

# NEW JERSEY ASSEMBLY AREA 36

## MEETING MINUTES – JUNE 6, 2020

Ann Marie Z. called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM via Zoom. The meeting opened with the Serenity Prayer.

Ann Marie indicated the theme for this Assembly was Step 2 and read the step; also read from The Forum, February 2020, page 3. Welcomed new people here for the first time.

This was followed by members reading the Twelve Traditions, the Twelve Concepts of Service, and the General Warranties of the Conference. Ann Marie Z. read from Page 86 of the Service Manual regarding dual members in Al-Anon service.

**Chairperson:** Ann Marie reminded all of etiquette procedures for Assembly.

Each speaker would have 2 minutes to speak and was reminded to stay on topic, one at a time, no need to repeat an opinion or topic, if anyone needs to leave before end please let Angela know.

There was a total of 75 participants. Voting members were not tallied as only vote was approval of minutes from March Assembly, which was tabled until November Assembly.

Chairperson report from Ann Marie Z. was included in packet. Highlights include:

- Majority of effort since last Assembly was posting temporary virtual meetings on the website.
- Thanked Angela and Martha for their efforts and response time keeping meetings updated on both NJ and WSO websites.
- No charges yet for Task Forces from March Assembly; will be done when NJ opens up again.

**Delegate: Donna S**

Report included in packet. Highlights include:

- Traditional WSC was held virtually.
- Presented PowerPoint from WSC.
- Donna on Thought Force: Identifying Ways to Look at Service.
- Presented WSO 2019 Auditors Report.
- Presented Highlights of 2019 Annual Report.
- Presented other reports and highlights from WSC, including WSC's response to COVID-19.
- 2021 WSC dates April 12 through April 16 in Tarrytown, NY, with visit to Stepping Stones.
- Al-Anon's 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary April 2021 during WSC.
- Al-Anon's Seventh International Convention, June 29 through July 2, 2023, Albuquerque, NM.
- As of WSC: 306 electronic meetings; electronic newcomers meetings with links for newcomers to get information from WSC; *Hope for Today* available as eBook; mobile app to roll out in summer.

**Alternate Delegate: Katie O.** gave report; included in packet. Highlights include:

- Analyzed May *Forum* sales report.
- *Forum* subscriptions have decreased slightly. Total subscriptions: 265. Total copies: 288. Numbers do not reflect electronic subscriptions.
- Hoping for a free raffle at each assembly for 2 subscriptions to *Forum*. Members will get a ticket when they arrive.
- Requested GRs encourage groups to subscribe to *Forum*.

- NJIS meeting scheduled for April 15, 2020 was canceled.
- Thanked District 11 for offering to provide refreshments; hoping they will offer for November if in person.

**Treasurer:** Audrey gave report; included in packet. 2020 highlights include:

- YTD Income: \$5,155.43
- YTD Expenses: \$7,263.72
- Net Difference: -\$2,108.29

Although currently expenses exceed income, expenses can be expected to go down, as travel expenses will go down due to COVID-19.

**Recording Secretary:** Mary F. requested anyone who had not submitted a packet to speak slowly when giving report, as this is first Zoom meeting.

**Corresponding Secretary:** Angela R. gave report. Included in packet. Highlights include:

- 310 active NJ Groups; 294 active Al-Anon groups; 332 Active Al-Anon meetings.
- 16 active Alateen meetings.
- 1 new group in Lyndhurst.

Gave COVID-19 Update:

- 140 Groups/161 Meetings suspended
- 84 electronic meetings/77 suspended
- March 13 was the date of first meeting suspension

Group records can be updated using form on NJ Assembly website.

Printed and sent 2 sets of Group Mailing Labels for Jal-Con and 1 set for Alagram.

Katie O. commented that some meetings which are meeting electronically are not posting on website for fear of losing anonymity. Discussion continued of how other groups are handling Zoom and electronic meetings.

Angela indicated if a group wants to list an electronic meeting, to use "Add new electronic meeting."

Angela and Martha gave instructions on how to change meetings temporarily.

**Alagram:** Kalpana gave report. Included in packet. Highlights include:

- Spring 2020 Alagrams mailed to 302 groups; 286 Al-Anon groups and 16 Alateen groups.
- If your group did not get Alagram, please contact Kalpana.
- Please make sure mailing address is correct. See Angela to make any corrections.
- Alagram is the official notice for Assembly meeting and is mailed free to all groups.
- Highlight of Spring issue was virtual June Assembly via Zoom.
- Alagram also posted to NJ Assembly website.

**Archives:** Mike gave report; included in packet. Highlights include:

- Starting to digitize paper archives onto hard drive.
- Plans to attend meetings and anniversaries on hold because of COVID-19.
- Sent one group in Manasquan group history and individual history forms.
- Included forms with report for anyone who needs them.

**Alateen:** Tim S. gave report; included in packet. Highlights include:

- AMIAS training scheduled 3/2020 in Butler and 5/2020 in Marmora were canceled because of COVID-19.
- WSO extended AMIAS recertification until 8/1/2020; could possibly be extended further.
- Recertifying all previously certified AMIASs provided they complete requisite paperwork and pass required background check.

