

Alcoholics Anonymous Southern Area 21 Assembly
Sunday, Sept. 13, 2020
Via Zoom (Meeting ID: 782 3527 3788, passcode: 962918)
Minutes

The Area Committee Meeting was held Aug. 18 2020 at 7 pm via Zoom; meeting ID 989 3952 0189; password 001155

Pat W. opened the committee meeting with a request that each officer be prepared to give a brief (3-4 minutes) of their duties, skills and time commitment required for the office. Following the DCM reports, Roland W. (Dist. 12 DCM) brought up the issue of collaboration between Area and member districts. A District committee chair had approached Area committee chairs requesting funds to support their District committee's activities and this request had been referred back to him as DCM by the Area committee chairs. There was discussion about the difference between collaboration, literature support and financial support.

The Area's Zoom account was discussed, in particular its use for the September election Assembly. At the July Assembly, opening a Zoom account for the Area was approved. The current Zoom plan is for less than 100 participants. An upgrade for more than 100 but less than 500 can be purchased for \$65 a month. Ellen K. (Dist. 19 DCM) moved to purchase the expanded plan for one month for the Sept. Assembly, Tim C. (Website Chair) seconded the motion. Motion carried.

There were no agenda items from the Area Committee meeting. The meeting adjourned at 7:57 pm.

Pat W. (Area Chair) called the Area Assembly to order at 9:00 am with a moment of quiet time followed by the Serenity Prayer and the A.A. Declaration of Unity. Ellen K. (Dist. 19 DCM) read the A.A. Preamble. Gordon N. (Alternate Delegate) read the short form of Concepts 7-9.

Roll Call: Area 21 Panel 69 Officers Present

Area Chair: Pat W.; Delegate to the GSC: Bobby D. Alternate Delegate/Alt Chair: Gordon N.; Recording Secretary: Rosemary T., Treasurer: Tom H.

Roll Call: Area 21 Committee Chairs Present

Archives: Carl M.; Corrections: Ed H. & Leo Stork; C.P.C.: Rose H.; P.I.: Ron J.; Grapevine: Dennis S.; Literature: Pat K. G.S.R. Workshop: Steve S.; Treatment: Dick B.; Structure and Policy: Ed M.; Area Webmaster / Technology: Tim C.

Roll Call: Past Delegates Present

Bill B. (Panel 43) Carl M. (Panel 55); Fariba M. (Panel 61); Mike F. (Area 38, Panel 53); Becky B. (Panel 63); Paula E. (Panel 65)

Recording Secretary Report

Rosemary T. gave a summary of the duties and responsibilities of the Recording Secretary. She then read the old and new business sections of the July 2020. By consensus the minutes were approved.

Registrar's Report

Ann S. gave a summary of the duties and responsibilities of the Area Registrar. She reported that the GSO database was not yet functioning, so she could not generate district reports to send to DCMs.

Treasurer's Report

Tom H. gave a summary of the duties and responsibilities of the Treasurer. He then reported that as of June the Area's balance was \$15,697.65. Since then there have been expenses of \$545 (postage stamps, archives and A/V equipment storage), deposits totaling \$2,197.27, for and ending balance as of Sept. 1 2020 of 17,349.91 (actual balance \$17,217.07). Less the Area's prudent reserve (1/2 the 2020 total budget amount), this resulted in an operating balance of \$97.07.

Tom announced that he is looking for input from committee chairs in formulating a 2021 Area budget that will be voted on at the Dec. 2020 assembly. Discussion followed. Frank (GSR Dist. 17) move to approve the treasurer's report; Steve S. (GSR Workshop Chair) seconded the motion. Motion carried

Area Delegate Report

Bobby D. gave a summary of the duties of the Area Delegate. He then gave the following report: I have had the privilege of giving my General Service Conference Report to the Area and began attending the local district meetings to do the same. I've been glad to have my friend Gordon.

On Saturday, August 15, I was able to participate in the very first virtual Illinois State Conference on Zoom. The day-long event featured AA and Al-Anon speakers from Virginia and Illinois, as well as inspiring talks from Jeff W. of our General Service Office, and Terry B., chair emeritus of our General Service Board. I was genuinely pleased to see several people from our area participating in the panel discussions this year on the topics: AA in a Digital World, and AA in Digital Spaces, dealing with anonymity and the 11th tradition. There was a lot to consider, and I found the topics to be very helpful.

