

NEW JERSEY ASSEMBLY AREA 36

MEETING MINUTES – MARCH 5, 2022

VIRTUAL ASSEMBLY

Donna S. called the meeting to order at 10:01 AM via Zoom. The meeting opened with the Serenity Prayer. Donna S. announced that Ann Marie Z. is a new Trustee-at-Large for Al-Anon.

Mike L. read the Twelve Traditions. Katie O. read the Twelve Concepts of Service and the Legacies.

Donna S. read the General Warranties and then from Page 86 of the Service Manual regarding service participation. Donna S. reviewed meeting etiquette on page 3-4 of the meeting packet.

Participation was tracked by Zoom. There were 83 participants.

OFFICER REPORTS

Chairperson: Chairperson report from Donna S. was included in packet. Donna S. reported that there is a full complement of officers and coordinators. There were no questions about the Chairperson report.

Delegate: Katie O. Delegate report from Katie O. was included in packet. Highlights presented by Katie O. include:

- Katie O. thanked everyone for support. She is learning the role.
- Katie O. submitted two proposals for WSO agenda. See report. She will be attending WSO conference in Tarrytown NY. No love gifts this year. May use ecards instead.
- Katie O. has new email as delegate.

There were no questions about the Delegate report.

Alternate Delegate: Liz K. gave report; included in packet. Highlights include:

- Hospitality materials stored at her house.
- Assembly likely to be hybrid in November. Liz K asked for people to let her know how many people likely to attend. Venue may be Middlesex Fire Academy, but other venues are under consideration.
- Liz K not able to reach NJ Service Center and asked for anyone who knows.
- Also included Forum Coordinator report.

There were no questions about the Alternate Delegate's report.

Treasurer: Mary K. gave report; included in packet. Highlights include:

- NJ Al-Anon Assembly Profit and Loss report for January through December 2021 included Total Income of \$ 13,200.68 and Total Expenses of \$13,184.70 for a Net Income of \$15.98 for 2021.
- Total Assets as of December 31, 2021 is \$34,908.70.
- YTD Income (2022): \$1,780.43
- YTD Expenses (2022): \$1,170.51
- Net Difference: \$609.92
- Updated treasurer's report was submitted on Thursday. Donations for January and February reported. Mary K. commented that Group name and Group number is needed to identify donations from groups.

There were no questions about the Treasurer's report.

Recording Secretary: Scott A. provided minutes from November 6, 2021, which will be discussed later in the meeting.

Corresponding Secretary: Jennifer B. gave report; included in packet. Highlights include:

- Gave Group Records report that included 273 active Al-Anon groups; 306 Active Al-Anon meetings; and 8 active Alateen groups.
- Report includes details regarding status of meetings as temporarily suspended, temporarily electronic, temporarily hybrid, and face-to-face.

Peter had question regarding updating a meeting's status to hybrid meeting on the WSO website. Jennifer B. explained that status pertaining to hybrid meetings should be sent in to WSO. Jennifer B. also commented that mail-in forms reporting a Group's status should go directly to World Service Office not to Jennifer B.

Ted V asked about time limits to for hybrid or electronic meetings to return to face-to-face status. Donna S. addressed this question indicating that at present there is no time line for groups transitioning to electronic or hybrid status during the pandemic to return to face-to-face status.

Ezra T. asked about setting up a hybrid meeting at Rutgers. Jennifer B. talked about hybrid meetings and what is needed to facilitate setting up new meetings.

COORDINATOR REPORTS

Alagram: Christina M. gave her report, which is included in packet. Highlights include:

- Christrina M. has envelopes and mailing supplies.
- Christina M. emailed Alagram newsletters to 304 groups and mailed out 274 Alagram newsletters.

There were no questions about the Alagram Coordinator's report.

Archives: Mike L. gave report, which is included in packet. Highlights include:

- Mike L. asked if anyone is interested in volunteering to help with archives. Have a braille copy of ODAT.
- Still has Braille copy of ODAT. Asked GRs if anyone knows a visually impaired member who could use it.
- Mike L. asked for volunteers to display some archived materials at Assembly.
- Mike L. pointed out that forms for group histories and longtime members are attached to his report.

