

SPRING ASSEMBLY OF THE MINNESOTA SOUTH AREA (MNSA)

April 2, 2022

The Assembly was held virtually via Zoom and called to order by the Chair, Sherry GS. After a moment of silence, the Serenity Prayer was recited.

The Twelve Traditions was read by Donna T. d1 AAP GR.

The Concepts of Service were read by Gerri A. d2 GR.

The General Warranties were read by Julie L. d15 GR.

Dianne G. POC dr15 reviewed Concept 5 reminding us of the importance of gaining information by clearly communicating expectations to maximize results. Cheryl C DEL37 d8 GR shared greater insights into Concept 6.

Welcome: Sherry GS, Chair, thanked everyone for attending today's assembly. She used the analogy of having ducks in a row that creates a vision of smooth sailing. For ducks to stay in a row, lots of work occurs below the surface of the water. The MN South Area is doing remarkable things because of all the work being conducted by all our various committees.

GRs who attended the orientation this morning shared what they learned about substantial unanimity.

MOTION: Karen B d11 GR moved that substantial unanimity be seventy-five percent (75%) of those eligible to vote today. Veronica F. ds13 GR seconded the motion. Results: 32 voted Yes

Secretary Report:

Roll Call:

All Officers

Delegate and Alternate Delegate

Coordinators: Archives, Alateen, Area Alateen Process Person, Assembly Activities, Group Records, Asst GRC, Forum, Literature, Newsletter, Public Outreach Absent: Website

Action Committee Chairs: GR Orientation, Membership Outreach Absent: Calendar, Fellowship, Group Services, Public Outreach

Liaisons Absent: Mpls Information Services, St. Paul Intergroup

District Representatives: 1, 4, 8, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17

Group Representatives: Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18 Absent: 6, 14, 17, 19, 20, 21

Past Delegates or Alternate Delegates: 28, 37, 49, 52 Absent: All Others

The minutes of the Fall Assembly were reviewed.

MOTION: Sally J LIT d12 GR moved to accept the minutes as presented. Cheryl C. DEL 37 d8 GR seconded the motion. Results: 100% Yes 0% No 0% Abstain

Open Positions: Public Outreach Chair and Calendar Coordinator. Sherry GS reviewed the duties and asked anyone interested to contact her. It was shared that the policy manual does not require a calendar be produced every year.

Open Positions: Public Outreach Chair and Calendar Editor. Sherry GS reviewed the duties and asked anyone interested to contact her. It was shared that the Calendar Editor isn't a position listed in the Policy and Procedure Manual; however, the calendar was added as a function of the Membership Outreach Action Committee several years ago.

Action Committee Meetings: Sherry GS shared information on the committees' scope of work to aid those that needed to select where they wanted to take part following the break.

Break: Upon return, members shared their favorite signs of spring and then moved to the various Action Committee breakout rooms.

Treasurer's Report: Mark P shared the budgeted vs. actual results for 2021. Contributions were \$3,317.65 less than budgeted after excluding the earmarked contributions of \$4,104.00 for Alateens to attend Midlake. Regarding expenditures, \$3050 was sent to the WSO for equalized expenses but we also received a refund from them for the previous year. Only \$3,700 was spent for Folderol since it was held virtually due to the pandemic. The PO Box was not paid until 2022 so it was not included in 2021 expenses. A computer was bought for use by the Treasurer for use in producing the financials. Three newsletters were charged to the 2021 budget as one from 2020 wasn't paid until 2021. Bottom line shows a surplus of \$703.92. YTD financials for 2022 through February show contributions of \$2,009.04 which is \$600 under budget. After paying the PO Box expense for 2021 of \$188 and area calendar expenses of \$864.93 there is a surplus of \$864.93 after 2 months. No bills have been presented for the website. The Area is not able to receive contributions via credit card currently. Appeal letters are sent twice a year and one will be going out soon. Electronic contributions may be possible in the future. Scott T recently gave the overhead projector to Mark P. The fidelity bond for the treasurer is in place but the \$170 was not expensed in 2021.

