

NEW JERSEY ASSEMBLY AREA 36

MEETING MINUTES – JUNE 3, 2023

VIRTUAL ASSEMBLY

Donna S. called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM via Zoom. The meeting opened with the Serenity Prayer led by Rich B., GR D-9.

The Twelve Traditions were read as follows:

Mike - Traditions 1-6

Cynthia – Traditions 7-12

The Twelve Concepts were read as follows:

Jeanie C. - Concepts 1-6

Deb. C. - Concepts 7-12

The Warranties were read by Kathy

Donna S. read from Page 86 of the Service Manual regarding service participation. Donna S. reviewed meeting etiquette on page 4-5 of the meeting packet.

Participation was tracked by Zoom. There were 58 participants. 45 Voting Members

OFFICER REPORTS

Delegate's Report from the World Service Conference (WSC): Presented by Katie O., included 52 slides presented over an hour. Report from the World Service Conference included in the Assembly packet. Katie O. thanked all for the letters, love gifts and fruit basket. Theme for WSC was Love, Laugh and Service together.

Katie O. shared Delegate highlights from the past year with the NJ Assembly and she shared her service journey. Highlights according to Katie O. include the following:

Voting was done at WSC using Whova app instead of Vox Vote.

Each Delegate submitted two topics for consideration for discussion. Topics selected for discussion at WSC included: how to attract members into service, how to tap into experience of past Delegates, and shortage of Trustee Applicants – Trustee at large or Regional Trustees.

International Convention this year is from June 29th to July 2nd, and Katie O. plans to attend. Katie O. took a trip to Al-Anon Service Office in Virginia.

At WSC, Delegate's reviewed AFG's Auditor's Report

The AFG Road Trip 2023 will be in Los Angeles, CA

There was a motion at WSC to revise the Service Manual to allow for virtual meetings, which passed.

Questions for Katie O.:

Cynthia K. asked how to help Al-Anon literature sales and how does Amazon sales of Al-Anon literature effect Al-Anon literature sales as a whole. Katie O. says that third party booksellers get a commission but if the same literature is purchased directly from Al-Anon then Al-Anon does not have to pay these commissions so it is better for Al-Anon if members buy Al-Anon literature directly from an Al-Anon source rather than from a third party vendor.

Marni asked for a summary of Alateen electronic meetings. Katie O. reported that Al-Anon wants to expand virtual Alateen meetings globally and such Alateen electronic meetings are overseen by WSO because there are different rules that may apply in different jurisdictions in the US and abroad.

Diana asked about locations for buying books physically since the Southern NJ information center is closed. Katie O says there is NJIS and it has a website, and that Jennette is the special worker there.

There was a five minute break between Katie O's Delegate report and the rest of the Officer Reports.

Chairperson: Chairperson report from Donna S. which is included in the Assembly packet. Donna S. reported that she is actively looking for a new venue for the November Area Assembly. There were no questions about Donna's report.

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

- NJIS is not having regular meetings so not in the loop with NJIS. NJIS has request for financial support though.
- Liz K. Reports that NJ Area has Area Wide Insurance Policy in place. A Certificate regarding coverage is available on request if your group needs it for your meeting venue.

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

Recording Secretary: Scott A. reports that draft minutes from the March 4, 2023 are available, which will be discussed later in the meeting.

Corresponding Secretary: Jennifer B. has excused absence today; her report is included in the Assembly packet. Donna S. asked GRs review report to make sure Group data is current ~~otherwise Group may be deleted from the Area database if not timely updated~~

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

- NJ Al-Anon Assembly Profit and Loss report for January through May 25, 2023 included Total Income of \$ 12,366.90 and Total Expenses of \$6,934.04 for a Net Gain of \$5,432.86 so far for 2023.
- Checking Account Balance as of May 23, 2023 is \$24,247.06, Savings Account Balance is \$13,843.10, so Total Assets are \$38,090.16.

