

SPRING ASSEMBLY OF THE MINNESOTA SOUTHERN AREA (MNSA)

APRIL 10, 2021

The Assembly was held virtually via Zoom and called to order by the Chair, Sherry GS.

The Twelve Traditions were read by Cindy S. d1 GR.

The Concepts of Service were read by Rachel G. d2 GR.

The General Warranties were read by Jean W. d3 GR.

Hilary L. d4 GR shared how the Concepts help us serve each other in business matters and the Traditions promote group unity. Our primary purpose is always to help families of alcoholics. Mary K. d5 GR shared how the Steps help with personal growth.

Welcome by Chair, Sherry GS: She welcomed everyone and expressed gratitude for being able to spend time with everyone today. Hope for Today was read for April 10 as the reading explains the benefits of service and reminded us all that God does not call the qualified, He qualifies the call. We have passions that support the Al Anon mission, so Sherry reminded us to be openminded. Her favorite slogan is THINK (Thoughtful, Helpful, Informative, Necessary, and Kind). If you hear acronyms, please ask if unsure. Zoom etiquette was reviewed.

Sheila P. dr8 defined substantial unanimity and that only GRs (group representatives) cast a vote with only one vote per group. A survey was conducted and 48 GRs responded as eligible to vote. Lois W. intended for substantial unanimity to mean "almost all". If anyone abstains from voting it is considered a "no" vote. If a vote does not pass, the issue may or may not be addressed at a later time and/or date.

Motion: Carol S. d4 GR moved that substantial unanimity be 70% of the votes cast today. Allison d12 GR seconded the motion. Results: 100% voted yes.

Roll call:

All Officers

Delegate and Alternate Delegate

Coordinators: Archives, Area Alateen Process Person, Newsletter, Alateen, Asst GRC, Group Records, Forum, Public Outreach, Website, GR Orientation, Calendar. Absent: Assemblies Activities, Literature

Action Committee Chairs: Fellowship Communication, Membership Outreach. Absent: Public Outreach, Group Services

Liaisons: Absent: St. Paul Intergroup, Mpls Information Services

District Representatives and/or Alternates: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17 Absent: 6, 14, 18-21

Past Delegates or Alternate Delegates: 28, 34, 55 Alt. 43, 49 Absent: All others.

Minutes of the Fall Assembly were reviewed. It was discussed that the \$3,000 love gift to the WSO is given as a love gift to thank the officers who served on the previous panel (Panel 58). If someone did not read the full minutes prior to the vote to approve is taken, GRs were reminded to follow their conscience.

Motion: Natasia d11 GR moved that the minutes be approved as written. Sally J. d12 GR seconded the motion. Results: Approved 100%

Break. Following the break, people shared something they are grateful for today.

There are two open positions that still need to be filled. Sherry asked that members contact her if they are interested in serving.

- Public Outreach Action Chair
- Literature Coordinator. Sally d12 GR volunteered to take this recently vacated position.

Introduction to Action Committees: The purpose of all committees is to find ways to make Al-Anon and Alateen available to those who need it.

- Group Services: To assure that every member and potential member who contacts Al-Anon/Alateen is treated with the warmth, understanding and love that characterizes the Al-Anon program. To keep our Area mailing list current. To strengthen the connection between the Assembly and existing groups – Al-Anon, Alateen, lone members, groups that meet in institutions, etc. To reach out to newly registered or unregistered groups to invite participation. To record the history of the groups.
- Membership/Outreach: Purpose: To find ways to strengthen our unity and commitment through communication within the fellowship. To cooperate and share information to encourage Al-Anon and Alateen participation in area activities and service meetings.
- Public Outreach: To be the communication voice for Al-Anon in the Minnesota South Area to the public. To attract the newcomer and inform professionals about the Al-Anon/Alateen program. To provide knowledge and generate public good-will toward Al-Anon. To encourage individual members to become involved in public outreach efforts.
- Fellowship: To articulate a clear, consistent message of hope for family members and friends of alcoholics through our literature, the Forum, and our newsletters. To encourage the use of Conference Approved Literature and the Forum. To encourage members to share their experience, strength, and hope in articles for the Forum and other literature. To provide guidance on the use of literature and the Forum in group meetings and outreach activities. To encourage sale of CAL within the membership and to outside agencies as a tool.