- Requesting all present AMIASs get paperwork to him by end of June.

**Literature:** Lori-Jo gave her report, included with packet. Highlights include:

- Calendar is coming together; using quotes released by WSO.
- One group in district had issue with use of outside website; directed to Service Manual.
- *Paths to Recovery* back on website and available to order.
- *Having Had A Spiritual Awakening* available as an eBook.
- A new daily reader is being reviewed.
- Several other Al-Anon books available as audio books.
- Lori-Jo's contact information is:  
[wigbigb@gmail.com](mailto:wigbigb@gmail.com)  
973-334-6992

**Public Outreach:** Karen P. gave report, included in packet. Highlights include:

- Two events scheduled for April and May canceled for fact-to-face and changed to virtual; difficult for our assembly to attend, so registration fees refunded.
- Hot line calls increased, both people looking for virtual meetings and professionals working with clients virtually. Sending out literature and referring people to Alateen chat.

Kalpana questioned: how are we doing outreach? How are groups around the country doing this?

Karen responded: Suggested to GRs to get literature to police departments with rise in domestic violence during COVID-19; has not seen anything about public outreach during COVID-19 on WSO website.

Peter M. indicated District 20/21 has a task force for Public Outreach and invited Karen P. to attend. Karen responded she would.

**Website:** Martha gave report, included in the packet. Highlights include:

- Total users continue to increase.
- Average time spent on page increasing slightly.
- People looking at more pages per session
- Working with Angela to maintain list of temporary electronic meetings due to COVID-19; about 80 meetings mid-May.
- WSO started adding temporary electronic meetings to their website; now, everyone checking our website is directed to WSO.
- Took advantage of GoDaddy package of services which will save over \$1,000 over next 3 years.
- Also working to shore up website security.
- Added LinkedIn icon to footer of website which links to WSOs LinkedIn account.
- Discussion followed about Zoom meetings and how groups are handling accounts, paying for accounts. Discussion centered around Tradition 7. Some districts allow groups to share one Zoom account.

**DID YOU KNOW: Kathy B. presented.**

**“Why it is important that we participate in discussions and have our vote count, in all affairs.”**

Presented readings on Group conscience from *Al-Anon Service Manual*, *How Al-Anon Works*, and read Concept 3.

When voting, an abstention does not count as a vote and can impact the decision.

## **DISTRICT REPORTS**

**District 2 Morris:** Angela submitted her report, included in packet. Highlights include:

- All in-person meetings suspended; 9 groups meeting electronically, with very positive feedback.
- Posting Zoom meetings on line and having business meetings.
- District has set ample reserve and established donation structure.
- Distribution of AFA 2020 on hold; public outreach on hold.
- Need for Alateen meeting in district; Morristown and Randolph have expressed interest.
- Next district meeting in October.

**District 3 Hunterdon/Warren Counties:** Katie O. gave report, included in packet. Highlights include:

- District met May 15, 2020 via Zoom; 4 groups represented.
- Most meetings have changed to online meetings because of COVID-19; some groups do not want online meeting information published for fear of getting hacked or photobombed. Some have posted signs on doors of meeting place directing people to online meeting.
- All meetings notified of WSO's guidelines for online meeting.
- Some daytime meetings are not meeting electronically because of limited technology.
- Have distributed AFA 2020 to contact person at treatment centers throughout district.
- Notified AMIASs there is no in-person training due to COVID-19.
- Bookmark "Just for Tonight" distributed to all groups. The suggestion is for groups to end meetings with one paragraph from bookmark and the Al-Anon Declaration instead of the Lord's Prayer.

- Treasury has \$860.58; encouraging members to make personal donations to service arms due to lack of in-person meetings.
- Next district meeting, September 18, 2020 at 5PM.

**District 4 Morris, Passaic, Sussex:** Christina gave report; included in packet. Highlights include:

- All meetings in district, with exception of Monday Night Vernon, meeting via Zoom.
- Groups adjusting to virtual meetings; having meetings with passwords; Meeting Hosts can watch for Z-Bombers; could lock meeting after opening is read.
- Treasury balance: \$561.73.
- Next district meeting scheduled for June.

**Districts 11 and 14 Middlesex and Union counties:** Kalpana gave report orally. Highlights include:

- Still getting organized as a new district.
- Last district meeting March 15.
- Started putting online meetings on website.
- Next district meeting June 14; agenda is set.

**Districts 19 Freehold/Howell Monmouth County:** Maryann Grace gave report; included in packet. Highlights include:

- Most face-to-face meetings now meeting via Zoom; very well attended and follow the principles and guidelines of Al-Anon.
- Asked members to remember Seventh Tradition when meetings resume and also to contribute to WSO on their own.
- Outreach has included sending AFA to middle and high schools in area and to police departments with business cards/meeting lists for officers to carry with them.

- Working with Diane S. to do online writing seminar for Forum articles and any other literature writing requests.