- Quickbooks is moving to the Cloud, and NJ Area will be moving its Quickbook program to the Cloud for now.
- Paid \$2399.00 for Nonprofit Insurance Policy, cancelled old policy and got a refund from State Farm of \$480.54.
- Received a one-time check from Jal Con Inc. of \$5,391.71 as a result of Jal Con Inc.'s dissolution.

Donna S. mentioned Uncommon Giving, a platform for people to send contributions to a non-profit. NJ Area does not use this service, and NJ Area cannot accept money from outside sources, moreover, this service charges a fee. Groups are encouraged to send contributions directly to NJ Area and not to use the Uncommon Giving platform because of the fees charged and because of the work involved vetting that funds are originating from an Al-Anon group and not an outside source.

Jean H. had question about excess funds, which is the next topic on the agenda so her question is deferred for now.

Jeannie C asked about estimate of the year's expenses. Donna S. referred Jeannie to the Audit Report for this information.

MaryEllen asked about what does NJ Area have a mission statement. Donna S. informed MaryEllen that she can get a copy of the Articles of Incorporation from NJ Area Website.

There were no other questions about the Treasurer's report.

HOT TOPIC DISCUSSION (followed

Treasurer's Report): Topic discussed was, after hearing the Treasurer's Report, do you think the Area has excess funds? If so, what should be done with it? Discussion went from 11:50 am to 12:05 pm, as follows.

Karen P. contends NJ Area should spend money on Public Outreach. Officers and members performing services for the Area get reimbursed for their expenses in service to the Area as well.

Peter M. suggests spending excess funds on a billboard.

Pat suggests using excess funds to help NJIS with its operational costs.

Mark McP asked about how NJIS is related to NJ Area. Donna S. answered that it is a separate entity.

Jeannie C. suggests sending excess funds to WSO.

Lori-Jo does not want excess funds sent to NJIS.

Susan P. asked about historical expenses. Donna S. says this information is in the Audit. Liz K. points out that Savings Account has enough money for one year's expenses based on historical expenses.

Liz K. says that NJ Area usually does not spend all its money budgeted every year.

Christina does not want funds sent to NJIS because it is a separate entity and it does not holding regular operational meetings.

Ken K. says he reviewed the Audit report, checking account and average expenses, and he concludes NJ Area has 1 year and 8 months worth of estimated expenses saved. Ken K. believes that a prudent reserve should be about \$20,000 in excess of a 4 month reserve.

Angela O. does not want to give funds to NJIS because there are no reports from NJIS.

COORDINATOR REPORTS

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

- Printed, folded and mailed a copy of the Alagram for Spring to all CMAs in the NJ Area and had the Spring Alagram posted on the NJ Area website as well

Liz K. asked whether members can submit poetry for the calendar. Christina contends that calendar and the Alagram do not have space for it.

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

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

- Held five AMIAS training sessions since last Assembly so there are currently 36 or 37 AMIASs.
- All AMIAS recertifications have been completed by the annual deadline.

There were no questions regarding the Alateen Coordinator's report.

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

- Mike L. attended the Area 45 AA convention in March 2023, and he may be getting volunteers from Al-Anon members who attended the convention.
- Mike L. sent a braille copy of ODAT from the Archives to a member who could use it. Contact information and forms available in report. No questions
- Long time members questionnaire as well as group history form is included in the package, as well as his contact information.

There were no questions regarding the Archive Coordinator's report.

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

- Angela R. is in process of creating annual calendar, and she has inspirational quotations for the calendar, although she is still looking for appropriate pictures for the calendar (no faces), and plans to have the new calendars available for Assembly in November 2023.
- New daily reader coming out in July 2023.
- The Forum is looking for topics for the Forum if you would like to make a submission.

Cynthia asked if photos for the Calendar are still published in black and white. Angela R. says yes.

Liz K. asked about submitting poetry for NJ Area calendar. Angela will look into that issue.

Marilyn asked about getting a group calendar. Angela says one calendar is mailed to each CMA so every group needs to verify its CMA to get a calendar.

