016; Sunday BDA Phone; New York
- ✓ Dana; April 21, 2020; Walnut Creek BDA meeting on Thursday nights; Michigan
- ✓ Two more callers did not introduce themselves (Both were being anonymous and reached out later: one person is a WSC BDA Committee member, attending out of curiosity, and the other person was attending while considering volunteering for one of our committee chair positions. She is still undecided.)

Review specific handbook details that are likely departures from most existing DA Intergroups

We had up to 45 minutes to review specific details that are likely departures from most existing DA Intergroups, all geared toward the healthiest behaviors we can possibly practice together, aligned with our DA Steps, Traditions, and Concepts to the best of our abilities.

There were 15 items for review and approval, and we had an average of three minutes for each item. We asked someone present on the call to read each of the fifteen items, then asked if there were any objections. If there were no objections, we moved on to the next item. If there were objections, we took up to three minutes to discuss the item at hand, to hear the objection(s), and then take a vote as to whether to move forward as is.

- **From "Rotation of service positions" (page 2 of 28):** No member should stay in any position, or at BDA Intergroup, for too long, where too long would be defined as more than two terms in the same position or more than six years in BDA Intergroup service, even if not consecutive. Yes, that's right. We ask that no one serve more than six years in BDA Intergroup service in their lifetime.
No discussion, no objections, approved.
- **From "BDA Intergroup responsibilities and activities" (page 3 of 28):** Offering the following pieces of DA and BDA literature at no cost to BDA newcomers and members who request them: DA's Currency of Hope; DA's "12, 12, and 12" book; the "Business Debtors Anonymous" pamphlet; the "Tools of BDA" pamphlet; and the DA "Twelve Promises" pamphlet. We ask BDA groups to buy their literature from GSO and individual BDA members to buy all other DA and BDA literature from BDA groups or from GSO. There are now eBooks available, too; see the DA website for more details. We do not offer or provide free DA or BDA eBooks.
Objection: "That's a lot of dough. There's a lot of money involved in Currency of Hope, the pamphlets, and then shipping them out to people. But I mean, it could be hundreds of newcomers, right? Is there a limit to how many of those you offer? It feels like it's an open offer that could end up being dozens and dozens, which feels like ..."
Outcome: After a few minutes of discussion, we agreed to move forward with the provision that we could change this detail, and any details in the handbook, at any time by making a new decision at a BDA Intergroup business meeting. We will also be reviewing and approving our spending plan in July 2020, including funds for literature.
An afterthought from a participant: "Perhaps we could add a line to this paragraph that says: 'This offering of free literature is dependent on availability of funds' or something similar.'" (See action list.)
- **From "How we started our BDA Intergroup" (page 5 of 28):** As we continued to serve together to create our new BDA Intergroup and to engage service people, we committed to serving from a positive mindset. Sometimes we may have a service position stand open until the best candidate becomes available. That's okay. We will also want to remain free of promoting the BDA Intergroup to BDA groups and BDA members. We are committed to making ourselves and our services available and attractive to BDA groups and BDA members. Some groups and members will not be interested in participating in the BDA Intergroup. That's okay, too.
No discussion, no objections, approved.