**District 20/21 Trenton, Hamilton, Princeton:** Mary K. gave report; included in packet. Highlights include:

- Last district meeting April 19, 2020 via Zoom, attended by 13 GRs
- Representation is growing.
- Most meetings now via Zoom; some listed on website, some not listed.
- 18 meetings out of 21 now virtual.
- Treasury balance: \$1,138.49; donated \$250 to WSO.
- Outreach at Footprints for Recovery and Princeton House IOP canceled due to COVID-19.
- Alateen meeting also held via Zoom.
- Distribution of AFA 2020 on hold.
- Peter D., Literature Chair, has every piece of Al-Anon literature and makes each group aware of what is available. Displays for meetings, anniversaries, and outreach. District voted to reimburse Peter for literature and racks to display it.
- Unity Fellowship Day under discussion; not sure when it can happen due to COVID-19.
- Presented at virtual Mental Health Fair at South Brunswick High School; provided downloads of Al-Anon literature and links to websites, as well as meeting lists; was sent to NJ Dept. of Education and will be included in one of their podcasts.
- Thought Force on Public Outreach has met twice via Zoom.
- Next district meeting May 31, 2020 via Zoom.

**District 22 Burlington County:** Liz M. gave report; included in packet. Highlights include:

- Last district meeting January 13, 2020.
- GRs keep in touch via email.

- Public outreach in March; health fair at Rancocas Valley High School with Al-Anon and Alateen literature.
- District has Zoom account; some individual meetings also have Zoom accounts.
- Meetings well-attended; many have passwords and waiting rooms.
- Beginners information provided at electronic meetings; also looking into Venmo and Zelle for Seventh Tradition.

**District 23 Northern Ocean County:** Sue H. gave report; included in packet. Highlights include:

- District held first Zoom meeting May 13, 2020; better attendance than in-person meeting.
- \$1,658 in treasury; will be used to fund district's Day of Sharing and outreach projects.
- Now has 9 GRs, down from 12.
- Most meetings have decided to be telephone or Zoom meetings; also have a district Zoom account.

**District 27 Cape May and Atlantic Counties:** Holly attended and brought report. Highlights include:

- District is not meeting.
- Groups staying in touch via text or email.
- District is referring people to website for meetings.
- AMIAS training was postponed; may happen in July.
- \$670 in treasury; not paying rent since district is not meeting.

**Lunch Break.** 15 minutes

**Jal-Con:** Diane S. submitted report. Highlights include:

- Jal-Con canceled because of lack of full committee
- Some members immune-compromised
- Hoping for Jal-Con in 2021 in Whippany.

Kalpna asked if Jal-Con considered partnership with AA; Diane indicated AA Convention is also canceled.

Kalpna asked if committee considered virtual Jal-Con. Diane indicated committee was not prepared to plan.

Tracy, a visitor, has a format for virtual workshops and offered to share. Diane accepted.

**NJIS:** No report. No one attended.

**Spanish Intergroup:** No report. No one attended.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

#### **Thought Force regarding Do Not Refer/Re-Refer Policy:**

Rich M. got copy of the last information from Paul G. There has been no other activity. Rich will follow up.

Katie O. indicated Rich mistakenly sent reports to her. Sue H. is on the Thought Force, not Katie. Rich will send reports to Sue H.

#### **Thought Force: Dreaming Big with 2020 Vision**

Ann Marie Z. gave report:

- No charges out for two task forces.
- No new meeting scheduled to revise Mission Statement.
- Will have committee meeting before next AWSC.

Katie O. questioned if these were the only two active Thought Forces. Asked what happened to

redistricting thought force? Ann Marie will address a new charge for redistricting.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **Approval of Minutes from 3/7/2020 Meeting:**

Tabled to November Assembly

#### **Audit Committee:**

Postponed until after pandemic; Ann Marie Z. will schedule as soon as shutdown is lifted.

#### **AMIAS Recertification:**

Tim S. stressed the need to get applications in ASAP so background checks can be completed. Application form is on website. Send to Tim's home address. If not in on time, meetings will be suspended. Tim indicated all AMIASs had been notified.

#### **Group Records Coordinator voting in November:**

As 501c3, we need to have elections every two years. This needs to be done by end of 2020 as an offset to the Corresponding Secretary position.

Group Records Coordinator maintains group records for entire state. This is done through WSO database. Also notifies if mail comes back, to see if group is still meeting. Position requires organization skills.

Three-year term; Angela is available to answer any questions.

#### **Discussion on How Groups/Districts Coping with Pandemic:**

There was a lengthy discussion as to how groups and districts are coping with pandemic. Topics included:

1. Zoom meetings and how groups are functioning
2. Are newcomers finding Zoom/virtual meetings? Donna S. indicated her meeting had newcomers
3. How are Zoom meetings listed on website? Angela indicated meetings are listed but not passwords.

4. Kalpana questioned about outreach. How is literature reaching newcomers?
5. Members questioned the effectiveness of posting on door to meeting if facility was closed.
6. Some groups are running out of funds. Some members are sending donations directly to treasurer of individual group. Some groups considering Venmo.

**Motion to adjourn at 1:15PM**

**Closed with Al-Anon Declaration**

Minutes Submitted by  
Mary F. - Recording Secretary