Motion: Gloria K d11 GR moved to accept the Treasurer's reports as presented. Gretchen F d13 GR seconded the motion. Results: 31 Yes 0 No 1 Abstain

Lunch

Alternate Delegate: Pat P ADL d11 said email requests looking for in-person Al-Anon and Alateen meetings have increased. He was elated to announce Mark A d2 has agreed to be the Alateen Coordinator for Panel 61. Mark A AAC d2 and Donna APP d1 GR held an AMIAS training March 12th with 21 attending and the second training session is scheduled for April 9th at 1:30 pm on Zoom. Kit B agreed to post the training information link on the website. One new AMIAS attended the March annual recertification training. The Alateen Safety Behavior Manual has not been approved by the WSO but we are in the queue and approval is expected.

Incorporation Implementation Taskforce: Jim L IITFC d13 GR and Theresa D adr15 served as directors and reported that MN South Area is incorporated as of November 1, 2021, as a nonprofit 501(c)(3).

Mark P TRS d13 was the other director serving on this taskforce. The Articles of Incorporation and the Bylaws were drafted to coincide with the MNSA Service Manual wherever possible but legal requirements in MN and/or the IRS sometimes made it impossible to align perfectly. A PowerPoint was used to review the details of the Bylaws. The goal was to minimize interference with the Area's Service Manual and minimize duties needed to remain incorporated. The Area is now officially known as Minnesota South Area AFG, Inc.

Bank accounts, liability insurance, contracts, etc. will list the corporation instead of requiring trusted servants to use personal information to conduct business on behalf of the Area. Going forward, the 5 Area Officers for each Panel will also serve on the corporate board with the ability to appoint 2 additional directors at-large. Terms are limited to 3 years or as they align with their assigned Panel; it is possible to be re-elected for a second 3-year term. Elections will be held after the nominating committee vets candidates and recommends a slate to the Assembly. Some venues are requesting liability insurance and it is hoped a rider on the Area's policy will allow groups to obtain insurance coverage. Board members may resign at any time. The law office address will be used to accept service and will keep a copy of all board minutes. Requests to read board minutes can be made to the Area Secretary or Area Chair. It was decided not to have GRs vote on any changes to directors as notifying them of a special meeting would be burdensome. Area Officers that will be serving on the corporate board were elected to be trusted servants. Our purpose is to serve families of alcoholics, not create a lot of work to protect volunteers who perform duties for the Area. If Officers act with fiduciary prudence they are protected by the corporation from being sued personally. Double-headed management will be avoided having the elected Area Chair serve as President of the corporate board. Once the Bylaws are approved the Area Service Manual will be updated. Contributions will now be tax deductible. The Bylaws can be changed in the future if needed.

MOTION: Jim L IITFC d13 GR moved to accept the Bylaws as presented. Sally J LIT d12 GR seconded the motion. Results: 31 Yes 1 No 2 Abstain

Delegate report: Kit S DEL d11 thanked everyone for attending and for trusting in him to be our delegate. The theme for the upcoming WSO delegate meeting is "Enhancing our recovery through abundance, unity and understanding". The Al-Anon service manual has been updated and is now published in Spanish and French in addition to English. The organization chart on pages 176-177 has changed. The link to the manual is <https://www.al-anon.org/pdf/P2427.pdf>. The Global Electronic Area will have a delegate at the conference, increasing the number of delegates from 67 to 68. Contributions to the WSO were around \$5M with expenses exceeding contributions by more than \$76K. Most expenses result from supplying needed services to AFG groups. The average cost to support an AFG group is \$300. Fifty-five percent (55%) of groups send contributions to the WSO while forty-five percent (45%) do not. The average contribution is around \$140.25. Last year and 2020 were the first 2 years since 1954 that contributions to the WSO exceeded money earned from literature sales, thanks to COVID. The WSO does tremendous work with little funds.