Review specific handbook details — continued

- **From "Formal decision-making protocol" (page 7 of 28):** [We have] a preference for consensus and reasonable compromises on all sides of an issue or decision.
Brief discussion: We desire to reach unanimous decisions without formal voting whenever possible.
No objections, approved.
- **From "General qualifications for Intergroup members" (page 8 of 28):** For officers and committee chairs, active engagement with a BDA sponsor and having worked all 12 DA Steps at least once. For coordinator positions, have a BDA sponsor and be actively taking the DA Steps.
No discussion, no objections, approved.
- **From "General qualifications for Intergroup members" (page 8 of 28):** For officers and committee chairs, freedom from incurring new unsecured debt for at least three years. For committee chairs, solvency time may be waived down to one year if all other qualifications are met. For coordinator positions, at least one year free of incurring new unsecured debt, but solvency time may be waived down to three months, as long as the BDA member is committed to doing their numbers, being sponsored, and actively taking DA's Twelve Steps.
No discussion, no objections, approved.
- **From "Intergroup Representative position description" (page 9 of 28):** [We] request that IRs represent what they believe their group would want rather than their own personal wants and opinions. This is not to override the "Right of Decision" (Concept 3). **NOTE: Also see this item related to the BDA Intergroup Service Representative (ISR) position description below.**
No discussion, no objections, approved.
- **From "When filling open positions ..." (page 10 of 28):** "Must be present to win" is our policy for BDA Intergroup elections.
No discussion, no objections, approved.
- **From "When filling open positions ..." (page 10 of 28):** When positions are not filled during annual elections and must still be filled, or trusted servants step down and need to be replaced during the course of the service year, we ask interested volunteers — for BDA Intergroup officer, committee chair, and coordinator positions — to attend at least two monthly meetings before making a commitment. During the month in between, we ask them to reach out to current BDA Intergroup members, look around the online resources we have available on our website at bdaintergroup.org, and receive relevant training (when applicable) before making a commitment to complete the current year in the open position. **[New paragraph:]** We then ask, if the person is still interested in taking on a BDA Intergroup position after this one-month waiting period, that they come to the BDA Intergroup business meeting a second time to volunteer for the position or to be nominated. We want to encourage willing volunteers. Our minimum definition for willingness is attendance at two consecutive BDA Intergroup meetings. A shared expectation in all roles is regular attendance at business meetings for the full period of service. Our overall intention with these requests is to create the best possible success for BDA Intergroup and for our trusted servants.
No discussion, no objections, approved.

Review specific handbook details — continued

- From "When filling open positions ..." (page 10 of 28): **NOTE: Except for our own ISR**, we will discourage all BDA members from serving concurrently at both the World Service level and at BDA Intergroup. **We do not want** to abuse the generosity, in terms of time and service, of our fellow trusted servants, and **we do want** to maintain our autonomy from the annual World Service Conference, including from the WSC BDA Committee. All GSRs and ISRs are welcome to attend BDA Intergroup business meetings and any other activities — see above — and to participate in discussions, but not to make motions, to vote, or to take a BDA Intergroup service position.
No discussion, no objections, approved.
- From "BDA Intergroup Chair" (page 11 of 28): [Chair leads BDA Intergroup into and through an] Annual election each June and / or July for the following year and an Intergroup inventory each March in preparation for the annual elections. (via Chair and Vice Chair)
No discussion, no objections, approved.
- From "BDA Intergroup Chair" (page 12 of 28): We encourage guests to attend our BDA Intergroup business meetings and welcome them to participate in discussion on agenda items. However, only BDA members serving as Intergroup Representatives or in BDA Intergroup service positions are eligible to make, second, and vote on motions.
No discussion, no objections, approved.
- From "BDA Intergroup Treasurer" (page 14 of 28): [We] do not take 7th Tradition collections at BDA Intergroup business meetings.
Brief discussion: Most Intergroups, in our experience, do pass a basket around the middle of each business meeting and collect six or seven dollars. For one thing, this would be more difficult for us since we are virtual. For another, we are already showing up and giving our two hours of service. Will we want to do seventh tradition collections, too?
No objections, approved.
- From "BDA Intergroup Secretary" (page 16 of 28): We have agreed to create an audio recording of every BDA Intergroup business meeting and to post those recordings, transcribed pdfs of those recordings, and the Secretary's minutes — including compiled action lists and open agenda items — to bdaintergroup.org as soon as they are ready.
Brief discussion: It is going to cost about twenty-four dollars each month, as secretary expenses, to have meeting recordings transcribed. Our secretary can then go through and whittle the 20-30 pages down to two and occasionally three pages of minutes with the addition of the next month's agenda and committed action items. That will take the pressure off the secretary and will take the pressure off the group to respond to secretary questions that disrupt discussion during business meetings.
No objections, approved.
- From "BDA Intergroup Service Representative" (page 18 of 28): [We] request that our ISR represent what they believe our BDA Intergroup would want rather than their own personal wants and opinions. This is not to override the "Right of Decision" (Concept 3). **NOTE: Also see this item related to the Intergroup Representative (IR) position description above.**
No objections, approved.