Volunteers are needed to serve on the following standing committees:

- Policy Review: Some Area trusted servants are assigned to this committee, and the additional three positions are filled by current District Representatives (DRs) or Alternate DRs. Two (2) more DRs are needed. Nominations will be voted on at the August Area World Service Committee meeting, and the commitment involve just a few meetings a year.
- Action Committee Thought-Force chaired by Karin B. seeks to discover what is/is not working. Great way to be introduced to KBDM (knowledge-based decision making) process. Experienced and inexperienced volunteers needed.

Chairpersons oversee Action committee meetings at the Assemblies. Coordinators have a login with the WSO and communicate with other like coordinators to share ideas and information. You do not need to be a DR (district representative) or GR (group representative) to hold an MNSA Area position.

Treasurer's Report: The 2020 balance sheet reflects \$25,730 in cash assets and no liabilities. The financial statements for 2020 reflect a shortage of \$3,813 in contributions; however, project expenses were less than expected so the net gain to the bottom line was \$3,702. The year-to-date budget had \$4,000 in contributions and actual of \$3,644. Folderol had a budget of \$9,000 with \$3,456 spent with more invoices expected. The expenses for the 2021 calendar and the final 2020 newsletter were incurred in 2020 but were not paid until 2021 which explains why expenses exceed the budget.

- Kit B, d8 noted that general ledger 4003 is meant to capture expenses that were incurred but were not billed by the trusted servant who incurred the expense. The amount on that line item represents funds rolled over from Folderol since it was held virtually. It was agreed to move these funds to another general ledger account.
- Sasha W, Website Coordinator, asked about funding for the website redesign. There are funds reserved for projects. Forms to request funding are available from the Area Treasurer.
- Karin B d8 questioned earmarking of funds for special use. Monies sent to the WSO cannot be earmarked for special purposes; however, MNSA has flexibility. The Finance Committee allows the acting Treasurer to decide if they are willing to earmark contributions. Currently, Mark P. has earmarked \$360 for Alateen.

Motion: Gloria K. d11 GR moved to accept the Treasurer's report with a change to reclassify and move line item 4003. Rachel G. d2 GR seconded the motion. Results: Yes 98% No 0 Abstain 2%

Midlake Conference for Alateens: Mariah B. AAC d13 recommends that the Area contribute funds to help Alateens who are not able to afford the conference. An Alateen, Madison, also presented to the Area. The pandemic has made it exceedingly difficult for Alateens to meet. The annual conference in October was held virtually last year. Many groups are inactive since in-person meetings were stopped. The cost for registration and housing is \$250 per participant with an additional \$150 for transportation for a total of \$400 per person. Not all will attend the entire conference, need to travel, or require any help paying. Additional comments:

- AMIAS training is being offered at 10 AM tomorrow via Zoom.
- Group representatives are to encourage love gifts be sent the Area Treasurer earmarked for Midlake participation by Alateens. Special fundraising by groups is a possibility.
- In the past, \$1,500 was given to support participation. \$1,200 added to the \$360 is a possible contribution.
- Some felt that sponsorship should be limited to Alateens within the MNSA membership and others felt that we should consider a broader group since some teens have been participating via ZOOM after losing local support.
- There are insufficient funds to consider a request for \$10,000. Also, there is a concern for setting a precedent for funding at this level.
- It is not possible to table this issue as the next Assembly will not be until October. If a project request had been made before the Assembly, details could have been vetted out to allow for a better understanding the commitment.

- It was suggested that Alateen representatives also ask Northern MN Area about possible contributions.
- It was suggested that, instead of the Midlake Conference, there should be consideration in supporting Alateen participation at the Gopher State Roundup.
- How will the money be allocated and who decides who will qualify?