A 6-month lead versus 3 months to get ordered literature results from a combination of a paper shortage and a lack of printers and truckers. Volunteers are needed to be trusted servants. Ask yourself why/why not would you consider becoming a trustee. The WSO committees are also in need of volunteers. Someone from MN recently volunteered for a 1-year term. If you don't want to serve at the WSO level but could help the MN South Area please talk to Sherry. Our Area will be asked to help

organize the 2023 North Central Delegate conference to be held next March. Decisions are needed soon about whether we want to include/exclude electronic only meetings into the MN South Area. There are lots of things to be considered and it can't be left to Group Services to make the call. Currently, all electronic only groups that apply to the WSO are put in the Global Electronic Area. Send your ideas, questions, and concerns to Kit S at togetherwecanmakeit108@gmail.com. His delegate report will be a hybrid meeting in St. Peter at 9 am on June 18th. The conference is not accepting love gifts, cards, trinkets, etc. at this year's conference. Kit S will gladly accept emails and expressions of appreciation.

Love gift: Sherry GS asked Kit S to leave the meeting temporarily so we might discuss a love gift to him for being our delegate.

MOTION: Sally J LIT d2 GR moved to approve a love gift of \$400 to Kit S as delegate for Panel 61 to the WSO meeting April 26-30, 2022. Cheryl C DEL37 d8 GR seconded the motion. Results 29 Yes 2 No

It was decided not to increase the love gift even with inflation as all travel and meals are already paid. The love gift is purely for use by the delegate as a token of appreciation for attending the weeklong series of meetings.

Break: Following the break, favorite Al-Anon tools were shared.

Technology Thought-force: Russ F ARC TThFC d11 GR shared an informative PowerPoint presentation on all the work performed to date. (Please see presentation attached to the minutes.)

MOTION: Russ F ARC TThFC d11 GR moved to approve the creation of a Technology Work-Force Group for a trial period of 5 years that will address and recommend the use of technology regarding:
1. How to encourage members to maintain a safe presence with regard to communication. 2. Ways to reach newcomers. 3. Methods to increase participation at all service levels. 4. Ways to encourage contributions to all service arms within MNSA. 5. Develop plans to help families of alcoholics and by creating a sustainable future. Gloria K d11 GR seconded the motion. Results: 30 Yes 0 No 0 Abstain

Volunteers interested in technology and with lots of ideas will be needed to serve on this new Work-Force Group. This group will assist AFG to implement technology to allow for productive hybrid meetings. Emails, texts, and other forms of technology continue to grow in popularity.

Electronic Meetings: Kit S DEL d11 and Pat P ADL d11 identified decisions that need to be made regarding electronic only groups to be a part of MNSA. The 4th Tradition allows for autonomy for each group. We would love to have the groups in our Area but there are issues to be considered. New Hampshire has created an outline to assist with decision-making. How will groups be identified so we can ask them to join us as the WSO automatically assigns AFGs that meet electronically to the Global Electronics Area. AFG electronic only groups must formally request to change Areas after they are accepted. As pandemic concerns subside, some hybrid groups may split as some members won't want to pay for Zoom while others won't want to pay for rent. What we don't want to do is try to solve problems that don't exist and may never exist. Kit B aGRS DEL28 d8 GR has already been asked about how to split a group. District 4 has an electronic only group that was assigned to the Global Electronic Area but they are using the District's Zoom account.

Action Committee Reports:

Fellowship Communication: Charley B FOR d11 GR reported that the group is working on a bookmark that can be shared electronically. A draft should be ready by the end of the month. It will be included in a future newsletter and on the website and can be used to welcome newcomers and increase fellowship.

Group Services: Pat P ADL d11 reiterated how grateful he is to have Mark A in the Alateen Coordinator role and that AMIAS recertification training is happening. Russ F ARC TThFC d11 GR is doing a fantastic job getting our records recorded electronically and a found suitable storage arrangement for past Area records. Group Services is preparing for electronic meetings or groups close to MN borders that want to become a member of our Area. Efforts are being made to get DRs for all districts in our Area. Current DRs want to share their experience, strength, and hope with other potential DRs because service is a key component to recovery. Group Services is considering a workshop at a future Assembly. Rosters are needed to be able to contact folks that may be interested. FYI- Anyone who needs a roster can make a request directly to the Area Secretary. The roster will appear in the spring newsletter but mailing addresses will not be provided due to confidentiality. Mailings to Al-Anon meetings often aren't seen if the group is meeting virtually. There was discussion as to whether the Website and Technology Coordinators should be a part of Group Services and the Alateen Coordinator should move to Public Outreach so both Alateen Coordinators are not on the same action committee.