There were also presentations on AA Archives, Area Service, and some very interesting and entertaining skits that folks from Area 19 put on, as well.

I believe this year's organizers had their hands full trying to switch everything over to virtual, since during the months leading up to the Conference, many people still held out hope that we would be somehow be past all the pandemic, and be able to meet in person. But at the time—between the rioting going on in Chicago, and the pandemic lockdown—that became impossible.

I commend the efforts put into advertising the event, and believe that it can be a success in the future, even if we may have to do some conferences virtually for a while. I will just say that the poor attendance had more to do with the apathy that I see among members who have found lots of other things to do on weekends, now that traditional get-togethers are out of the question.

I'm not sure what will happen, but I suspect that eventually, the pendulum will swing the other way. I urge all of you to consider taking some time to support the hard-working folks who put in a lot of time in planning and organizing these events.

Our Area will be hosting next year's Illinois State Conference, and we will be working, I'm sure, with our friends to the North, learning what works and what doesn't from them. Thank you.

He then presented the following report on the duties and responsibilities of the Area Delegate: First of all, I'd like to say that it has been a great honor to serve as delegate for Area 21, and I have been blessed by this experience in ways I never would have dreamed of. It has allowed me to focus on listening, on being careful to put my opinions and desires aside, and to seek help from my Higher Power in ways I'd never had to before. I believe that God wanted to teach me some big lessons in humility in order to be useful to Him and to all of you.

I will say that under pre-pandemic conditions, this job is a very demanding one, not only because of the large amount of time and work involved, but because there is a lot of travel involved, as well. However, COVID-19 has changed all that dramatically. By contrast, after February of this year, all my travel has been virtual. But I have done plenty of that.

I believe the biggest challenge for the delegate is the amount of time spent in emails, zoom meetings, and phone calls. But I assure you that it is still tremendously rewarding. Here are the duties as they are outlined in our Service Manual.

Though the high point is the Conference meeting, the delegate's job goes on year-round and involves all aspects of the Conference structure. The delegate should:

- Attend the annual Conference meeting fully prepared. Immediately upon election, every delegate is put on the G.S.O. mailing list to receive Conference materials.
- Communicate the actions of the Conference to area committee members and encourage them to pass on this information, and the delegate's enthusiasm, to groups and to inter- groups/central offices. If an area is too large for the delegate to cover in person, he or she will ask area officers and committee members to share the load (and I might add that this is where I am grateful that I had an alternate delegate that was willing and eager to help me, both years.)
- Be prepared to attend all area and regional service meetings and assemblies applicable to his/her respective area. From these meetings, delegates come to better understand their own areas and can make suggestions for the Conference agenda. Here, too, they come in contact with A.A. members who might not be reached otherwise. (This responsibility includes attending the Conference of Delegates Past and Present, held in February, four Area Assemblies, the Illinois State Conference, Regional Forums, as well as sitting on the Illinois State Conference Policy Committee and attending any number of other area, district, and local events.
- Help area committees obtain financial support for the area and G.S.O.
- Provide leadership in solving local problems involving the A.A. Traditions. (And I might add that it's important to think carefully about giving an opinion. I believe a delegate's job is to ask questions and help folks find a solution that works for them.)
- Remind G.S.R.s to inform groups and individuals about AA Grapevine and Conference-approved literature.
- Cooperate with G.S.O. in obtaining information — for example, making sure that up-to-date information reaches G.S.O. in time to meet the deadline for each issue of the A.A. directory and helping carry out the triennial membership surveys (which have not taken place in a while).
- Visit groups and districts in the area whenever possible.
- Work closely with committee members and officers, sharing experience throughout the year. After G.S.R.s and committee members have reported on the Conference, learn from these A.A.s how groups and members have reacted.
- Assume added responsibility if the area chair and alternate chair are unable to serve. Or, if an area committee is not functioning effectively, the delegate may take an active role in remedying the situation.
- Keep the alternate delegate fully informed and active, so that the alternate can replace the delegate in an emergency (and this is no small thing, judging from my experience last year).
- Late in the second year of the term, work with newly elected delegates to pass along a basic knowledge of Conference proceedings and problems.