Forum: Liz K. gave report, included in the J Area packet. Highlights include:

- Liz K. says there is opportunity to share in the Forum. Liz K gives Forum writing workshops, and she is giving one for District 5's Unity Day. Contact Liz K. if interested in attending one of her Forum writing workshops.
- Getting closer to goal of 325 Forum subscriptions within the NJ Area.

There were no questions for the Forum Coordinator.

Public Outreach: Position is vacant, so no report. The following comments were made about Public Outreach:

Kathleen knows of Discovery House that is looking for literature from Al-Anon. Donna S. says there are electronic resources available, which Kathleen can get from her district rep, Karen P.

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

- On April 11, 2023, renewed subscription with GoDaddy for one year.
- There was a recent wordpress update that has caused some plug-in glitches.
- AnnaMarie is trying to update Google analytics from universal to Google 4.

There were no questions for the Website Coordinator.

Lunch Break taken from 12:25 pm to 12:55 pm

DISTRICT REPORTS

District 1 Hunterdon/Warren Counties: Vacant, no DR so no report.

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

- 31 groups listed in group count, 23 active, 1 no mail status and 7 inactive.
- Last District meeting was March 23, 2023 with next meeting TBD.
- Treasury: \$506.70.
- Still contemplating a District Zoom account that the groups can share.
- Alateen AMIAS training completed in support of Butler Alateen group.

No questions for District 2 Rep.

District 3 Bergen and Passaic Counties: Vacant, no DR, no report.

District 4 Essex, Hudson and Union Counties:

Angela O. gave report, included with NJ Area packet. Highlights include:

- District 4 has 41 meetings, 25 face to face, 3 hybrid, 7 temporary electronic, 3 permanent electronic, 2 suspended and 1 Spanish meeting with an unknown status.
- Last District meeting was April 16, 2023, with next meeting to be determined. Planning to establish a monthly District meeting schedule.
- District Fellowship picnic scheduled for June 24th, 2023 at Tamaques Park Picnic Pavilion in Westfield, NJ.
- No service positions filled other than DR.

No questions for the District 4 Rep.

District 5 Mercer, Middlesex and Somerset Counties

Peter M. gave report, included in NJ Assembly packet, with Highlights including:

- Last District meeting was on May 22, 2023, with monthly meetings planned for the 4th Monday of each month for the rest of the 2023.
- Treasury: \$1,103.94
- District 5 has two Alateen meetings, and working to establish a new Spanish meeting in the District. Number of active groups in District 5 not reported.
- District Literature Display is available for Public Outreach events and anniversary meetings.
- Unity Day event is scheduled for October 21, 2023 at Stone Hill Church in Princeton.
- Have full officer roster. On Sunday, June 11th, 2023, District 5 is having a potluck dinner with family event for Alanon, AA and Alateen at St. Gregory the Great Church.

No questions for District 5 Rep.

District 6 Monmouth County – Vacant, no DR so no report. MaryEllen is working to get a DR. Meeting of District 6 GRs in planning stage.

District 7 Ocean County : Karen P. gave report, which is included in NJ Area packet. Highlights include:

- Last District meeting held on May 11, 2023 with next meeting scheduled for June 14, 2023.
- Number of registered groups in District 7 not reported although 13 GRs participated in the last District meeting.
- Treasury reported as “very stable.” District 7 is still looking for a treasurer.
- District 7 purchased the new Service manual for each GR in District 7.
- District 7 is hosting a face-to-face workshop on October 14, 2023 at Bayside Chapel in Barnegat, NJ.

No questions for District 7 Rep.

District 8 Burlington, Camden, Gloucester

Liz K. gave report, which is included in NJ Area packet. Highlights include:

- 23 groups active in District 8. 17 face to face (one of which is Spanish speaking), 1 temporarily electronic, 3 Al-Anon and 1 Alateen hybrid, 2 permanent electronic groups, and 3 meetings closed due to lack of attendance.
- Last District meeting held on April 19, 2023, with next District meeting scheduled for May 17, 2023 on Zoom (third Wednesday of each month).
- Treasury: \$2,203.64
- District 9 participated in the Area 45 AA Convention with Al-Anon participation with District 8 members putting on a “Superheroes” theme skit.
- Liz K, District 8 DR, led a workshop on how to write submissions for the Forum.
- District 8 offers \$75 seed money for literature to new meetings in the District that do not have enough money to stock literature.

No questions for the District 8 Rep.

District 9 Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland and Salem Counties: Anne A. presented her report, which is included in NJ Area packet. Highlights include:

- There are 16 Active Meetings in District 9 including 3 that are summer seasonal only. Three of the meetings are hybrid and one is a temporary electronic meeting.
- Treasury: not reported.
- Last District meeting held on May 10th, 2023 and next District meeting scheduled for June 7th, 2023 via Zoom.
- District 9 is distributing pamphlets for public outreach
- Looking to change email address for the district.

- Ocean City Meeting in District 9 is celebrating its 53rd anniversary on June 20, 2023.

No questions for the District 9 Rep.

District 10 (Electronic Groups): Mark McP. presented his report, which is included in NJ Area packet. Highlights include:

- There are 6 Active Electronic Meetings in District 10.
- Treasury: not reported.
- Initial District meeting is still in the planning stages.
- District 8 is distributing pamphlets for public outreach

No questions for District 10 Rep.

LIAISON REPORTS

NJIS: No report. Position vacant.

Spanish Intergroup: Aura B. did not attend NJ Assembly. No report.

Al-Anon Chairperson to Area 45 Convention:

Jennifer R., past Al-Anon Chairperson to Area 45 Convention, is looking for an Al-Anon Chair for next Area 45 Convention in 2024. Jennifer R. has prepared a report, which is included in the NJ Area Assembly packet, which she made for the benefit of the next Chair.

There were no questions for Jennifer R.

Al-Anon Chairperson to Area 44 Convention:

Christina McG., the present Al-Anon Chairperson to the 67th Area 44 Convention, is looking for volunteers to support Al-Anon participation in this event. More detailed information regarding the event and roles available for volunteers is provided in a flyer Christina prepared, and which is included in the NJ Area Assembly packet. The 67th Area 44 Convention will be held in Somerset, NJ on September 22-24, 2023. Karen P. volunteered to

bring literature. Cynrthia K. volunteered to bring an Alateen table for part of the convention. There were no other questions for Christina McG.

OLD BUSINESS:

Policy Handbook Committee Update: Peter M. reported briefly on behalf of the Committee. It is an ongoing process. Peter M.'s written update is in the NJ Area Assembly packet.

Thought Force to define excess funds update: Tim S. is not present today; however, his brief update on the progress of this Thought Force is provided in the NJ Area Assembly packet. Donna S. discussed this Thought Force briefly and the Hot Topics discussion conducted earlier during this Assembly meeting.

Hybrid Assembly Venue Search: presented by Liz K., who informed the Assembly that the Stone Hill Church in Princeton NJ will be the new venue for the October AWSC meeting and the November Assembly, which both will be hybrid meetings. There are no nearby restaurants, so bring your lunch. If looking for fundraising, consider catering the lunch.

Christina asked if AWSC will be there too. Liz K says yes and both will be hybrid. Liz K also commented that the NJ Area is looking into the Whosa app for voting at Assembly.

Ken S mentioned that he has some signage that may be used during Assembly.

NEW BUSINESS:

Roll call – GR Count: there are 60 people present, of which 46 are voting GRs.

Approval of Minutes from March 4, 2023 Assembly Meeting:

After discussion of amendments a motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes as amended.

Motion: The members recommend that the minutes be approved as amended.

Vote: Yes 46 No _____ Abstention/No vote _____

The motion passed unanimously.

2022 Financial Audit: Motion presented by Donna S. on behalf of AWSC, followed by voting on the motion.

Motion: The AWSC recommends to the Assembly that the 2022 Audit Report be approved, as amended and that the ample reserve for the new year be set at \$14,658.97.

Vote: Yes: 45 No: 0 Abstention:
1

Motion passed by substantial unanimity.

Task Force: Nomination/Vetting Procedure for Regional Trustee: Kathy B., Chair, is not at Assembly today. Donna S. says that Kathy B. would like GR to join this Task Force, which addresses how resumes get submitted by the Area Delegate on behalf of interested candidates.

