

## NOVEMBER 30th 2021 SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETING

### A. Meeting convocation by Chair.

1. Called meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
2. Led moment of silence to acknowledge the death of member John H.
3. Explained purpose of special meeting: Discussion of 3 motions raised over past 3 business mtgs — all have been raised and tabled due to lack of time for discussion.
4. Described special meeting structure:
  - a. Call on each person once, initially allowing everyone one time to speak.
  - b. Open discussion to the group as a whole after each person has shared.
5. Stated three motions for consideration:
  - a. (1) Elect a vice chair for the zoom meetings.
  - b. (2) Separate FB into two autonomous groups, in person and zoom.
  - c. (3) To distribute the excess prudent reserve that was raised during the COVID crisis according to Fastbreak's usual procedures by the end of year.

### B. Chair opened the discussion asking people to:

1. Mind the time given the 25+ people in attendance and more entering.
2. Note the intention to end the meeting at 8:30pm/90 minutes.
3. State their position on a given motion, if they know it, prior to sharing.

### C. Chair began selecting people to speak in the order on the zoom listing:

1. Pat asked which motion to consider first and Chair recommended 2<sup>nd</sup> motion first, 1<sup>st</sup> motion follows, and then 3<sup>rd</sup> motion.
2. Roger stated he wanted to discuss the 3<sup>rd</sup> motion: Provided figures for the motion; felt it imperative to follow past rules in particular because we accepted excess donations given the COVID crisis.
3. Chris proposed that the 3<sup>rd</sup> motion should be viewed as separate from the other motions; suggested we monitor situation and donate to Intergroup as we would typically. He did not understand urgency to split groups, and he said he considered zoom to be a different venue for the same group — Fastbreak. He wondered allowed about how to strengthen zoom, noting its broader reach. Proposed a cochair and asked what happened to the Fastbreak tradition of "Always having one." And asking "What happened to it?" Regarding voting confusion, he noted that Fastbreak members would use their discretion just as Fastbreak attendees at the 7am meeting would not vote on issues for the 8:15am meeting. Reiterated: There is no difference w online & zoom meeting management.
4. Patrick identified as a zoom attendee. Praised Fastbreak and hoped to maintain its online strength. Working group did not discuss whether to separate, just how. Suggested reforming the working group and having it use the AA inventory questions to consider whether it should separate.
5. Andrea identified as a zoom attendee and expressed frustration "We keep having discussions and it's great, but we need to make decisions" Stated there were basic, persistent zoom issues that need to be addressed. Sense of urgency expressed. Noted feeling "like bastard step child of hybrid meetings. She said "I'd like to have a time limit, have a vote, and move on."

6. Frances expressed concern about inclusivity in AA as a whole and Fastbreak in particular. She wants Fastbreak to be a group where everyone is welcome, and she said “I want a way to still feel I am apart of the live meetings.” Voiced support for a cochair who goes to zoom meetings. Hoped we vote soon.
7. Marjorie identified as a member of both the live and zoom meetings. She said she would “feel excluded or divided” if group is split. Expressed the belief that “the division would harm something that is central to my life.”
8. Michelle identified as a new attendee of in person meetings. Proposed a question, noting that she didn’t “have an opinion about whether or not we are the same group.” Asked why the zoom meeting cannot make use of the group conscience process in the same way that the in person meetings use the group conscience to resolve issues like the air conditioning. “Why aren’t some of the things we do at the live meeting being done at the zoom meeting.”
9. Roger pointed out that meetings around the country are going through the same discussion. He acknowledged that he is “a physical meeting person and not a virtual meeting person.” Discussed the amount of planning that went into starting the physical and zoom meetings. He said “When I was chair, I was always asked are we going to cancel the virtual meeting.” Made the case that the zoom (virtual) meeting “guarantees it’s own perpetuity by making it separate, be your own thing.” He stated that Intergroup is splitting where zoom and in person meetings are listed. He noted that if the meetings separate, they would each have their own representation. Asked the group as a whole to consider if Fastbreak zoom and Fastbreak in person “really are the same meeting — are we being of maximum service to the newcomer.”
10. Keith considered aloud whether Fastbreak is offering the newcomer the best outcome for sobriety and stated “I think we are.” Noted his physical limitations and need for self care. He discussed how he went to both in person meetings and always felt part of Fastbreak. He professed that he didn’t “understand why we have to separate” and voiced support for a zoom meeting cochair. “I don’t want to break up home.”
11. Michael stated he is a gut oriented person who was grateful for zoom over the pandemic. Noted zoom was essential “when it was all we had” and wanted to ensure it continues. He stated that zoom is “being banished that’s why they feel like bastard stepchildren.” Voiced opposition to separation, and expressed concern about finances if the meetings separate.
12. David voiced agreement with Roger regarding motion 3 and fiscal concerns. Regarded Motion 2 as a “meat cleaver” and expressed desire for unity, rejecting motion 2.
13. Gail invoked the memory of John H and urged the group to reject motion 2. Cited history of in person meetings held at different times being considered one meeting; zoom and in person meetings likewise can be considered one meeting. Voiced support for motion 1 and advocacy for a cochair for zoom meetings.
14. MJ stated “zoom saved my life.” She asked “If there are problems in live meetings and zoom meetings then why don’t each have their own meeting?”
15. Catherine M asked if we are considering “the right question.” She inquired “What problem are we trying to solve for by separation.” She also wondered aloud about the financial sustainability of separation for the in person meetings.