Motion: Julia E. d8 GR moved, and it was seconded that \$2,500 of discretionary funds be contributed for the Midlake Alateen retreat in October at the Wisconsin Dells; the motion was made with a strong recommendation of an appeal letter to be sent to groups and GRs are to request their group send contributions to the Area Treasurer marked for Midlake Alateen sponsorship. Results: Yes 85%, No 10% Abstain 5%

Break: Sharing of favorite slogans

Alateen Safety Committee: Pat P., Alternate Delegate 61 reported the safety regulations have not been finalized between the Area and the WSO. Donna T. AAPP (Alateen Area Process Person) said as many as 30 AMIAS sponsors will have a lapse in certification if they do not have the annual safety training required tomorrow, and the required paperwork turned in by April 30th. There are 68 AMIAS certified sponsors currently. Members must be AMIAS certified to serve on the Alateen Safety Committee.

Motion: Russ F. d11 GR moved to approve Lynn M d11, Kit B d8 and Jim L d13 as members of the Alateen Safety Committee. Allison d12 seconded the motion. Results: Yes 100%

Delegate report: Kit S., as Delegate, is a member of the WSO. The Delegate acts as a channel for information to flow to and from the WSO and the MNSA conference. Decisions made in our Area are shared world-wide and vice versa. Home groups have the ultimate authority and responsibility as stated in Concept 2. Delegates have complete administration and authority to act at the WSO. Lois W. and 40 friends had lunch in 1951 and decided to form a group to support families of alcoholics. "Many Voices, One Journey". The agenda for the Delegate conference this week is 5 pages long and includes over 100 pages of reading. Sixty-seven delegates will be given 42 agenda items and asked to select their top 14. On June 12 at 9:30 AM, Kit will report to the Area on the results of the WSO conference. It is unsure if it will be in person or hybrid based on the pandemic. Staff at the WSO is down 80% due to retirements and positions left unfilled; however, the WSO is recruiting to fill the Director of Programs position. Volunteers interested in Trustee positions need to apply on-line by August 15th. Literature sales are down, and they are a major source of funding. Individual contributions are important and can be made directly at AlAnon.org.

Tech Thought-Force: Scott T d12 has agreed to Chair. Other members are: Kit B. d8, Sherry GS d11, Sasha d8, Russ d11, and Kit S. as Delegate. 2021 Spring Assembly Technology Thought Force poll objectives:

- Introduce and reinforce online security and anonymity as central considerations in 12 Step online environments. Repetition is a proven influence.
- Tie program principles and the vision of our program's continued existence to considerations in preserving anonymity and security in our online recovery environment.
- Reveal a very informal baseline for assessing our membership's awareness of those issues.
- Achieve some insight to members' degree of perceived capability.

- Induce introspection about how we each approach our online environment - are we part of the solution or part of the problem?
- Increase recognition and discernment of individual responsibility for preserving security and anonymity. Who, what, when, where, why, and how is anonymity an issue in our online recovery environment?
- Obtain some face validity for the poll - when people talk the talk but do not walk the walk. Ex: When 90% answer that they carefully read and follow instructions for joining area Zoom meetings, but reality is only 60% appeared correctly named in assembly waiting room, as was the case at 2021 spring assembly. This predicts with high reliability that the results of the rest of the poll are not likely accurate. It also implies that, as an Area, we are not achieving Awareness, first of the 3 A's.
- Provide emotional common ground for those intimidated by technology.
- Prioritize Tradition 12 - placing principles above personalities (or convenience, comfort, features).
- Finally, and most importantly, to provide a mandate for including security and anonymity as a primary principle of MN South Area's continued online presence.

