

Panel 61

MNSA World Service Committee Meeting

February 4, 2023

After a moment of silence, the meeting opened the Serenity Prayer

Robin R dr2 read the 12 Traditions; Wendy M adr2 shared the 12 Concepts of Service; Mark A AAC d2 recited the General Warranties. Dianne G dr15 volunteered to speak on Concept 9 and Mark A AAC d2 offered to share thoughts on Concept 10 at the April Assembly.

Welcome: Chair, Sherry GS d11, welcomed everyone joining today's virtual AWSC. Although the hope was to offer this gathering as a hybrid meeting, it wasn't possible for several reasons. The April Assembly will also be virtual; however, it is the intention to have both the AWSC and Assembly offered as hybrids in the second half of this year. Sally J, our literature coordinator, passed away since our last AWSC meeting. Sally is remembered for her contributions of wisdom, love, and kindness in Area service.

Roll call:

Present: All Officers

Delegate and Alternate Delegate

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

Action Committee Chairs: Group Services, Membership Outreach, Public Outreach

District Representatives and Alternates: 1, 2, 4, 8, 11, 12, 13, 15, 17

Past Delegates and Alternates: Panel 28, Panel 52, Panel 43 Alt/Panel 55, Panel 55, Panel 55 Alt/Panel 58

Other: GRs

The Chair led a discussion on what constitutes substantial unanimity.

Motion: Pat P ADL d11 moved that substantial unanimity be determined by two-thirds of those voting at today's AWSC conference. Barb U GSAC d11 seconded the motion. Results: 100% voted Yes

The Secretary reviewed the minutes from the last AWSC meeting.

Motion: Ute Z NWS d11 moved to approve the Secretary's minutes as presented. Monica F dr1 GR seconded the motion. Results: 100% voted Yes

Motion: Kit S DEL d11 moved that all Assistant Coordinators be granted voice and vote for today's session. Su S dr4 seconded the motion. Results: 100% voted Yes

Treasurer's Report: Mark P. TRS d13 reported there was a shortfall in donations of \$2,031.14. However, trusted servants only spent \$545.94, meeting/services underspent \$1,253.17, overhead underspent

\$1,753.32, projects left \$700.32, and there were no expenses for incorporation. The 2022 budget forecasted a shortfall of \$7,259 but the result was a \$102.73 surplus. The balance sheet reflects a balance of \$36,489.89 in the bank account. Liabilities of \$4,104 for Alateen Midlake, \$8,000 for Folderol, and \$2,025 for the website totaling \$14,129.00. Total equities of \$22,360.89 combined with liabilities for a grand total of \$36,489.89 to balance with assets. The books were audited and found correct. Discussion included the need for the Finance and Policy Review Committees to determine if the Area will continue to accept earmarked donations for a specific cause, e.g. Alateen. The WSO does not accept earmarked contributions. It is expected the Midlake event for Alateens will be held in 2023 so these funds will be spent.

Motion: Mark A AAC d2 moved to accept the Treasurer's 2022 audited financial reports as presented. Peggy W GRC d11 seconded the motion. Results: 25 Yes 0 No 0 Abstain

North Central Regional Delegates Meeting: Mary H DEL55 d10 and Betty A AAC DEL58 d16 are co-chairing the event as MNSA is the host Area.

- Areas included in the North Central Region are: MN South, MN North, Iowa, WI & Upper Michigan, Illinois North, Illinois South, Michigan, Indiana, and Ohio.
- Purpose of the meeting is to share experience, strength and hope to help new delegates understand the role they will play at the WSO Conference.
- MNSA first participated in the Northwest Conference in 1985. In 1990, MNSA moved to the North Central Region.
- There are 9 Areas so we can expect to host every 9 years. MNSA hosted with MNNA in 1993. MNSA hosted in 2002, 2012 and will host the March 17-19, 2023 conference.
- Attendees range from 50 to 80 in number and include current delegates and alternates, trustees, officers, and others invited to attend according to prescribed guidelines.
- Attendees pay their own expenses. The Region pays the expenses for the Regional Trustee. MNSA does budget to cover some Regional Delegate Meeting (RDM) expenses including:
 - The WSO Delegate's expenses to the RDM will be paid.
 - Expenses of the immediate past Delegate, Alternate Delegate, and Chair will be partially reimbursed in equal amounts from the budget line created for that expense.
- Agenda includes welcome, games and introductions for Friday, presentations and business meeting Saturday, and speakers Saturday night and Sunday morning. There will be AI Anon meetings, snacks, meals, and sharing.
- Mark P will serve as Treasurer, Linda S as Secretary, Pat P is handling Registration, Kit S Hotel and Meals, and Sherry GS and Pat P are working on Hospitality. Sherry GS and Pat P welcome any help from districts with love gifts or any other hospitality offerings.
- MNSA Officers and Coordinators may attend but have no voice or vote. Sherry GS will be sending an invitation to those eligible in the near future if they desire to attend at their expense.