Membership Outreach: Karin B MOAC d8 said that issues with bulk mail caused problems with the delivery of the fall newsletter and there have been some problems with sending it via email. The Assembly Activities Coordinator hasn't had much to do since we have been attending virtually. The website coordinator was unable to attend today's Assembly. Both St. Paul Intergroup and Mpls Area Information Services could benefit from volunteers to assist with answering the phone and literature sales. Today's project intended to align AFG meeting information with the WSO and the 2 websites for our Area but time and lack of information prevented completion; however, some progress was made with districts 4,11 and 15.

Public Outreach: Mark P TRS d13 said 17 were in attendance in their small group today. They are putting together packages of information to send to professionals, e.g., clergy, mental health providers, social workers, etc. The WSO has many tools to assist them. Breakfast gatherings to share the information is being considered if funds allow.

District updates:

Kate H dr17 said more people are attending meetings in-person and virtually. They want to revitalize Alateen and plan to contact school counselors. They will be hosting a weekend event soon.

Sheila O. co-dr16 announced a district fun day next Saturday, April 9th, in St. Peter. The cost will be \$5/person with speakers and lots of fun.

Theresa D adr15 reported that most groups have restarted in-person meetings; however, 2 appear to be defunct. Their March 5th fun day was well attended. Currently, there are no Alateen meetings but they hope to get them restarted.

Jen J dr12 said half of their meetings are in-person and the other are virtual with only a few hybrid meetings. There are no Alateen meetings currently.

Michelle W GRO dr11 shared that they are hosting 4 in-person events at the Calvary Church and they continue to meet on Zoom. Fifty people are enrolled, with average attendance 15 to 20, the second and fourth Saturdays of every month. They have 3 active committees. One works on sharing experience, strength and hope and documenting the stories shared. The other committees are working on conflict resolution and the 4th Step.

Sheila P dr8 reported they do not have an active Alateen meeting. The district did purchase a Zoom account. In-person meetings are well attended every week at the Uptown House. They hosted a writing workshop to help others share their stories of experience, strength, and hope. June 22nd there will be a Zoom session on sponsorship. The district set up a Pay Pal account.

Su S dr4 said their district will be hosting a speaker meeting and they have invited Kit S DEL to come and speak in April. They are aiding AFG groups with how to reach out to the public with printed and electronic resources.

Diane K d9 GR bravely stepped forward to share her takeaways from today's Assembly that she intends to share with her group.

Miscellaneous:

Sherry GS announced the next AWSC meeting will be held Saturday, August 6th. It is still uncertain if we will be ready to meet in-person or at least offer a hybrid possibility. When asked about the Alateen earmarked funds she said the Policy Review Committee will be reviewing this and will report at the AWSC conference in August.

Erin P d11 GR enlightened us with great news that the MN Library for the Blind has Al-Anon literature available. If anyone knows of someone with a visual disability be sure to let them know. If they aren't registered with the MN Library for the Blind Erin would be more than happy to assist them.

Gloria K d11 GR asked if the WSO is in greater need of contributions than our Area. In 1951, Lois W recommended each member send \$1 twice a year to the WSO. MN South Area does have a prudent reserve but it won't last long. Both the WSO and our Area need contributions to allow us to serve families of alcoholics. Expenses exceeded income for our Area in 2021 and the trend continues in 2022 averaging a net loss of \$300/month. Kit B aGRC DEL28 d8 GR suggested members send \$1 to \$10 per year to celebrate every year in the program. Mariellyn K aGR said her group reserves a percentage of each week's contribution for the various service arms and sends contributions quarterly.

Sherry GS announced that the first Board of Directors meeting for Minnesota South Area AFG, Inc. will immediately follow the close of today's Assembly after a quick break. Officers and Directors must attend but all are welcome that wish to stay on Zoom.

Pat P ADL d11 closed the Assembly with the Al-Anon declaration.

Area Secretary,

Linda S