I want to thank you again, from the bottom of my heart, for allowing me to be of service to you. I especially want to thank my service Sponsor, Mike Foster, as well as our East Central Regional Trustee, Mark Everett, for their guidance, patience, and tremendous support. I also want to mention Past Delegates Paula Elliott, Becky Burden, and Fariba Murray for being my sounding boards and cheerleaders. I love you all very much. Just one last thing; be sure to get an extra cushion for your chair. You'll be glad you did!

Area Chair Report

Pat W. reported that he has been working with the Illinois State Conference Policy Committee. They have been revising their structures and procedures document. He has incurred some expenses for in person travel.

Alternate Delegate's Report

Gordon N. gave a summary of the duties of the Area Alternate Delegate. He then reported the following: I had opportunity to attend and participate in 2 district meetings recently. Both of them were done virtually. I want to share my report I gave to them:

I want to take a few minutes to hopefully encourage you all to “Keep on Keep’n on!” None of us could have projected what 2020 would be like. The good news is AA is still alive and well. We have adjusted and overcome the obstacles that were placed in front of us. I am truly amazed and impressed in our districts, area, GSO and AA as a whole. To me, it is as if we knew exactly what to do prior to the pandemic. Virtual meetings, conferences, district meetings, area assemblies and the like have kept us all informed. I believe we will continue to adapt and overcome all obstacles that are place in front of us. Just a few examples of what I have seen and been able to participate in: A multitude of Zoom Conference Call AA Meetings. Literally all over the world. Got to hear speakers from Australia, England, Scotland, Ireland and many cities across the US and Canada.

Participated in Zoom Conference Calls for planning committees. Many of those making the tough but necessary decisions to not meet in person.

Participated in Zoom Conference Calls for District Meetings. Hearing how groups are meeting online and their members carrying the message no matter what.

Participated in Zoom Conference Calls for our Area Assembly and Committee meeting. I must say we need to do a better job at communicating but overall we were able to have an informative assembly.

You have heard Bobby share about the first ever General Service Conference done virtually. How amazing is our fellowship that we can pull that off?

Let me end with this: I think it is more important than ever that we stay close to each other. Perhaps not face to face, but through emails, text messages, phone calls and of course via Zoom or whatever platform is used. It is vital for our recovery!!!

Officer Elections

Mark E. (East Central Regional Trustee) presided over the elections. He began by explaining the 3rd Legacy Procedure used for elections of AA Officers set out in the *A.A. Service Manual* (pages S21-S23). Tim C. (Area Webmaster) explained how the votes would be held using the polling feature in Zoom.

Delegate to the GSC: Gordon N. (Area Alternate Delegate) and Sally P. (GSR, Dist. 17) stood for the position. Discussion followed about the Area 21 Handbook’s section on officer elections. Any members of the Area Committee can stand office; any member can be nominated from the floor. The members of the Area Committee are: area officers, Area service committee chairs, DCMs (or their alternates if DCM is absent) and past delegates. GSRs are not members of the Area Committee and cannot stand for election as an area officer.

Gordon N. was elected by acclamation.

Alternate Delegate to the GSC: Tom H. (Area Treasurer) stood for election. Fariba M. (Panel 61 past delegate) nominated Dick B. (Treatment Chair); he declined the nomination. Robert S. (Dist. 18 Alt DCM) nominated Ellen K. (Dist. 19 DCM); she declined the nomination. Becky B. (past delegate) nominated Leo S. (Corrections Committee co-chair); he declined the nomination. Bobby D. (Area Delegate) nominated Ed. H. (Corrections co-chair); he declined the nomination. The candidate gave a brief statement of his qualifications and interest in serving.

Tom H. was elected by acclamation.