Lori-jo suggested contacting NJ Association for the blind in Denville to see if that organization knows of anyone who might want the braille copy of the ODAT. Rich M. suggested posting online the availability of the braille ODAT.

Eric S. asked about archived literature. Mike L. gave some examples of forums, assembly minutes, letters, etc., stored in locker in Woodbridge, NJ.

Public Outreach: Debbie A. gave her report, which is included in packet. Highlights include:

- Debbie A. reviewed housekeeping matters, such as reaching out to members to learn the role.
- Public Outreach will provide support to AA NJ convention in March 2022.
- Debbie A is contacting school based organizations and group reps to identify needs and ideas for public outreach. No questions.

There were no questions about the Public Outreach Coordinator's report.

Alateen: Lori-jo gave report, which is included in packet. Highlights include:

- Lori-jo informed the Assembly that there are presently five dates for AMIAS training. All Alateen Sponsors need to

attend one of these dates or will not be re-certified. Lori-jo described process for re-certification documentation.

Anna Marie L. asked whether meetings are on Zoom and Cynthia asked what AMIAS means. Katie O addressed Cynthia's question, explaining that AMIAS means Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service.

Literature: Angela R. gave report, which is included in packet. Highlights include:

- Angela R. thanked Lori-jo for discussing the role with her. Angela R. needs pictures for NJ calendar.
- New welcome ebooklet is available online for \$1.40 per booklet.
- New daily reader to be released in 2023 at Al-Anon convention in New Mexico.

Ted asked about how to get an electronic version of service manual. Angela R. commented that electronic version of Service Manual will be downloadable from WSO website in April 2022. Anna Marie asked about pictures for calendar and Angela explained that they are inspirational pictures, no pictures of actual Al-Anon members.

Website: AnnaMarie gave report, included with packet. Highlights include:

- New security measures mentioned. AnnaMarie needs help with maintaining website.
- AnnaMarie also needs help with certain types of files, so if there are any tech savvy individuals that could help AnnaMarie, especially anyone with web developing experience, it would be appreciated. Liz K. encouraged all GRs to take this request back to groups to enlist volunteers for service. Carol G. asked about what is the website, which is NJ-Al-anon.org. Mary T. asked for AnnaMarie's contact email, which is webmaster@nj-al-anon.org. Katie O.

discussed how to get tech support, suggesting Geek Squad.

- Anna Marie has looked at subscription at TechSoup and GoDaddy. Donna S. said they will look at getting Tech Soup subscription. Ann Marie Z. discussed development sandbox to test out changes. Angela R. suggested AnnaMarie can discuss how to utilize the sandbox with her.
- Katie O. mentioned that WSO looking at having two website coordinators, one for content and the other managing the operation of the website

DISTRICT REPORTS

District 2 Morris County: Ken S. gave report, included in packet. Highlights include:

- District 2 had meeting February 22nd, 2022.
- District 2 to fill request for literature by Morris County Veterans' Group.
- District 2 had been providing public service announcements via Fairleigh Dickenson radio. This will be discontinued by District 2 because WSO to handle public service announcements.

Tim S. mentioned that he is facilitator for the Morris County Veterans' Group that received literature from District 2, and this Veterans' Group has requested literature from a number of 12 step organizations.

District 11 Middlesex and Union counties: Angela O. gave report, included with packet. Highlights include:

- District 11 has eleven meetings, which are back to face-to-face. Turnout has been low.
- District 11 had a meeting end of February.
- District 11 is planning a picnic but date not selected.
- District 11 would like to do public outreach again as well and would

welcome public outreach coordinator participating in these efforts. Used to attend recovery meetings at rehab centers as public outreach, but that not happening since COVID.

Karen P. mentioned that a message was sent to District Reps regarding a picnic that AWSC did in the past. Katie O. mentioned that previous Area picnic created controversy.