Open positions:

- The Literature coordinator position is open and is a one-year commitment since Panel 61 will finish up at Folderol 2024. The Calendar Editor position has not been filled and is also open to anyone filling called to serve.

- Sherry GS encouraged everyone to consider serving on Panel 64. Panel 61 completed the incorporation of our Area, began a new website, and discovered how to offer virtual and hybrid meetings. As a result, the next Panel should have more availability for directly serving AI Anon members.
- There is a resume form to complete if you are interested in serving on the next Panel. It is a good way to see your progress with regard to service and growing your AI Anon program. There will be workshops at Folderol to assure a successful transfer of duties.
- A big thank you to Tracy B adr11 and Wendy M adr2 for volunteering to chair Folderol 2024.
- The Policy Review Committee is proceeding without a chair and are taking turns leading meetings. This committee will have a report ready for the August AWSC meeting.

Action Committee Thought-force: Karin B MOAC d8 chaired this thought-force that included Betty A, Lynn M, Mary H, Russ F, and Pat P.

- Action Committees were introduced in 2002 and it is believed that they did increase participation. Their inclusion aligned with what the WSO offered at the time; however, the WSO has since stopped using Action Committees.
- Pros, Cons, and What is and isn't Working with Action Committees was reviewed.
- The Thought-Force is recommending a change from Action Committees to Workshops.
- Using the term Action Committee is misleading as they are one-time events and the membership changes at each conference depending on who joins the breakout session.
- There was often overlap between the Action Committees as similar projects would be suggested. Hybrid meetings created new challenges for success.
- Workshop topics would be decided in advance and could be included in the invitation flyer for the Assembly.
- The recommendation is to ask the GRs to consider Workshops as an alternative on a trial basis. Coordinators can still decide to form Committees outside of the Assembly to accomplish predetermined tasks.
- It is unknown if there will be a need to add a Workshop Coordinator position to the Area.
- Suggestions for Workshops: hosting an Assembly, IT needs for hybrid meetings, how to obtain a checking account, etc. International is a good source for ideas on workshop topics.

After each Action Committee met for 30 minutes to discuss the Thought-force proposal, a straw poll was conducted and the majority present were in favor of recommending Workshops to replace Action Committees. A motion was not necessary for Sherry GS to include this on the agenda to allow Action Committees to weigh in on the decision to change at the April Assembly.

Delegate report: Kit S DEL d11

- Kit reported the WSO theme for 2023 is Love, Laugh, and Grow Together, published in English, Spanish, and French.
- The AI Anon International Conference will be meeting the end of June and early July in Albuquerque, NM. The invitation states that attendance can be either in person or virtually.
- Anyone interested in serving as MNSA Literature Coordinator will get access to AFG Connects.
- Sally J and Roger V, both who recently passed, were remembered for their many years of service to our Area. Condolences to their families and those who served along side them in AI Anon.

- All voting at the WSO conference will be electronic. As AI Anon continues to move towards the use of technology to support its work, more help will be needed. If you have talents in the technology area or know of others who would be willing to assist, please contact Russ F ARC TWGC d11 GR.
- The Board of Directors welcomed Mariellyn K as a new director replacing Jim L. Jim was recognized and thanked for all his work getting the Area incorporated which included the initial writing of the Article of Incorporation and its By-laws.