Area Chair: Pat K. (Literature Committee chair) stood for election. Tom H. nominated Rosemary T. (Recording Secretary); she accepted the nomination. Paula E. (past delegate) nominated Dick B. (Treatment Committee chair); he declined the nomination. Becky B. (past delegate) nominated Jennifer V. (Dist. 20 DCM); she declined the nomination. Shari D. (Dist. 6 GSR) nominated Ellen K. (Dist. 19 DCM); she declined the nomination. Mike F. (past delegate Area 38) nominated Ed M. (Structure and Policy Committee chair); he declined the nomination. Bobby D. (Area Delegate) nominated Jodi P. (Dist. 7 DCM); she declined the nomination. Each candidate gave a brief statement of their qualifications and interest in serving.

It was determined there were 35 eligible voters. On the first ballot, neither candidate had more than 2/3 majority. On the second ballot, Rosemary T. was elected with 68% of the vote.

Area Alternate Chair: Steve S. (GSR Workshop Chair) nominated Pat. K (Literature Committee chair); he accepted. Tom H. (Area Treasurer) nominated Ed. M. (Structure and Policy committee chair); he accepted. Each candidate gave brief statement of their qualifications and interest in serving.

It was determined there were 35 eligible voters. On the first ballot; neither candidate had more than 2/3 majority. On the second ballot, Ed M. was elected with 74% of the vote.

Recording Secretary: Jennifer V. (Dist. 20 DCM) stood for the office. She gave a brief statement of her qualifications and interest in the office.

Jennifer V. was elected by acclamation.

Registrar: Ann S. (Area Registrar) nominated Will H. (Dist. 6 GSR). An objection was raised that he was not a member of the Area Committee. But it was explained he was nominated from the floor. However, he declined the nomination. Steve S. (GSR Workshop Committee chair) stood for election. Pat W. (Dist. 7 GSR) nominated Jodi P. (Dist. 7 DCM); she accepted the nomination. Bobby D. (Area Delegate) nominated Shari D. (Dist. 6 GSR); she declined the nomination. Each candidate gave a brief statement on their qualifications and interest in the position.

Jodi P. was elected with 83% of the vote.

Treasurer: Steve S. (GSR Workshop Committee chair) stood for election. Carl M. (Panel 55 past delegate; Area Archivist) nominated Ellen K. (Dist. 19 DCM); she declined the nomination. Gordon N. (Alternate Delegate) nominated Arlene W. (Dist. 10 DCM); she declined the nomination. Paula E. (past delegate) nominated Pat W. (Dist. 7 GSR); he declined the position. Rose H. (CPC Committee chair) nominates Dennis S. (Grapevine Committee chair); he declines. Paula E. (Panel 65 past delegate) nominated Pat K. (Literature Committee chair); he declined the nomination. Pat W. (Area Chair, panel 67 past Delegate) nominated Ron J. (Public Information Committee Chair); he accepted the nomination. Each candidate gave a brief statement on their qualifications and interest in the position.

It was determined there were 32 eligible voters. On the first, second and third ballots, no candidate had a 2/3 majority. Sally P. (Dist. 17 GSR) made a motion to go to a hat draw rather than a 4th ballot. Frank (Dist. 11 GSR) seconded the motion. The vote was 19-13 in favor of the motion.

On the hat draw, Steve S. was chosen as Treasurer.

2021 GSC Trustees Nominee Election

Pat W. (Area Chair) announced that nominations for the East Central Regional Trustee position and the Trustee at Large for the US positions were both open. Paula E. (Panel 65 past Delegate) has expressed interest in these positions, but must be nominated by an Area. Bobby D. moved that the Area nominate her for these positions and she was nominated unanimously.

Regional Trustee Report

Mark E. gave a report on AAWS activities and his own as the East Central Regional Trustee. Before COVID 19, he traveled about 40 weekends a year to AA Assemblies, Conferences and Forums. Under COVID that travel is now all virtual. On AAWS activities, he reported that contributions are down, to 40-50% of pre COVID levels. Similarly, literature sales are down to 50-60% of pre-COVID levels. They have recently picked in volume because of a 10% discount on Big Book sales. AAWS has drawn \$3 million from its reserve fund. The Board has voted to cancel all in

person staff travel for 2021, cancelled in personal regional forms for 2021. They are also developing an early retirement plan for staff and will not fill vacant staff positions. Money was lost on the 2020 GSC conference due to late cancellation; the deposit paid the hotel for the 2020 was forfeited. As of the time of this report, no decision has been made on the final format for the 2021 GSC: 2 plans are formulated one for all virtual and one for in person. In finalizing the format, input from members is being solicited.