Taskforce for Implementing Incorporation: Jim L d13 is Chair. Other members are: Kit S Delegate, Mark P Treasurer, Theresa D adr15. The law firm of Legal for Good in St. Louis Park is drafting the documents. The attorney is Jennifer Urban. There is a flat fee of \$2,000 that includes the Articles of Incorporation, Sales Tax exemption and, status as a 501(c)3 non-profit. Other services will be billed at an hourly rate. Hoping the total cost with expenses to come in at \$2,400 and below budget of \$4,500. The by-laws will align with our Traditions and Concepts and will be presented at the Fall Assembly. Efforts to incorporate go back over 15 years. The work at the District level is considered Area work but Groups will not be included in the incorporation. It may be possible for groups to request a rider to the insurance to gain coverage for liability.

Alternate Delegate: Pat P. d11 is learning a lot as the Chair of the Alateen Safety Committee. He receives 5 to 6 e-mails a week from the website that require him to answer. He is working to find representation for underserved districts.

Break: What are you going to do after the meeting today?

Action Committee Reports:

- Fellowship: Hilary d8 GR reported the intention of offering a workshop about how to write and include artwork for submission to the Forum and other Conference-Approved literature. The group also decided on a project with the Newcomer packet and will research ways to allow CAL literature to better serve members with disabilities as we progress through this Panel.
- Group Service: Peggy W d11 reported the breakout group discussed ways to promote communication to enhance relationships in MN SA. They want to encourage all districts to have active DR participation with membership on an Action committee. There is a desire to facilitate increased participation by Alateen groups.
- Membership/Orientation: Karin B. d8 MOAC reminded everyone to get their submission to Ute Z., Newsletter Coordinator, by the end of April for inclusion in the next newsletter. Sasha W. d8, Website Coordinator, led a discussion on a digital toolkit for newly appointed GRs. The group

discussed service to members and welcoming people to service. Also, the group created a whiteboard card as a love gift to Kit S. as our Delegate.

- Public Outreach: Lynn M d11, Public Outreach Coordinator, tried to encourage someone to step forward to Chair this committee. Getting the word out is not as easy since the pandemic has limited where printed materials may be left (e.g., doctor's offices). There are alternatives but they need to be identified and then determine the best way to proceed. The committee plans to request a project request form at the Fall Assembly.

Additional Items:

- Group Records: Peggy d11 appreciates receiving all the updates for groups. It is easy to update information with the WSO. It makes it possible for the WSO to refer people where they need to go to find a meeting. The Tech Thought-Force is looking into ways for group e-mails that will maintain anonymity.
- An email will be sent to DRs reminding them to look for information at MNSA and include information on meetings on the calendar. GRs need to keep in contact with DRs to know what is happening.
- One person's flyer for this Assembly was blank inside. If there were others, please let Sherry GS know.
- Betty A Delegate for panel 58 was planning to be here today but ended up in the emergency room with her husband who is undergoing cancer treatment. Prayers were requested.
- Mariah B. dr13 thanked those who donated gift cards to Alateens for literature.
- Kit S. was sent to a Zoom "waiting room" while a love gift was discussed as a thank you for serving as Panel 61 Delegate. The work of our Delegate requires a tremendous personal commitment of time, talent and comes with personal expenses.

Motion: Sally J d11 GR moved to honor Panel 61 Delegate, Kit S., with a love gift of \$400. Gloria d11 GR seconded the motion. Results: Yes 89% No 8% Abstain 3%

Closing comments:

- Patty L. d9 GR said she has ten (10) pages of notes to organize and share with her group. She highlighted the need to raise funds for our Alateens and the importance of helping them transition to AI Anon. Although the weather outside was delightful, she is glad she spent the day at the Assembly.
- Carol S. d4 GR thanked Sherry GS for running an excellent meeting today.
- Ute Z. reminded us to send articles for the newsletter by the end of this month.
- Mariah B. reminded us of the AMIAS training for Alateen sponsors at 10 AM tomorrow.
- Kit B. reminded GRs to keep sending changes about virtual meetings to him so he can update the Mpls website.
- Poll was taken regarding future Area events, and preferences on how them once we are on the other side of COVID-19. Results were: In person only 2% Zoom only 9% Hybrid 89%

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Scott, Area Secretary