District 20/21 Trenton, Hamilton, Princeton: Peter M. is DR. Michelle gave report for Peter M. who could not attend Assembly. Peter M.'s report is included in packet. Highlights include:

- Had second district meeting via zoom on Feb 18, 2022
- District 20/21 has over 1000 dollars in funds and has literature as well for distribution
- District 20/21 is in search for Alateen coordinator and new AMAISs. Also District 20/21 is in need of a public outreach coordinator.
- District 20/21 is discussing whether meetings will remain hybrid.

There were no questions about the District 20/21 report.

District 23 Northern Ocean County: Karen P. gave report, which is included in packet. Highlights include:

- Two district meetings have been held so far this year.
- District 23 is working with local libraries in Ocean Country to provide literature such as ODAT and Courage to Change to all county libraries.
- District 23 has an eye-catching poster for public outreach activities.
- District 23 is discussing virtual online workshop in spring/summer of this year.
- District 23 invited GRs from District 24, which is dark, to join District 23 meetings.

There were no questions about the District 23 report.

District 25: Liz K. gave report, which is included in packet. Highlights include:

- District 25 has held monthly district meetings.
- District 25 has two Spanish meetings, but Liz K. is not sure if they feel represented. Unclear whether Spanish Delegate is attending Spanish meetings.
- One hybrid group has split into two meetings, a face-to-face meeting and to a fully online meeting.
- District 25 funds in past have been up to 1000 dollars, but District 25 has lost track of these funds as District 25 had been without a District Rep. for a while.

Katie O. discussed how District funds tend to go to WSO and the Area, and perhaps to the NJ Service Center, when a District goes dark.

Liz K. pointed out that some hybrid meetings within District 25 have broken links to meetings, which causes problems when members want to attend those meetings.

District 27 Cape May and Atlantic Counties: Anne A. gave report, which is included in packet. Highlights include:

- District 27 has 3 online, 3 hybrid, 7 face-to-face meetings.
- District 27 is offering public outreach at AA convention.
- District 27 has set up a District zoom account, which may be used for all online meetings in District 27.

Ezra T. asked how the District zoom account is shared. Ezra T. owns the zoom account for his meeting so he had questions regarding how to share a privately owned zoom account. Anne A. says that the District 27 zoom account was paid for by District 27, and that any person within District 27 who wants to use the zoom account for a meeting within District 27 needs to schedule themselves using the District 27 zoom account.

LIAISON REPORTS

Jal-Con: No report as this position is vacant.

Donna S. commented that this position is vacant so not sure whether there will be a Jal-Con 2022. Di G. from District 26 was at last Jal-Con meeting and reports that there is lack of support and there will not be a Jal-Con 2022 but there may be a Jal-Con 2023. Tiffany asked what is Jal-Con. Donna S. explained that Jal-Con is the NJ Al-Anon convention, and it has evolved from a three-day event, to a one day event, to an online event. Jal-Con is a separate non-profit. Tennile J. from District 7 asked how people may volunteer for Jal-Con. Di G. has email address. Katie O asked whether Jal-Con has renamed itself.

NJIS: No report. No one attended.

Spanish Intergroup: Aura B. No report.

OLD BUSINESS:

NJ Group Records Update:

Jennifer B. prepared report, included with packet. Jennifer B. highlighted that since March 2019, WSO did not send the WSO Annual Update Sheet to groups as usual. so NJ Area Al-Anon did this function starting in July 2021. Jennifer B. reported that WSO is resuming mailing the WSO Annual Update Sheet in March 2022 to the CMAs of registered groups.

Ted asked about how to confirm group registration and Jennifer B. reviewed the procedure.

Linkedin Update:

Kalpana K. prepared final report for 2021, included with packet. Final report from 2021. Kalpana reported that the 2021 Linkedin campaign for the NJ Area had a budget of 5000 dollars, but less was spent. Kalpana explained that this 2021 Linkedin campaign was a brand awareness campaign, and that Scott, a WSO brand communication director, pointed out how successful this brand campaign has been. However, WSO to do brand awareness going forward. Going forward, the NJ Area Linkedin campaign will be an engagement campaign to provide information to those who reach out for it. Kalpana pointed out that while the NJ Area has the

funds to continue the Linkedin campaign, it may not have enough people to sustain this activity. Kalpana informed the Area Assembly that persons interested in supporting the Linkedin campaign should contact Ken K. and Kalpana.