16. Kent spoke as a member who splits time between meetings: FB 1, 2 and zoom as well as contributes via venmo. He stated he is “not aware of anything that is so dire that we’d take this step.” Views separation as “a solution looking for a problem.”
17. Gay stated “I’m opposed to splitting groups with a cleaver.” She suggested letting the chair, John S, pick someone he can collaborate with. She believed people would honor voting appropriately on measures applicable to the group they attend. Acknowledged she was a zoom who has been rarely to physical meeting. Expressed disappointment that the working group considered only the mechanics of separation and not the purpose.
18. Leah advocated in support of separation as a means of strengthening the zoom meeting as it assumed responsibility for its own management and gained representatives to Intergroup and GSR. Noted how business meetings had become too long because there was no time to manage what were fundamentally different concerns for in person and zoom meetings. Expressed surprise at the emotional intensity of people’s affect expressed in the business meeting — especially in the use of words like cleaver and machete when this was an organizational change and not a disavowal of the zoom and in person meetings shared roots.

**D. There was an absence of new hands up to speak, and the chair noted that we could move on to people speaking a second time.**

1. Roger voiced his opposition to the zoom vice chair. Stated he viewed separation as “an empowerment.” He distinguished in person and zoom meetings by the lease held by in person meetings, namely, in person meetings are all controlled by the same lease. Cited an example and expressed concern about managing voting, people from zoom voting on in person issues and vice versa. Noted agreement with MJ that separate business meetings were ideal. Observed that there were only 4 people from in person meetings in the current business meeting, asked: “they are louder but is it fair?” Stated his belief that the in person meeting was being forced to remain joined to the zoom meeting.
2. Chris challenged the need to split: “Its just a different venue for same message.” This is parallel from FB 1 & 2. Nothing has changed. Discussed the value of zoom and observed how there were newcomers who have never been to a physical meeting. Cited history of in person meetings held at different times being considered one meeting; zoom and in person meetings likewise can be considered one meeting. Dismissed concerns about inappropriate voting. Emphasized that Fastbreak is getting a unified message out. He proposed that the energy of the business meeting ought to be on how to make the merger of the groups seamless.
3. Andrea voiced frustration that Fastbreak keeps having discussion: “Eventually we have to get arrangements done.” She noted “alot of hiccups” in the current process on zoom and emphasized the need for consistent service.
4. Kent stated his belief that the voting concerns were false, a “non issue.”
5. Leah reiterated the view that separation would strengthen zoom and its ability to address “hiccups” directly with a group conscience and self governance. Expressed surprise that zoom members felt cut off by a cleaver the groups will always be joined by the same history, like being one house with different entrances.” Literally, they will retain the Fastbreak name and perhaps could remain listed jointly on a shared website. Only talking separate governance, not rejection.

6. Keith rejected Leah's notion and stated: "Separation is separation. If we are in the same house. Why separate?" He believed zoom could govern things that pertain to zoom, in person likewise. Expressed surprise over the sense of urgency to separate.
7. Michelle asked "Why not follow path of Intergroup? They provide leadership?" She expressed confusion about voting concerns.
8. Kevin questioned separation from a fiscal vantage point. He asked "Would the brick and mortar meeting be okay without zoom?"
9. Patrick spoke about the need to clarify NY Intergroup from the general service and how they relate to aa as a whole, given that they are both service entities. In addition to other items, he stated that Fastbreak Zoom would not be allowed to retain the name Fastbreak. Stated that these motions are part of a "big conversation — we are in new territory. Groups coming together in different ways."
10. Matt said he enjoyed hearing what was said and he has always gone to zoom. "The zoom meeting has been the best thing in my life."
11. Leah offered a clarification that the issues at hand were not questioning the value of Fastbreak zoom. Reiterated desire for unity. Reiterated her belief that the name Fastbreak zoom and Fastbreak 1 & 2 could be retained — and they could remain on a shared Fastbreak website
12. Roger read meeting minutes and offered a clarification that the name Fastbreak Zoom was not disallowed.
13. Gay spoke against motion 2 and separation.

**E. The Chair noted the time and the absence of hands raised to share.**

1. He signaled he was bringing the meeting coming to a close.
2. He said he wanted take a moment to express his opposition to separation.
  - a. Leah expressed dismay and took note of the Chair's offering his opinion at the meeting's end. Stated her belief that "he was putting his hand on the scale inappropriately given his position" of leadership and respect.
  - b. Chris stated his opposition to separation and advocated for the creation of a cochair "Two equal partners." Invoked people to "Vote your conscience."
  - c. Roger clarified it was not a vote for cochair, rather overall vice chair.
  - d. Andrea voiced her support for motion 1 and the creation of a cochair.

**F. Meeting Adjourned: Serenity prayer recited.**