GSR Introductions: there were 7 GSRs present.

Old Business

Area Inventory: Will H. (Ad Hoc Committee Chair) reported that he has compiled the results of the inventory and seeking direction from the Area as to how to proceed with acting on the results of the inventory. Discussion followed. Will suggested that the Registrar could distribute the results by email. Tom H. suggested that if that happened, perhaps inventory items could be on the December Assembly agenda.

New Business

Area Committee Meeting (held August 18 2020) items: no new business items.

Floor items: Bill B. (past delegate, Panel 43) spoke on the confusion during today's election for Area Officers. He asked if the Area's eligibility requirements for officers should follow the *A.A. Service Manual* rather than the current form in the Area 21 Handbook. Discussion followed. Sally P. (Dist. 7 GSR) volunteered to draft language to amend the Area Handbook. Bobby D. (Area Delegate) noted that the Area has a Structure and Policy Committee that has responsibility for this type of issue. Pat W. (Area Chair) directed the Structure and Policy Committee to work with Roland W. (Dist. 12 DCM) and Sally P. (Dist. 17 GSR) on clarifying or editing the language on eligibility for officers.

DCM Reports (Presented on August 18 at the Area Committee Meeting)

District 7 (DCM, Jodi P.)

Since our last DCM report, the following important things occurred:

- We held our last District meeting as a Zoom Virtual meeting on August 2nd. Bobby D and Gordon N attended and gave their respective reports as Delegate and Alternate Delegate.
- 17 of our 25 meetings in the District have reopened.
- Several members of District 7 are serving as the Planning Committee for the 2021 Tri-State Convention, which will be held in Mount Vernon, IL. This conference has now been moved to November 2022 as the site for this year (Owensboro, KY) has moved to next year (2021).

We faced these challenges:

- Currently churches and hospitals are not all allowing meetings back inside yet so many of our meetings are still outside or not reopened yet. Some are still looking for alternate sites to meet.
- We do not have any committee chairs so no participation in committees.
- We still do not have a District Secretary
- Poor GSR attendance at the Area Assemblies and District meetings.

We carried the message by:

- Keeping our website current with information and announcements.
- Frequent E-mail communication with GSR's with current information on meeting re-openings and Area events.

Current goals of the district are:

- Our next District meeting is this month where we will be having elections for the Board positions and

Committee Chairs. Hopefully we will be able to fill these positions.

- Get started working on the District Handbook again.

District 12 (DCM, Roland W.)

Since our last DCM report, the following important things occurred: We are holding District 12 meetings via Zoom and have seen lower attendance as a result, but it has picked up a bit of late. District 12 has created a Venmo account to allow for contributions thru Venmo.

We faced these challenges: for the first 3 months of the Pandemic, we saw group contributions to District 12 decline dramatically. We have seen an uptick in group donations during the month of July.

We carried the message by: our Webmaster has updated our website to make it more friendly to newcomers and AA groups in the area as well.

Current goals of this district: to support our GSRs, carry the AA message and support AA as a whole.

Other things we want to share: Nothing at this time.

District 16 (DCM, Carl H.)

Happenings in the District:

- We held our last District meeting on 7/19/20 outside at a city park. There were 4 board members and 5 GSRs present.
- Approximately half of the District's 28 meetings have reopened either outdoors or with social distancing.

District Challenges:

- Fairly low attendance at most of the meetings during the Pandemic.
- We have not been allowed back into the jails in the District to bring meetings.
- Currently some of the churches in the District are not all allowing meetings back inside yet so many of our meetings are still outside or have not reopened.

We carried the Message by:

- Aiding meeting in Albion and Robinson, when they are not in our district.
- Keeping the website up to date with meeting changes and announcements.
- Welcoming both Alanon and NA members into our AA meetings as there are not as many of these meetings in small towns.
- Wayne City is still planning their big outdoor fish fry event for next weekend with food and a speaker to get everyone together for fellowship.
- The next District meeting is planned for October 11 th , at an indoor site large enough for social distancing.