Alternate Delegate Report: Pat P ADL d11

- Thanks to the COVID pandemic, there has been a huge spike in Electronic Only meetings. To support these groups, the WSO created the Global Electronics Area.
- Electronic Only meetings are automatically placed in the Global Electronics Area unless an Area has procedures in place to accept and serve these groups.
- At the Assembly last fall, the GRs voted to accept Electronic Only groups so a Task-Force was created to document the procedures. (See attached)
- The proposed procedures were shared on how hybrid groups in MN South that want to split into In-person and Electronic Only meetings will all be allowed to remain in MNSA, if desired. The procedures also accommodate newly formed Electronic Only meetings that have certain requirements for a presence in MNSA territory.
- The procedures are not policy and may be changed if GRs have recommendations. To formally adopt the procedures there needs to be a vote taken at the Assembly.
- **MOTION: Russ F ARC TWGC d11 GR moved to accept the Electronic Only Task-Force's recommendation for the Electronic Only meeting procedures to be presented to the GRs at the 2023 Spring Assembly. The motion was seconded by Su S dr4. Results: Yes 21 No 0 Abstain 0**
- Kit S DEL d11 will share this update with the WSO in hopes that they will add MNSA to the drop-down menu when Electronic Only groups want to join our Area. The WSO may require we wait until the GRs vote which will further complicate allowing current MNSA groups that transition to Electronic Only avoid automatic assignment to the Global Electronics Area.

Website: Sasha A WEB d8 shared a Power Point presentation on the website being developed.

- WordPress was chosen as the basic format for the website.
- The presentation included:
 - Timeline for completion
 - Audiences for the website
 - Success factors to include: Sticking to the original scope of the project; Area representation and alignment.
 - Need for a committee for redesign
 - Site map example for people looking for meetings near them
 - There will be sections for: About AI Anon; Meetings; Member Information; Alateen; Literature; Contact Us; How to make contributions; privacy; and District related content.
- Area36.org and MN North websites were used for ideas for our new website.
- Sasha's final slide was a list of ways members can volunteer to assist.

St. Paul Intergroup Request by Bob N for an Al Anon billboard.

- The billboard is 85-90% refined. It is about carrying the message to others. Suggested wording: Troubled by Someone's Drinking? Al Anon is here for you.
- A website will be listed for contact. Volunteers will be needed to accept phone calls between 9 AM and 9 PM.
- Three different vendors were contacted about the project. There are restrictions on placement because the word alcohol appears.
- The recommendation is to commit to the billboard for 3 terms of 4 weeks each for a total of 12 weeks.
- Placement will be in St. Paul in high traffic area on Snelling Avenue not far from Interstate 94. Billboards on highways and/or electronic billboards were cost prohibitive.
- Total costs will be \$6,500 to \$6,800. Intergroup has committed \$3,000, District 8 \$2,000 and it is hoped the Area will agree to fund the balance.
- There is a savings of around \$50 in taxes if allowed to use the Area's 501(c)(3) number. The decision would need to be made at the Assembly as the Board of Directors for the non-profit corporation merely ratifies what is voted upon by the GRs. If the GRs decide to amend the budget and participate in this initiative it makes it easier to justify using the Area's non-profit status. Nothing in the by-laws prevent the use of the 501(c)(3) for this purpose.
- There is no history of success using billboards but information will be gathered from this project for future considerations. Mpls used a billboard at least 20 years ago and from memory it seemed worthwhile. The billboard needs to be in addition to other efforts to spread the word.
- **Motion: Kit B aGRC DEL28 d8 moved to recommend the Assembly approve \$1800 to fund the billboard project presented by St. Paul Intergroup and allow use of the Area's 501(c)(3) status. Mark A AAC d2 seconded the motion. Results: Yes 22 No 5 0 Abstain Motion carried.**

Technology Work Group: Russ F ARC TWGC d11 GR shared a PowerPoint presentation reporting the progress made on the 5 objectives the Task-Force was challenged to accomplish. The objectives were once stated as goals but it was decided if the objectives are met it will accomplish our ultimate goal of helping families of alcoholics. Instead of best practices, the word good is being used as what is best today may not be tomorrow due to the pace of change with technology. (See PowerPoint)

- Use of technology can never be 100% secure for protecting anonymity. This is true at meetings that are in-person as buildings have cameras and members have smart phones.
- There are not secure ways to make donations using the current websites.
 - It is important that contributions are from members only.
- There are challenges with hybrid meetings if held outstate. Will internet connections be an issue?
- Not every group needs a Zoom account. How might sharing accounts work?
- Accomplishing objectives 1-4 should accomplish the 5th objective. This is not about the results as much as it is a journey.