Thought Force on Excess Funds:

Ann Marie Z. presented slides, included in packet, regarding Thought Force on Excess Funds. Highlights from the presentation included:

- This is a thought force, not a task force. It has not been established that there are Excess Funds. Since the Thought Force started in November 2021, some groups have not been donating because of the perception that the NJ Area has excess funds.
- Slides address warranty one and having sufficient operating funds. Ann Marie Z. reviewed how knowledge based decision making (KBDM) paradigm was applied to address the issue of sufficient operating funds and how to determine them.
- Some members want excess funds to stay in NJ, and others want to support public outreach (Linkedin pages, attending fairs, professional conventions). Public outreach is one of the largest expenses of the Area.
- Thought Force looked at average of last three years of expenses, which was 14,700 per year but donations for 2020 to 2021 were reduced.
- Funds in operating account were reviewed.
- Factors due to COVID may be affecting donations and meetings transitioning from face-to-face to hybrid or online meetings may be affecting donations as well.
- Based on the guiding principle of spiritual abundance, Concept Seven, and common principles of honesty, trust and freedom, the GRs should make the ultimate decision regarding preservation and management of NJ Area funds.

- Consideration of future costs of hybrid assemblies could be around 1800 dollars for new equipment based on Area experience in Minnesota.

The Thought Force ideas regarding how much should be in the ample reserve:

- Leaving anywhere between 50-150% of a year's expenses in the checking account
- Keep 50% of balance needed to accomplish planned budget

The Thought Force ideas regarding what to do with any excess funds:

- send 25% to WSO and use 25% for public outreach and/or special projects
- use funds to fund hybrid assembly meetings
- use funds to support LinkedIn campaign and public outreach to counselors, therapists and social workers, in NJ

Broke for lunch at 11:59 AM.

Reconvened at 12:30 PM, with Guest Speaker talking until 1:03 PM.

At 1:04 PM, discussion on Thought Force presentation began.

Peter D. commented that he thought there was an excess of funds, so how did he get the perception that there was an excess of funds for the NJ Area. Ann Marie Z. explained that a member perceived there was an excess of funds, so it was addressed with the Thought Force. Since then, another 5K of expenses dropped the operating account balance and based on the P&L sheet, donations are still down at a rate of 12K per year, so groups need to keep donating to the NJ Area as there may not be an excess of funds.

Laurie K. asked whether WSO sends funds to the NJ Areas. Karen P. explained funds are sent to WSO. Anna Marie Z. explained that WSO appeal letters point out the services WSO provides for donations provided by individuals, Groups, Districts and Areas.

Tim S. pointed out that WSO does fund some Areas to send delegates to World Conference.

Richard M. commented that he believes the NJ Area needs more time to see how donations and expenses will equalize due to the current environment.

Ted V. asked how other Areas have addressed these issues. Tim S. commented that evaluating how other Areas address this issue is something that a Thought Force may consider.

Eileen commented that sending 25% to WSO may be too high and that it may be better to calculate at the end of the year and not on a month-to-month basis. Ann Marie Z. explained that year end may be best, but this would be addressed by a Task Force. The current presentation is the product of just a Thought Force.

Eileen commented how her group donates to WSO and the NJ Area, so it is a concern that money sent to the NJ Area would get sent to WSO. Eileen felt that evaluation Area excess funds should be on a yearly basis.

Mary T. asked if there are suggested allocations in view of the fact that NJIS is not active. Tim S. explained that that should be a group decision based on a group consensus.

Ezra T. commented that he was on the Thought Force and pointed out that there is no definition yet of what constitutes excess funds. In view of the pandemic, not sure how to calculate excess funds in view of the changes in meetings to hybrid and online and decrease donations possibly due to COVID.