Current District Goals:

- Fill the rest of the Committee chair positions.
- Find new locations for the meetings at churches which are not open to large groups anymore.
- Better communication with the individual meetings by updating the GSR information.

District 19 (Ellen K. DCM)

Since our last DCM Report, the following things have occurred: Our Area Delegate gave his report on the virtual 2020 GSC at the July District meeting; and one of the local meeting locations began requiring attendees to wear masks after two members tested positive for COVID.

We faced these challenges: Continuing to keep the District website up to date regarding events that were canceled, postponed, or held virtually.

We carried the message by: offering a variety of in-person and virtual meetings; letting folks know about the State Conference.

Current goals of this District are: to continue to obtain information from GSRs and other sources in order to provide up-to-date information on local meetings; and to continue to adjust to the current health situation as information becomes available. We will also be holding District elections sometime this fall.

Other things we want to share: A BIG “Thank You” to Chicago Area 19 for Saturday’s first ever virtual State Conference!

District 20 (Jennifer V., DCM)

Since our last DCM report, the following important things occurred:

- In August, District 20 held a virtual District 20 meeting to determine if we were ready to meet in person. It was decided to begin meeting monthly again, in-person and virtually.

We faced these challenges:

- The current health situation has caused facilities in District 20 to close doors to meetings.
- Some facilities have opened back up; however, some of these have restrictions that attendees must adhere to in order to be at the facility.
- The August District 20 virtual meeting had 4 attendees – the officers!

We carried the message by:

- Three groups within District 20 continue to meet virtually, and the meeting information has been made available to other members and District 20’s website.
- District 20 continues to take extra care to make sure the website is up to date.
- District 20 helpline members continue to answer calls and direct newcomers, or any member, to meetings available in District 20 and surrounding areas.

Current goals of this district are:

- District 20 officers plan to personally call contacts for groups/committees within the district to explain how much we need them to keep the program of Alcoholics Anonymous strong in District 20!
- District 20 elections will be during the October GSR meeting.

Other things we want to share:

- Event and meeting information can be found on District 20’s website: www.aad20.org

A.A. Birthdays since the March Area Assembly

Arlene W., Sept. 2, 26 years, Rosemary T., Aug. 12, 9 years; Steve S., Aug. 20, 11 years; Sally P., June 14, 19 years; Carl M., Aug. 29, 44 years; Leo S., April 9, 15 years; Gordon N., April 17, 26 years; Ed M., June 17, 9 years; Fariba M. May 8, 29 years, Frank, Aug. 8, 24 years; Mary Kay B., Mar. 12, 30 years; Will H., Mar. 15, 4 years. Total years of sobriety: 236 years.

Report on Future Assemblies and Conferences

December 2020 Assembly: hosted by Dist. 5 – will be held via Zoom. A planning update will be given at the next Area Committee meeting.

March 2021 Assembly: hosted by Dist. 6. A planning update will be given at the next Area Committee meeting.

June 2021 Assembly: no bids

Sept 2021 Assembly: no bids

2021 National Corrections Conference: Ed H. (Corrections Committee co-chair) reported that the conference will be held the 2nd weekend in November at the same location as this year’s cancelled conference at the same rate.

2021 Illinois State Conference: Leo S. (Committee Chair for Host District) reported that he has a first meeting with the hotel the week before. He has a contract from the hotel, but it is not yet finalized or signed, because there are details to be worked out.

Area Committee Chair Reports

Ed Higginson (Corrections Committee co-chair) announced the Corrections Committee would be holding a hybrid Corrections workshop in Peoria (Dist. 6) on Saturday November 14.

Carl M. (Archivist / Archives Committee chair) announced he was working with committee members and others on digitizing some of the materials held in the Area Archives

Tim C. (Website Committee Chair) announced he was looking for new member or members for the committee.

Adjournment

Frank (Dist. 11 GSR) moved to adjourn. Leo S. (Corrections Committee co-chair seconded the motion). Motion carried. The assembly adjourned at 1:40 pm.