

March 16, 2023

**Please direct all
communications to:**

Grand Central Station,
P.O. Box 459,
New York, NY 10163
Fax: (212) 870-3003

We, the General Service Board, want to thank you for your patience and support as we navigate our way forward after the unanimous decision by the Board that a change in leadership would be in the best interest of AA going forward. The decision was a painful and difficult one for each of us to make, and we acknowledge how deeply it affects the Fellowship. We also recognize how unprecedented this was and that the Fellowship wants answers. Within the bounds of maintaining the confidentiality of Board deliberations and protecting the reputations of all involved the Board would like to take the opportunity to inform and communicate with the General Service Conference and the Fellowship to continue to foster trust, cooperation, transparency, and accountability.

In a General Service Board trustees' planning and sharing session, numerous accounts of conduct by the Board Chair, Linda Chezem, that were concerning and creating disharmony, were brought to the attention of the Board. The concerns included:

- operating independently of the Board, Board policies, committees, and corporate Board structures,
- micromanagement of trustees and employees, and
- making unprofessional and inappropriate remarks about past and current trustees and employees.

A number of Board members witnessed this behavior, which violated the organization's code of conduct policy and was a detriment to our unity and ability to conduct business. Linda Chezem denied any wrongdoing and offered to resign if the Board asked. After deliberating, the Board unanimously voted to accept her resignation as Board Chair and Class A Trustee on January 29, 2023.

Given this unprecedented situation, the Board is currently reviewing its code of conduct, so there is a transparent way and process in the future for Board members to address code of conduct concerns in a way that is in keeping with AA principles, including Concept V – which states in part, “The traditional “Right of Appeal” should also permit any person in our service structure, whether paid or unpaid, to petition for the redress of a personal grievance, carrying his complaint, if he so desires, directly to the General Service Board. He or she should be able to do this without prejudice or fear of reprisal.”

While the vehement response to such an unusual and traumatic event is understandable, what we wish to emphasize is that this reaction from the minority is not informed. We as a Board wish to reiterate in the strongest possible terms that this decision was taken as a collective body and based on irrefutable patterns of behavior that were proving to be detrimental to the functioning of the General Service Board and the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous.