

# NEW JERSEY ASSEMBLY AREA 36

## MEETING MINUTES – NOVEMBER 4, 2023

### HYBRID ASSEMBLY

Donna S. called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM in the Assembly hall with some members in attendance via Zoom. Donna S. opened the meeting with the Serenity Prayer.

The Twelve Traditions were read as follows:

Lydia, GR, D9 - Traditions 1-6

Lana B., GR, D8 – Traditions 7-12

The Twelve Concepts were read as follows:

Joan M., GR, D8 - Concepts 1-6

Sara E., GR, D9 - Concepts 7-12

The Warranties were read by Denise S., GR, D8

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 monitored by Jenn B. There were 105 participants. 67 Voting Members

### OFFICER REPORTS

**Chairperson:** Chairperson report from Donna S. which is included in the Assembly packet. Donna S. attended the PA Assembly in Harrisburg, PA. Donna S. also participated in Policy Committee meetings, the Thought Force on Excess Funds, and organized the agenda and meeting of the Budget Committee in August. There were no questions about Donna's report.

**Delegate's Report from the World Service Conference (WSC):** Katie O. gave here report which is in Groups.io. Katie O. gave a list of AFG communities that she monitors, and listed conferences and meetings she chairs or attends.

Katie O. plans to attend the North East Delegates Conference. Katie O. mentioned that the North East Region is looking for volunteers to be the North East Regional Trustee. There has not been a candidate for North East Regional Trustee from the NJ Area for some time.

Katie O. discussed a letter from the WSO Executive Committee. A copy of the letter is in the Assembly packet.

There were no questions about Katie O.'s report.

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

Liz K. has been participating in the Thought Force on Excess Funds, the Budget Committee and the Policy Committee.

Liz K. reminded everyone that insurance certificates are available for those Groups that need one. Just contact Liz K. and she will get you an insurance certificate for your Group;

Liz K. introduced the 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition basket and the Ask-it-Basket. Ask-it-Basket questions will be addressed later in the meeting.

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

**Recording Secretary:** Scott A. reports that draft minutes from the June 3, 2023 Assembly are available, which will be discussed later in this meeting.

**Corresponding Secretary:** Jennifer B.'s report is posted in Groups.io. Highlights include:

There are 257 Groups in the NJ Area.

Jennifer B. reports that only 100 Groups have updated records as part of the annual update. Jennifer B. has emails for 90% of Groups.

This is Jennifer B.'s last meeting as Corresponding Secretary as her 3-year term ends this year (2023).

There were no questions regarding Jennifer B.'s report.

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

NJ Al-Anon Assembly Profit and Loss report for January through September 30, 2023 included Total Income of \$ 18,117.21 and Total Expenses of \$9,381.33 for a Net Gain of \$8,735.88 so far for 2023.

Checking Account Balance as of September 30, 2023 is \$26,732.07, Savings Account Balance is \$14,661.11, so Total Assets are \$41,393.18. Operational funds (which covers monthly expenses) are currently at \$8,735.88.

Mary K. serves on the Budget Committee, which is in the process of preparing a budget for 2024.

Scott A. asked about Jal Con Inc. dissolution income reported in June 2023. Mary K. explained that this income is on the books for 2023 as a one time donation.

Ken K. asked about the 248 Groups in the NJ Area and whether we are tracking which Groups make donations to the NJ Area. Mary K. says that no, the NJ Area is not tracking which Groups are making donations.

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

## **COORDINATOR REPORTS**

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

Christina prepared the fall 2023 edition of the Alagram and, after approval by Chair and Delegate, mailed a copy to each Group with a CMA (current mailing address), so 255 copies were mailed. Christina also emailed a copy of the Alagram to each Group with an email address on file.

Subsequently, an error was found in the Alagram that needed to be corrected. Corrected version of the fall 2023 Alagram was submitted for publication on the Area website and corrected version of the Alagram was emailed to all Groups with an email address on file.

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

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

Lori-jo held first Area-wide meeting for AMIASs in the NJ Area. Since June 2023 there are ten new AMIASs. District 1-9 each have at least three AMIASs.

Contact Lori-jo if interested in becoming an AMIAS.

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 44 AA convention in Somerset, NJ, September 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> 2023, and he set up a NJ Area Al-Anon Archives display there.

Mike L. continues to collect information for the Archives. Mike L. is sending archives forms to the Groups via email, and the archives forms are available today in the Lobby. Contact information and Archive forms are available in Mike L.'s report.

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

**Literature:** Angela R.'s report is included in NJ Area packet Angela R. has an excused absence today. Donna S. commented that Area calendars are available for sale and may be purchased today for \$5.

Highlights from Angela R's report include:

284 calendars were printed and mailed to 258 Groups and 26 AWSC members. 41 additional copies of the calendar were printed and are available for sale at \$5 each.

Literature updates are summarized in Angela R.'s report.

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

Liz K. says there is opportunity to share in the Forum, and Liz K. reports that an AI-Anon member from the NJ Area submitted a photo that was recently published in the Forum.

For today's Assembly, Liz K. has provided post cards so each member may write a slogan on it with your name and address for submitting to the Forum for consideration for publication. Liz K. has also provided a paper clip for marking your place in your Forum.

Raffle tickets are available for a drawing today for a free subscription to the Forum.

Liz K.'s goal is 325 Forum subscriptions within the NJ Area, and the NJ Area is currently at 292 subscriptions.

There were no questions for the Forum Coordinator.

**Public Outreach:** Position is vacant; however, Karen P. prepared a report. The following highlights from Karen P.'s report were made about Public Outreach:

Karen P. attended the Area 44 AA convention in Somerset, NJ, September 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> 2023, and sold literature there at a NJ Area public outreach table.

Karen P. attended a workshop in Ocean County on October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023 held at and sponsored by the Ocean County Community College, and the NJ Area had a public outreach table there.

The NJ Area had a public outreach table on September 9<sup>th</sup> at a walk on the Seaside Heights boardwalk.

There were no questions regarding Karen P.'s report.

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

Website User Data analytics included in report. Website averaging 1445 website users per month, with average visit lasting 50 seconds. Additional analytics included in AnnaMarie's report.

Permanent Electronic Meetings were removed from the NJ Area Website on July 30, 2023.

Wordfence, our website security software, was renewed for one year on September 19, 2023.

There were no questions for the Website Coordinator.

## **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:

29 groups listed in group count, 20 active, 1 active but has no mail status, 1 active Alateen meeting and 7 inactive meetings.

Last District meeting was October 24, 2023 with next meeting is on November 28, 2023.

Treasury: \$659.74.

District 2 purchased a District Zoom account that its Groups can share.

District 2 continues to support the Butler Alateen group.

District 2 distributed excess funds in the amount of \$314.30 to AI-Anon service arms.

District 2 active in public outreach, filling a books and literature request from a Veteran's group in District 2. District 2 also plans to complete by the end of 2023 mailing of AI-Anon information to rehab facilities in District 2.

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 36 meetings, 26 face to face (2 Spanish Speaking and 1 Polish Speaking), 3 hybrid, 2 temporary electronic groups (these two groups to determine their permanent status by year's end), and 5 permanent electronic groups.

Last District meeting was October 13, 2023, with next meeting scheduled for November 28, 2023.

Treasury: \$289.83

District 4 had a District Fellowship picnic in June 2023 with about 50 attendees. The picnic included an Al-Anon speaker, an Al-Anon/AA dual member speaker, and an Alateen speaker.

District 4 is moving forward with Library Al-Anon Bookmark and Poster Public Outreach projects.

District 4 now has three new AMIASs and is looking to start its first Alateen meeting.

No service positions filled other than DR, but District 4 is working on it.

Gloria asked for translators for Spanish speakers in meetings. According to Liz K. there seems to be discontinuity between English speaking and Spanish speaking service arms. See Liz K. if you are bilingual and would like to help with this issue.

No further 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:

District 5 has 44 active groups.

Last District meeting was on October 24, 2023 to review Unity Day analytics, with next District meeting planned for November 27, 2023.

Treasury: \$785.48

Peter M. is working with a committee in District 5 to visit all Groups in District 5.

District 5 held a Unity Day event on October 21, 2023 at Stone Hill Church in Princeton. 94 people attended. District 4 budgeted \$525 for the event, which was spent, and income from the event was \$788. Snacks were donated and the Church provided water and coffee. District 5's Unity Day was a success with workshops and speakers, and is growing, with plans to hold another District 5 Unity Day next year.

District 5 has two Alateen meetings. One of these two meetings gained four new members recently so it now has seven participating members, while the other Alateen Group has three participating members. District 5 is looking to start a third Alateen meeting and is looking for an Al-Anon member to help with starting up this third meeting.

Public Outreach: no updates on District 5's book project or health fairs.

No questions for District 5 Rep.

**District 6 Monmouth County** – Vacant, no DR so no report. MaryEllen is working to get a DR and revive District 6. Some of the GRs in District 6 met in October 2023 to discuss how to revive District 6 and GRs in District 6 have a District hybrid District meeting scheduled for tomorrow.

Donna S. asked MaryEllen to put Donna S.'s email address in the chat during the hybrid District meeting so Al-Anon members attending the hybrid District meeting can reach out to her.

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

Number of registered groups in District 7 not specifically reported although 14 GRs participated in the last District meeting.

Last District meeting held on October 7, 2023 with next meeting scheduled for November 8, 2023.

District 7 has a new Treasurer and the District 7 Treasury reported as very stable.

District 7 hosted a face-to-face workshop on October 14, 2023 at Bayside Chapel in Barnegat, NJ, with about 65 people attending. Coffee, tea and bagels provided with attendees asked to bring a dessert to share. The workshop had four topic rooms with two morning sessions and one afternoon session. There were two Al-Anon speakers and one AA speaker.

District 7 has an Alateen meeting reactivating on November 18, 2023 in Tom's River.

District 7 plans to shift focus to public outreach.

No questions for District 7 Rep.

### **District 8 Burlington, Camden, Gloucester**

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

25 groups active in District 8. 17 face to face (Spanish speaking Group is temporarily suspended), 3 Al-Anon and 1 Alateen group are hybrid, and 3 permanent electronic groups.

Last District meeting held on October 18, 2023, with next District meeting scheduled for November 15, 2023 on Zoom (third Wednesday of each month).

Treasury: \$2,540.83

District 8's Public Outreach activities include its downloadable poster campaign (posters come from WSO), its library campaign (contacting library acquisition staff to donate Al-Anon literature for circulation to the public), and participating in Connecting Resources to Communities Conference held by Camden County Council on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse, fall festival in Glendora, NJ. District 8 is looking for a bilingual (English and Spanish) member to help with public outreach.

District 8 held a "Game Day" event on September 30, 2023 for GRs and CMAs to gather in a social setting with food, games and fellowship.

District 8 is planning a workshop in the Spring of 2024. More to follow.

District 8 continues to offer \$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 18 Active Meetings in District 9 including 3 that are summer seasonal only. Three of the Groups are hybrid, one Group is a permanent electronic group and one Group is a seasonal electronic meeting.

Last District meeting held on October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023 and next District meeting scheduled for December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023 via Zoom.

Treasury: \$1629.134.

District 9 decided to make a distribution of \$100.00 each to WSO and to the NJ Area.

District 9 held its Second Annual Virtual Workshop, "Carrying the Message," on October 28, 2023 via the District 9 Zoom account.

District 9 is participating in the AA Waves Round-up with Al-Anon participation on November 17-19, 2023 in Cape May, NJ, with three District 9 members chairing meetings on the twelve steps and a District 9 member from Ocean City, NJ participating as a guest Al-Anon speaker.

District 9 has two new AMIASs but no Alateen meeting. District 9 would like to start up an Alateen meeting.

District 9 has a new tri-fold meeting list, which District 9 has printed for public outreach distribution.

Peter M. asked for a copy of the District 9 tri-fold meeting list. Anna A. directed Peter M. to the Assembly packet, which has a copy of the District 9 tri-fold meeting list.

No other 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 10 Active Electronic Meetings in District 10. Their times, dates and Zoom links are listed in the District 10 report.

The initial District 10 meeting was held on October 23, 2023 and next District 10 meeting is scheduled for December 4, 2023. All District 10 meetings are via District 10's zoom link.

Treasury: not reported.

District 10 notified its members that the new Al-Anon Daily Reader, "A Little Time for Myself – A Collection of Al-Anon Personal Experiences," is back in the Al-Anon online store.

District 10 notified its members regarding how to attend this NJ Area Assembly via online link or in-person.

District 10 experiencing some issues with how Al-Anon members can find its meetings, which at this point is only directly via the WSO website.

No questions for District 10 Rep.

### **LIAISON REPORTS**

**NJIS:** No report. Position vacant. Peter D. did pick up some literature from NJIS and it is in the lobby for those who are interested.

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

**Al-Anon Chairperson to Area 45 Convention:**

Joan M., the current Al-Anon Chairperson to Area 45 Convention, provided a report, which is posted in Groups.io. Highlights include:

Joan M. attended a planning meeting via Zoom on October 8, 2023. The theme for the convention is "on the plane of inspiration."

Al-Anon will get a bigger room this year. The Al-Anon skit is completed and ready to rehearse. Alateens will be participating as well.

The date of the Convention is March 16-18<sup>th</sup>, 2024 in Atlantic City, NJ.

There were no questions for Joan M.

**Al-Anon Chairperson to Area 44 Convention:**

Christina McG., the Al-Anon Chairperson to the 67<sup>th</sup> Area 44 Convention, prepared a report that is posted on Groups.io. Highlights of the report include:

The 67<sup>th</sup> Area 44 AA convention with Al-Anon participation was held in Somerset, NJ on September 22-24, 2023. The Al-Anon speaker was David E. from Chicago. There were five Al-Anon meetings that went well.

Karen P. provided Al-Anon literature at the Convention.

The Area 44 AA convention with Al-Anon participation next year will be September 20-22, 2024.

There were no other questions for Christina McG.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Policy Handbook Committee Update:** Mary-Teresa U. prepared a report on behalf of the Committee, which is on Groups.io. It is an ongoing process. Next meeting of this Committee is on November 14, 2023.

Mary-Teresa U. reviewed the objective of this Committee, which is to prepare updates to the Area

Policy Manual based on policy changes approved at Assembly.

Debbie F. asked when the update will be ready for review by Assembly. Donna S. says maybe next 3-6 months.

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Roll Call taken to get GR count for voting. There are 32 GRs in the room and 35 GRs online for 67 GRs present for voting. Substantial Unanimity constitutes 45 yes votes. If a GR needs to leave, then let Jennifer B. know so GR count is adjusted for voting.

**Thought Force to define excess funds update:**

Tim S. presented and thanked participants on the committee. Committee charged with recommendations to Assembly, which are to be referred to a Task Force. See presentation, which is in Groups.io. for recommendations. After the presentation by Tim S., the following discussion ensued.

Mary Beth asked about the recommendation regarding checking account. Tims says it pertains to the NJ Area checking account, because there are several accounts for the NJ Area, including checking and savings accounts. The NJ Area checking account is used to pay monthly operating expenses.

Tina S. asked about how future expenses are estimated. Tim S. says yes. Liz K. says that this optic is addressed later in today's meeting when budget is addressed.

Mac asked about the recommendation of \$5000 in the operating checking account. How can that be managed with month to month to fluctuations? Tim S. says recommendations pertains to operating funds, but does not address the 18K excess in the operational account.

Liz. K reviewed the difference between Thought Force and Task Force, see pp. 71 and 72 in Service Manual. Donna S. summarized that a Thought Force determines the "what" and that a Task Force determines the "how."

Mary Beth N. asked about the difference between the checking versus the savings accounts. Tim S. explained that checking is the operational account and the savings account is a prudent reserve to operate for a year without income. Prudent reserve is calculated from the NJ Area Audits.

Cynthia has accounting experience and agrees with idea of a \$5000 operational account. Cynthia believes that excess funds should be sent to WSO. Tim S. explained that based on a minority appeal to the NJ Area, the Thought Force was created to look at the amount of money in checking and savings accounts to determine if the amounts are reasonable or excessive. That is the scope of what the Thought Force has reviewed. Tim S. explained that what to do with excess funds would be determined by a Task Force.

Tim S. explains that if today's motion passes then recommendations of the Thought Force will go to a Task Force, and volunteers will be needed for the Task Force.

Ken K. opined about why he joined the Thought Force and why he resigned from the Thought Force. Ken K. agrees with Thought Force recommendations, but disagreed with certain aspects of the Thought Force. Ken K. went over two minutes time limit and had to be muted. Donna S. reviewed the two-minute limit again and asked members to be respectful of that boundary.

Lauren asked about using excess funds for a public address system for assembly.

Mark asked about paying for an interpreter, would it come from the \$5000 operational account. Donna S. answered that it could come from excess funds or be an added monthly expense.

Jean asked what is the actual role of WSO in the world and the Area in NJ when it comes to handling donations. Tim S. explained that individuals contribute to WSO by their own action but groups and districts and the Area make contributions following Group conscience. The Thought Force, Task Force and the Assembly vote is the mechanism for distributing funds to WSO and is part of the reason WSO is financially solvent at this time.

Pat M. asked questions relating to moving money between NJ Area checking and savings accounts. Pat M. is concerned that electronic groups are not contributing. She also commented about using funds for public outreach. Tim S. addressed the reason for checking and savings account, with checking account constituting an operational account for month to month expenses, the savings account for holding the prudent reserve, and then Assembly will decide what to do with any excess funds. Tim. S. says it may take the process about another year to play out.

Mark contends that the perfect is the enemy of the good enough. Mark would move forward with the Task Force.

Angela O. asked about the recommendations regarding recommended purchases for public address equipment and translation resources, and asked about opening a CD. She feels money should be moved into savings. Liz K. explained that savings account balance is determined by annual audit, and this money is not touched except for emergencies to cover expenses.

Eileen expressed concern that numbers and spending are skewed by inflation. Eileen contends that donations to the NJ Area should stay in the NJ Area and used for NJ Area purposes.

Pat K. commented regarding how her group handles its funds, sending all of it to WSO and that Thought Force-Task Force paradigm is a waste time.

Karen W. would like to volunteer for the Task Force and would like excess money used in the NJ Area for interpretation equipment and public address equipment.

Rita contends that the Thought Force recommendations make sense to her.

Pat J. would like some of the excess funds spent in the NJ Area not all being sent to WSO. Her group makes quarterly contributions to WSO

John P. would like to move the motion.

Joan would like to move the motion. Tim S. explained that this motion is from the AWSC so it does not need to be made from the floor.

David L. commented on sending the Thought Force recommendations to the Task Force. Tim S. asked that if someone already asked your question, then don't repeat it because we have limited time available and a packed agenda.

Kathy B. made a point of order regarding the Thought Force and Task Force paradigm. Liz K. commented that this discussion is for GRs only and there is only one time at the Microphone for each GR.

At the conclusion of discussion, Donna S. presented the motion from AWSC for a vote at Assembly.

**Motion:** The AWSC recommends to the Assembly that the recommendations from the Excess Funds Thought Force be forwarded to a task force.

Yes: \_\_\_\_29 + 26\_\_\_\_  
No \_\_\_\_3\_\_\_\_ Abstention 1

Motion passed by substantial unanimity with 55 votes.

If you want to volunteer for the Task Force, then let the officers know at the front of the room.

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Lunch Break taken from 12:15 pm to 12:45 pm

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After Lunch Break, Roll Call taken to get GR count for voting. There are 29 GRs in the room and 14 GRs online for 43 GRs present for voting. Substantial Unanimity constitutes 29 yes votes. If a GR needs to leave, then let Jennifer B. know so GR count is adjusted for voting.

**Nomination/Vetting Process for Regional Trustee Presentation:** Presented by Kathy B.

Kathy B. presented a proposed process for vetting candidates for Regional Trustee for the North East Region, including Resume, Resume content, and timelines for vetting candidates. The recommendations have been discussed at Trustee meetings, and at AWSC.



Opened up for questions. Joan asked about the previous motion. Kathy B. pointed out that the previous motion on the Thought Force has been voted on and is closed.

There was no further discussion on the issue so Donna S. brought up the following motion for a vote.

**Motion:** The AWSC recommends to the Assembly that that Regional Trustee vetting process be approved as presented.

Yes: 29 + 27 = 56  
No 0 Abstention 0

Motion passed unanimously.

**Thought Force to define Tech Coordinator Position-update:** Jennifer B presented. Her report is included in the NJ Area Assembly packet.

This Thought Force is tasked to determine what Tech Coordinator responsibilities should be considered for the Tech Coordinator Position.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Election for Corresponding Secretary/Group Records Coordinator (See Page 71 of NJ Area Assembly packet for description of duties):**

Jennifer B. shared her experience strength and hope regarding the position. Donna S. shared that the Corresponding Secretary/Group Records Coordinator position is elected on an off year to satisfy NJ requirements for officer continuity.

Ken K. commented that this is an important Officer position. Ken K. opined about legal duties and obligations. In his opinion, Jennifer B. is one of the top Group Records Coordinators. The position is one of the six legal officer positions of the NJ Area, and they are covered under NJ Area liability insurance. The position obligates the position holder to three duties: duty of care, duty of loyalty, and duty of good faith. The trustees conduct the business of the NJ Area. AWSC and Assembly report to the Board.

Donna S. reviewed the following election eligibility criteria for Corresponding Secretary/Group Records Coordinator.

Election Eligibility for any officer position, first qualification be a current or past District Representative (DR). If no eligible DR candidate volunteers, then the position be opened for current officers or coordinators or past officers or coordinators who have remained active at the Assembly level. If there are still no qualified volunteers then the position will be opened to all members.

At the Area Election, qualified members must be present to stand for any elected position.

Mac nominated Kris. Kris declined the nomination.

Carrie H. volunteered for the position. Jessie nominated Carrie H. Donna S. asked whether Carrie has been a GR or DR, which she has not. Carrie has been a member of Al-Anon for 13 years. Home group is in District 4 and she lives in District 5.

After Carrie H. sequestered into a breakout room, nomination opened for discussion.

Carrie H. brought back to the meeting. Donna S. asked if Carrie H. has any service positions in the group. Carrie is a book/article editor, so detailed oriented, mission driven regarding sharing educational information. Carrie H. has not held any service positions.

Angela O. says she has known Carrie H. for ten years and has confidence Carrie H. is reliable.

Donna s. asked how often Carrie H. meets with her sponsor. Carrie says once a week as scheduled and as needed

Tim S. commented that it is more important to be willing.

Carrie H. sequestered again. By consensus at the meeting, voting will be open voting.

**Election Count for Carrie H.:**

Yes: 28 + 25 = 56  
No 3 Abstention 0

(In person 28 + Virtual 25 =  
Total 53), 3 nos, and no abstentions  
(2/3 = Substantial Unanimity 40)

Carrie H. has been elected as Corresponding  
Secretary/Group Records Coordinator by  
Substantial Unanimity

**Approval of Minutes from June 3, 2023 Assembly Meeting:**

After discussion of amendments to draft minutes a motion was made by Debbie F. and seconded by Angela O. to approve the minutes as amended.

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

**Vote:**

Yes: 24 + 26 = 50  
No: 0 Abstention: 3 + 2

Motion to approved minutes as amended passed by Substantial Unanimity.

**2024 Proposed Budget:** 2024 Mary K. presented Proposed Budget and explained changes from previous budget. The 2024 Proposed Budget is included in the NJ Assembly packet.

Biggest change is decrease in travel expenses because many people are attending meetings via Zoom.

Reduced budget from \$32,777,00 (2023) to \$28,444.00 (2024) in report. This year NJ Area has spent more of the budget than in previous years. AMIAS expense decreased because training is now online. Insurance coverage includes both for Officers and for Group liabilities insurance. Rent decreased because of change of venue for Assembly. Website coordinator expenses less than expected because no helper hired. Picnic expense taken out

because no volunteers for picnic. There is a budget item for WSO donation, which NJ Area has not regularly made.

Cindy U. is having difficulty seeing what has been actually spent in the past and what is proposed. Mary K. explains that money may be allocated but not spent because those entitled to it do not request it. Also, some positions are vacant and, once staffed, it is expected the money may be spent. Donna S. explained that the budget is a plan for what may be spent so activities may be planned. The budget is a planning tool.

Cindy concerned about a deficit budget.

Ken K. made a summary of the budget a s a deficit budget that is an 80% increase in projected spending than in the past. Ken K. echoed Donna S. comments about budget as a planning tool but that the planned increase in spending seems excessive to him.

Holly concerned that budget numbers do not look accurate to her. Mary K. and Liz K. acknowledge that there may be an error.

Meeting moved to the Ask it Basket while Mary K. looks at the possible budget error.

Mary K., after reviewing the proposed error, pointed out what numbers need to be adjusted. Final Proposed Budget is still the same number.

Tina H. had question about what constitutes a special project. Donna S. explains that a special project would be a project that is developed during the year and has not been anticipated. Tina H. also wanted to know about platform/subscription budget. Mary K. explained that this expense pertains to online Quickbooks. Tina H. had questions about several other line items and Mary K. explained what each one reflects.

Mary Beth concerned about the discrepancy between this budget for \$28,440 based on past expenditures for a lot less. Donna S. explained that cash on hand and budget are not the same thing. This is the first time that the NJ Area has ever done a revenue budget. Donna S. contends that perspective on the

budget should change from what we spend to what revenue we expect to receive. Donna S. explains that the NJ Area has never spent money that it does not have.

Kris asked if the proposed income should be removed from the budget. Donna S. explained that it is a better practice to include in a budget anticipated revenue.

Mary K. explained that donations have been increasing and expects donations will continue to increase.

Jean H. says that if the budget is a planning tool, then we can deal with unexpected expenses if they arise. Mary K. agrees that we can.

As there were no further questions, Donna S. moved the meeting to a vote on the following motion.

Motion: The AWSC recommends that the 2024 Proposed Budget be approved as amended.

Vote: Yes 22 + 23 No: 4 + 2  
Abstention: 1

Motion passed by Substantial Unanimity with 45 votes.

**Ask It Basket:**

What can be done to encourage people of color to participate in Assembly? Liz K. suggests taking this back to the groups for discussion.

Aster commented on this question, that as a person of color, suggests may be develop literature targeting African Americans in particular. Kathy B. points out there is literature for people of color.

Liz K. points out that Ask it Basket is not open to general comments.

Christina works with doctoral candidates and discussed African Americans do not use hospice because they rely on church. This may be the same.

Kathy B. points out that dual members of AA and Al-Anon not eligible for service above the groups.

Does Al-Anon have an opinion regarding how much time as a member before becoming a DR? Kathy B. points out that there is no requirement for two years of service or membership to become a DR.

Why can't Al-Anon literature be copied and distributed to members? It is copyrighted so can't copy Al-Anon literature and distribute it.

What is the purpose of NJIS? Can we get literature from WSO? Yes, and Kathy B. recommends asking NJIS for its budget. Service manual explains the role of the Information Services

Is there a way to bring back a checklist of character defects? Liz K. suggests reaching out to literature coordinator at WSO with suggested checklist. Liz K. suggests customizing a checklist for your own personal use.

What is best way to get people to volunteer for service within the group and the same people keep rotating through the position? Liz K. suggests that the issue is burn out, or that older members may not want to take positions that require using new technologies.

Some people wanted to know why the Legacies of Gender not included in this meeting? Donna S. says not enough time for this meeting so plan is to include it in next Assembly.

Liz K. drew ticket for Forum subscription, and the winner received her new Forum subscription.

**NEXT ASSEMBLY MEETING** – Saturday, March 2, 2024 10:00 am – 3:00 PM, hybrid format.

**Meeting closed with Al-Anon Declaration at 3 PM.** Donna S. dispensed with motion to close procedure.

Minutes Submitted by  
Scott A. - Recording Secretary