One meaningful handbook change offered since the last handbook drop-in meeting

- **From "BDA Intergroup Chair" (page 13 of 28), addition of second of three check marks / bullets:**
Our Chair is an ex officio member of every BDA Intergroup Committee and is a service partner to every officer, committee chair, and coordinator. Although the Chair may not be available for every committee and coordinator's business meetings, the Chair is always invited by email. We love our Chair!
Brief discussion: "This is the way it works at the board level. The chair does not get a formal committee assignment. They are considered a, quote, ex officio, which is some Robert's Rules gobbledygook. But this allows the chair to sit in on committee meetings and the committee chairs generally send an invite to the chair to say, 'we're going to talk about something that's worthy of your attention.' And then the chair may or may not show up depending on their schedule and so forth. But it is useful because it gives the chair a seat at the table if they need to be there."
No objections, approved.

Read handbook pages 22-26 together and edited until ready for approval

- **"BDA Intergroup Special Events Co-Chairs" (page 22 of 28):**
Brief discussion 1: "We should remove the word 'no' at the end of the last check mark / bullet on page 22." Done.
Brief discussion 2: "Is there a timeline? So, like, let's say there's an event that they're working on, you know, six months from now or a year from now. Is there a guideline for at what point dates are set? And that agreement kind of comes forward to Intergroup, like a minimum, like we'd want to know at least twelve months in advance, or we'd want to know at least six months in advance." Added the phrase "at least three months" to the sentence: "The Special Events Co-Chairs prepare and seek BDA Intergroup approval at least three months before moving forward with an event." Done.
- **"BDA Intergroup Special Events Co-Chairs" (page 23 of 28):**
Brief discussion 1: "Why are we adopting the 'Guide to Special Events' rather than just asking our special events co-chairs to go read the pamphlet? First of all, they never do; so let's not set ourselves up for failure. Second is that BDA is never mentioned in that resource that I could find. That is the primary adaptation. There are a few other tweaks offered based on real world experience in planning DA events. Plus, we've taken four pages and boiled them down to one." No changes proposed or made.
Brief discussion 2: "In the paragraph about Tradition Five, it says, 'based on the principles of DA and BDA.' And I was like, what are the principles of DA and BDA? Like I've just never heard it framed that way, so it made me think, what the heck is that? Is that something I haven't learned yet? I just want to bring it up, because if it would snag me in my thinking, it might snag someone else." There was a brief discussion in response, although that discussion didn't seem to be leading us toward progress.
Outcome: Meeting leader asked that we move on. Our elected chair will pick up this detail for future discussion. (See action list.)
Brief discussion 3: "On this page, sometimes we say, 'DA and BDA,' and sometimes we just say 'DA.' Is that intentional? Is there a difference from one item to the next?" Nope, "DA and BDA" is the preferred phrasing. We'll do a "find and replace" search on these pages before finalizing the handbook. Done.

Read handbook pages 22-26 together and edited until ready for approval — continued

- "BDA Intergroup Tech and Web Chair" (page 24 of 28):
No discussion, no objections.
- "BDA Intergroup Tech and Web Chair" (page 24 of 28):
Brief discussion: "Same issue, sometimes we say, 'DA and BDA,' and sometimes we just say 'DA.' Is that intentional? Is there a difference from one item to the next?" Nope, "DA and BDA" is the preferred phrasing. We'll do a "find and replace" search on these pages before finalizing the handbook. Done.

Entertain and work through a motion to approve the handbook excluding spending plans

Motion made — "To approve our proposed BDA Intergroup Service Handbook, excluding the two spending plans, but including all the changes we have made on this call." — **and seconded.**
No discussion, no objections, approved.

Discuss how we want to perform our first round of BDA Intergroup elections

Suggestion from participant: "Do we want to just run down the list? And in the order that was suggested earlier — chair, then treasurer, then secretary, then vice chair, I guess. And then any other committee chairs and so forth. Let's see if there are volunteers."
No discussion, no objections, approved.

Elect our first BDA Intergroup Chair and "pass the gavel"

Brief discussion: We read the qualifications, term of service, and first paragraph of duties for our open Chair position, from our approved BDA Intergroup Service Handbook.
Nomination made — Ingrid S for BDA Intergroup Chair — **and seconded twice.**
No discussion, no objections, approved.