Volunteer to serve as the Al-Anon Chairperson to the Area 45 AA Convention with Al-Anon participation. Donna S. asked if there is a volunteer for this position. Anyone interested should reach out to Donna S. after the meeting.

HOT TOPIC DISCUSSION: Topic discussed pertains to Non-Gendered Legacies. Donna S. presented, pointing out that this is a discussion only. This topic is about members reading pronouns in Al-Anon readings.

Rich M. believes the issue is an outside issue.

Pat asked what is the alternative non-gendered language.

Lori-jo does not think this is a political issue, and that it is an inclusion thing for her.

Chris G asked whether it would be an issue for WSO to manage.

Lydia came to Al-Anon as an individual and the pronoun is not important.

Cynthis K suggests applying step 3.

Scott A. contends people reading the Al-Anon literature inserting their own pronouns is not a copyright or trademark issue.

Jeannie sees this as a take what I like and leave the rest issue.

Mark suggests letting the process play out.

Kathleen O. believes perspectives may change as one practices the program over time. Kathleen would object to calling God "it." Kathleen believes she would not take offense to other people using pronouns of their choice.

Lauren wanted to know whether she should say something if someone changed the words when reading literature in a meeting.

Maureen O. likes the language as it is. Does not see it as an issue.

Mike believes this is a tradition 4 issue, and should be addressed by each group individually.

Liz K. believes this issue may be reflecting changing times. Newer literature reflects current cultural environment.

Donna S. believes that legacies should be read as written to not dilute the program.

Eileen M. believes the language should be inclusive.

Marilyn D points out the older literature assumed the male viewpoint. She does not want to forget what is important.

Rick believes Al-Anon should bring no outside opinions into the meeting. Rick believes reading literature with pronoun changes negatively affects Al-Anon.

Aster has been in meetings worldwide and sees it as inclusion. She sees Al-Anon as divine and should be preserved as is.

Jean H. believes this could damage the program bringing it up and discussing it. This topic does not lend itself to unity.

Karen P. shared her experience when the only literature was the ODAT, which in some ways is outdated. She reads the legacies without reading into it other issues. She would like to keep the language as it is.

Eileen R. believes this is an important issue. The world is changing, and older members may have different perspective than the younger members. It's a topic worthy of discussion.

Jeanne M. believes that the program is how it affects "I."

Carol M. this is the biggest number of people who have shared on a topic today. She sees it as an outside issue and should not be brought up the World Service Conference. Not worth the effort to change one word.

Peter M. notes that Al-Anon membership has been declining because it is not inclusive. Peter believes the language should be changed to be more welcoming for younger people. Peter believes this topic is worthy of consideration.

Christina is on the fence seeing the issues on both sides. She does not believe history should be rewritten. Christina changes the words when reading the literature and does not believe it is necessary to change the written word.

Joan C. has family and friends on both sides. She believes GRs should bring it back to their groups, and then bring the group conscience back to the Area and to World Service Conference. She would like to keep the language just the way it is.

Donna S. suggests brining this issue to your group to consider the issue. Donna S. will draft an issue for groups to review.

Ask It Basket:

Denis S. asked about Treasurer's report, projected and actual expenses were the same. Liz K. explained that the WSO budget is expected to be balanced.

Kathy wanted to know about NJIS, are there any recommendations. Donna S. sees it as an outside issue, so Area will not make a recommendation.

Marilyn reports that her group has been electronic since covid. Zoom meetings are limited to 40 minutes. Donna S. suggests this is a topic for the District, and her DR is Peter M. NJ Area Zoom is not for use for the Groups.

Donna S. addressed earlier question about phone list. Sponsors may be identified with an asterix if desired.

Mary T is looking for volunteers for event. See her after the meeting if interested.

NEXT ASSEMBLY MEETING – Saturday, November 4, 2023 10:00 am – 3:00 PM, hybrid format.

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

Minutes Submitted by
Scott A. - Recording Secretary