Mary K. has current Treasurer's report. Mary K. pointed out that expenses and donations for last year resulted in a profit of only fifteen dollars, so this fact should be kept in mind when determining whether there are excess funds.

Debbie F. commented she would not support progressing the Thought Force to a Task Force because some groups are splitting into online meetings resulting in less members in New Jersey and less donations.

Multiple members raised concerns regarding the clarity of the question.

Liz K. made a motion to move forward with a Task Force, yes or no. Motion seconded by Debbie S. 48 GRs available to vote. 26 yes and 17 no. Motion failed because substantial unanimity needed to pass is 29, which was not reached.

Guest Speaker:

Mark M., WSO At Large Committee Member, and member of WSO Literature Committee, began speaking at 12:20 PM and, following questions and discussion, ended at 1:03 PM.

Karen P. thanked Mark M. for mentioning the ODAT.

Kathy B. thanked Mark M. for how the Literature Committee stays faithful to sharings. Kathy B. commented on ebooks vs. printed books, in that she recalls the Having had a Spiritual Awakening book dipping in sales so it was converted to an ebook instead of discontinuing it.

Peter D., literature coordinator for District 20, commented that the Having had a Spiritual Awakening book is no longer available as a hard copy but is available as an ebook. Mark M. not sure why this book is no longer available as a hard copy book.

David A. asked if Mark M. knows the name of the new daily reader and when it will come out. Mark M. does not know the title but there is an anticipated release date.

Tim S. asked Mark M. to talk about WSO committees and how to get involved on these committees. Mark M. discussed that Al-Anon has no "promises," and spoke about an email he sent to WSO and was asked to send in a resume. No positions available, so he let it go, then was contacted a year and a half later to participate on the WSO Literature Committee.

Update on Task Force on Permanent Electronic Meetings: Donna S. gave brief update. May have proposal for June assembly.

Update on Task Force on Redistricting:

Christina M. gave brief update. This Task Force may have a proposal for the June assembly.

NEW BUSINESS:

Approval of Minutes from November 6, 2021 Meeting:

After discussion of amendments, Debbie F. motioned to accept the revised minutes and Liz K. seconded. 43 in favor, no opposition. Two abstentions. So motion passed and amended minutes are approved.

Amendment to Certificate of Incorporation: Tabled

Donna S. talked about February letter circulated to Groups. This issue was subsequently tabled by AWSOC due to procedural informalities. A proposed amendment may be presented to NJ Assembly in November 2022. Katie O. not sure whether new notice is required. Donna S. will consult with NJ Al-Anon Area's attorney regarding notice requirements.

Discussion and Poll re: Future Assembly meetings:

Liz K. is researching what is needed for conducting a hybrid virtual assembly. Liz K. took informal poll regarding how many people may attend in person. Jennifer B. asked about voting software and attendance. Liz K. is looking into it. Debbie F. felt that the option to attend in person or remotely will increase number of people willing to serve as GRs. Liz K. points out that GRs and DRs attending Assembly should be reimbursed by the Groups/Districts for their travel expenses.

Did you Know Topic – Does Al-Anon have promises?

David A. presented. David A. pointed out that Al-Anon does not have promises, but does have Experience, Strength and Hope. David A. referred to pages 269-270 of Survival to Recovery. David A. explained that Al-Anon does not publish promises because WSO policy committee does not want this passage to rise to the level of steps and traditions. There were no questions regarding this presentation.

2021 Financial Audit – Request for GR Volunteer:

Donna S. reported that 2021 Financial Audit is scheduled for Saturday, 1 pm, April 2, 2022, at Liz's house in Clemmington, NJ. Sara E. volunteered to participate as a Group Representative.

NEXT ASSEMBLY MEETING – Saturday, June 4, 2022 10:00 am – 3:00 PM via Zoom.

Ask It Basket: No Questions

Motion to adjourn made by Christina M. and Ann Marie Z. seconded. Motioned passed by informal vote at around 3 PM. Meeting closed with Al-Anon Declaration

Minutes Submitted by
Scott A. - Recording Secretary