Agenda Items for the April Assembly:

- GR Orientation
- Reports of the Secretary and Treasurer
- Action Committee Thought-Force
- Love gifts
- Technology Taskforce

- Electronic Only Meetings
- Website presentation
- Billboard recommendation from Intergroup
- Folderol
- Recap of the North Central RDM meeting

Coordinator reports:

- Archivist: Russ F ARC d11 made an offer to AIS to store the Area's stuff and we would pay them storage fees but this was not possible as they do not have the space. There is a need to form a digitizing committee so we no longer need to store documents.
- Area Alateen Process: Donna T APP d1 said recertification training will occur on February 25 and March 18. Ten new AMIAS were brought onboard in 2022. Nineteen of the 42 AMIAS that need to recertify completed their training last October so 23 remain.
- Alateen: Mark A AAC d2 is retiring in 3 weeks so he will have more volunteer time. There were 13 Alateen meetings and 7 disbanded during COVID. Fridley plans to restart their Alateen meeting. It is predicted 6.4 adults are affected by someone's drinking; therefore, there should be many more attending Al Anon than AA.
- Group Records: Peggy W GRC d11 due to changes with Electronic Only meetings the changes taking place are astronomical. Kit B aGRC DEL28 d8 has been a tremendous help. She should be contacted with all changes and it only takes about 4 minutes to update the WSO.
- Newsletter: Ute Z NWS d11 reminded everyone that she gets mailing information from Group Records so make sure Peggy W GRC d11 is informed of changes so newsletters are received. Thirty percent of groups registered with the WSO do not have an email address on file. Kit B aGRC DEL28 d8 can extract data from WSO files with mailing or email addresses so let him know if you want him to do it for you. It is critical DRs get group changes reported to Group Records timely. Please consider writing a submission for the newsletter!
- Public Outreach: Gloria K and Judy J POAC d18 GR have met but it is too early to have a report.

Action Committee Chairs: No reports.

District Representative updates:

- District 2: Robin R dr2 will have a flyer announcing a seminar on April 22 and will forward to Kit B, Sasha W, Intergroup, and Mpls Information Services. There were 111 new members last year; beginner meetings on Saturday at 9:30 AM were restarted successfully.
- District 4: Su S dr4 reported there are 7 In-person meetings, 2 Electronic Only and 3 Hybrid. Kit S DEL d 11 presented a session on how best to serve, sharing guidelines used by other groups. They coordinated lists with other local groups so they could share literature and resource information as part of public outreach. Also, the district had someone speak about our literature. They have restarted open speaker meetings. The district is supporting some new groups financially. They are trying to get an Alateen meeting restarted in March.
- District 8: Sheila P dr8 reported they are meeting the 2nd Thursday of each month. The district has a Zoom account their groups may use. Last year, they hosted 4 workshops. The district had a virtual potluck in January. There will be an Intergroup speaker meeting February 25th. July 16th there is a picnic at Cherokee Park planned. Beginner meetings every Saturday are going well. A Forum writing workshop was held and the 11 participants were given a paid subscription to the Forum.

- District 11: Tracy B adr11 reported they meet every quarter in-person at the nature center. The district voted to contribute to the WSO, Intergroup, MNSA and Alateen. Workshops offered: How to tell your story; Relationships; Intro to 4th Step.
- District 12: Jen J dr 12 said an in-person meeting on Mondays has been added. One hybrid meeting is splitting into an Electronic Only meeting and In-person meeting. They have 4 In-person, 2 Hybrid and 1 Electronic Only. To restart newcomer meetings. Ordered several copies of Al Anon Faces Alcoholism.
- District 13: Colleen CD dr13 said the district meets every month on Saturday via Zoom. They have 13 groups but only 11 active; 7 groups have GRs and 3 do not have GRs. Five meetings are In-person, 5 are Hybrid and 1 is Electronic Only. Alateen has been tough to get restarted. Jim L has offered to attend groups to present on sponsorship. Mark A AAC d2 is willing to present on Alateen. They have a volunteer for public outreach.
- District 15: Dianne G dr15: They have 7 inactive groups, more than they have active. They held their first district meeting virtually but it didn't affect participation level. The first Saturday in March the district is sponsoring a Fun Day in Rockford. First resumed In-person speaker meeting offered dessert and beverage instead of potluck.

Miscellaneous:

- Judy J POAC d18 GR may be able to help identify a contact for the 4 groups in Willmar.

Linda S SEC d7 GR read the Al Anon declaration and the meeting closed at 3:07 PM.

Area Secretary,

Linda S