Election of available volunteers

Brief discussion: We individually read the qualifications, term of service, and first paragraph of duties for open positions, for which we had volunteers, from our approved BDA Intergroup Service Handbook.
Nominations made individually — Bill J for Treasurer, Bob A for Secretary, Nancy G for Newsletter Coordinator, and Dana M for Parliamentary Coordinator — **and seconded individually.**
Taken one by one: No discussion, no objections, approved.

11am pacific / 2pm eastern — Closed with DA Promises and Serenity Prayer

Action list

- **All — Consider making change to "BDA Intergroup responsibilities and activities" (page 3 of 28):**
Offering the following pieces of DA and BDA literature at no cost to BDA newcomers and members who request them: DA's Currency of Hope; DA's "12, 12, and 12" book; the "Business Debtors Anonymous" pamphlet; the "Tools of BDA" pamphlet; and the DA "Twelve Promises" pamphlet. We ask BDA groups to buy their literature from GSO and individual BDA members to buy all other DA and BDA literature from BDA groups or from GSO. There are now eBooks available, too; see the DA website for more details. We do not offer or provide free DA or BDA eBooks.

An afterthought from a participant: "Perhaps we could add a line to this paragraph that says: 'This offering of free literature is dependent on availability of funds' or something similar."

- **BDA Intergroup Chair — Follow up on unresolved concerns related to "BDA Intergroup Special Events Co-Chairs" (page 23 of 28):**
Brief discussion 2: "In the paragraph about Tradition Five, it says, 'based on the principles of DA and BDA.' And I was like, what are the principles of DA and BDA? Like I've just never heard it framed that way, so it made me think, what the heck is that? Is that something I haven't learned yet? I just want to bring it up, because if it would snag me in my thinking, it might snag someone else." There was a brief discussion in response, although that discussion didn't seem to be leading us toward progress. Meeting leader asked that we move on. Our elected chair will pick up this detail for future discussion.

- **All — Announce open service positions and attract eligible candidates for our elections, which will continue July 26, 2020:**

Officers — Vice Chair (2 years)

Committee Chairs — Intergroup Service Representative (3 Years), Literature Chair (2 Years), Public Information Chair (2 Years), Special Events Co-Chairs (2 members at 2 Years each), Tech and Web Chair (2 Years), Vice Tech and Web Chair (2 Years)

Coordinators — Archives Coordinator (1 Year), eBlast Coordinator (1 Year), International Coordinator (1 Year)

- **All — Come prepared to review and approve our general and PI spending plans on July 26, 2020:**
See <https://www.bdaintergroup.org/post/bda-intergroup-proposed-one-year-business-plan> for details.
- **All — Please speak more clearly during BDA Intergroup business meetings:**
See June 28, 2020 business meeting transcript when it is posted.

Agenda for July 26, 2020 BDA Intergroup business meeting

This is simply an estimated agenda; our chair will provide an accurate agenda a week before our next meeting:

Up to 10 minutes — Open with Serenity Prayer plus BDA and DA readings

Up to 10 minutes — Introductions from business meeting participants

Up to 5 minutes — Urgent business and review of agenda

Up to 10 minutes — Brief Intergroup Representative reports

Up to 15 minutes — Officer reports at 5 minutes each

Secretary, Treasurer, Chair and Vice Chair (1 report)

Up to 5 minutes — ISR and Committee chair reports

This is a place marker for July 2020: We will be electing committee chairs this month.

Intergroup Service Representative, Literature Chair, Public Information Chair, Special Events Co-Chairs (1 report), and Tech and Web Chair and Vice Tech and Web Chair (1 report)

Up to 15 minutes — Coordinator project reports

Two coordinators were elected in June: Newsletter Coordinator and Parliamentary Coordinator

Three coordinators will be elected in July or later: Archives Coordinator, eBlast Coordinator, and International Coordinator

Up to 45 minutes — Old business

1. Complete our elections as efficiently and sanely as possible. (Open service positions will always be our first piece of old business each month.)
2. Approve our BDA Intergroup spending plan (see page 15 of 28 in the BDA Intergroup Service Handbook).
3. Approve our BDA Intergroup PI spending plan (see page 21 of 28 in the BDA Intergroup Service Handbook).

Up to 0 minutes — New business (we have no new business listed for July 2020)

Up to 5 minutes — Close the business meeting