

District 32 Minutes June 19, 2023

Open with serenity prayer at 7:00 p.m.

June Birthdays:

Stephanie – 2 years 6/15

Robert – 17 months 6/15

Concept 6 read by Dillon

Tradition 6 read by Dan

In Attendance:

Elected Chairs: Heather - DCM, Dessie – Alt DCM, Ruth A – Secretary, Dillon – Archives, Dan P - Corrections, Robert – Treatment, Samantha – District Rep, Lydia and Gary - CPC, Troy – Grapevine Literature, Nichole – PI, ____ – Events Chair; and GSR's: Ruth A – Hour of Power, Samantha M - Federal Way Women Big Book Study; Troy O – As Bill Sees It, Max M - Auburn Stag Group, Susan W – Wednesday Night Women in Recovery, Samantha M - Federal Way Women Big Book Study, Stephany Z – Sunlight of the Spirit, Jeff – Federal Way Men's Stag.

Count:

GSR - 4

Elected Chair - 12

Guests - 0

Total Voting Members - 16

Secretary – Ruth: Minutes sent via email on Saturday, June 10, 2023.

Motion to Accept Minutes 1st Dillon, 2nd Gary.

Treasurer – Tony:

Heather introduced Crystal, Area 72 Delegate –

Crystal: Let's start with the Inventory – handout of the District Inventory questions – Secretary will take minutes on things to follow-up on. When you do a 4th Step, it doesn't really help if you don't take a 5th Step (do something w/ the Inventory). Will cover Six Categories:

District Structure

District Business Meeting

District Representatives

District Unity

District Officers

The GSR

- 1) What is the Purpose of the District? Support the members/groups in the geographical area, communication channel through Area and General Service Conference and Board.

Heather – District also does service work – PI, etc.

- 2) What more can the District do to help the groups and better carry the message? Dan – Corrections, pink can; Lydia – CPC, work at area hospitals; Dillon – Archives, provides the experience and pictures; District Representative – go to Intergroup Meetings and bring it back to the District Meeting. Robert – Treatment – Intercept and Milam panels; Accessibilities – going with Intergroup on that topic.

Anyone goes to the Area Quarterlies? Nichole – PI – going to the monthly community meeting and work study – looking for multi-service centers to place literature where it isn't currently existing. Crystal just wanted us to know that's part of what the Area does – sharing experience, strength, hope, and communication. Just

came back from the Conference, and updates went out to pamphlets, etc. Pamphlets for each area of responsibility can be downloaded from AA.org, etc.

Do you, as a District, volunteer for the phones for Intergroup? Not as a District, but some of our groups do. One thing we could do better is to attract more people, so we can have committees for each area, instead of just the Chair. Crystal recommends going and making a specific ask of someone, because alcoholics have a hard time saying no. We used to live in District 11, and every home group had a PI Chair, a CPC Chair, etc., so there were automatic committees.

- 3) Is the District structure adequate for the number of groups and meetings in the District? I need to look that up. I think it's in the 70's, but don't know the right number. Crystal – what that tells me is you have a lot of “dark groups”.

The District Business Meeting

- 1) Is a adequate opportunity given to all members to speak and participate in discussion and activities? Is the minority opinion heard? Yes
- 2) Are the meetings interesting and informative? Yes
- 3) How could the District meeting be improved? Having more GSR's, could bring coffee, could talk more about what our purpose is? Crystal – there is the GSR preamble you could read at the beginning of the meeting. Also, when Dillon read Concept 6, did anyone understand? It's great when we read it, but maybe spending 2 minutes to get something out of it, rather than just having someone read it to you. Ask for a volunteer for the next month, so they can do some homework ahead of time. Also, everything in there is talking about why we are doing this. I don't have everyone's phone number, not everyone's group that they are in, didn't have Laura's number to pass along information from Intergroup – that kind of connectivity. I've been thinking about that a lot, we've been sending around a phone list. Crystal – one of the benefits of Google Drive, is people can put their own phone numbers in there, so it doesn't fall on the President or the Secretary. I saw you did a potluck tonight, which is awesome – do you do other stuff? Annual Picnic. I used to tell Sponsees to be District 32 Representatives, but it's hard to get them energized. We also started an end of year “social”. Crystal: If you had something you thought could be improved, would you feel comfortable approaching Heather about that? Heather – we've had a lot of new people in District now, so that's good spirit of rotation. Samantha – when the reports get sent out, I don't even read them – I am calling myself out, need to look at what's sent out. For your reports, don't do it in the meeting, you just submit reports? We do both.

District Representatives

- 1) Are the District Committee Representatives facilitating good communication between the District and committee? And are people showing up for the District meetings? People talked about how it happens that people don't go to District. Don't accept service positions out of resentment. Attendance has ebbed and flowed; it depends on having the right person in the right role. For example, I'm better at Picnic Committee versus Archives Committee. When you get a new Committee Chair – perhaps we assign them a “buddy”, they could have their phone number, and go to meetings with them, etc. Stephanie – likes the idea – she is the GSR for the Auburn group – feels like the information she brings back from the District is ignored. I like the idea of the buddy system. At the last meeting the PI Chair was at, suggested to get a Service Sponsor. Heather – something we should talk about more here. A Service Sponsor is way different than a 12 Step Sponsor, it's really just someone who has been in Service, and can help you out with questions. If you're not familiar with the Traditions, or want to start learning about the Concepts, Service Manual, Committee work, etc. – someone who has done that before, and can show you the ropes – it's not a huge commitment. Crystal encourages everyone who is in service to get a Service Sponsor – someone you will call/text and ask questions of. Max – how many people here willing to be a Service Sponsor? There were about 4 hands raised. I would encourage you about the other events with Area Appointed and Elected, a good opportunity to see who is of service.

District Elected

- 1) Are they aware of what's going on w/ the District as a whole? Reaching out to the District as a whole? Able to handle situations that may arise within the District? Let's talk about DCM's, Alt DCM's, Treasurer and

Secretary. Love Heather's love of service, someone was supposed to be DCM who moved, and she's very passionate about it. Gavin – there's more structure in the agenda, which for a long time, this meeting would go long, or discussions would have to be tabled, because people weren't there. The Agenda is helpful, you don't deviate from the agenda. Do we have a District Handbook? Heather – we do – the DCM before me, Nick, was wonderful, helped invigorate the District and excitement for service. During his rotation we did the District Handbook. Do you have a physical copy of it? No – it's on the website. Carolyn – the handbook can help with the format of the meeting, like having an Agenda, memorializing that – something that works. Heather – it does get confusing for GSR's with all the different handbooks – District, Area.

- 2) Are Elected attending what they are supposed to? Yes. Treasurer wasn't here tonight, usually sends a report if he's not here. Good communication. How many people go to the pre-conference? No. Did DCM tell you to? YES. But did they explain what it was all about? Every time I get reminded that I have to go to events, I don't want to at first, but when I do go, it's always helpful. We did in the District meeting, go over some of the hot topics, trying to get people excited. When you go to the Assembly, you should already have your group conference and be ready to vote – all of that information was at the Pre-Conference. When I was Chair, I would say, "there's a pre-conference packet in the back, please go get it and read it". We need everyone's help to make the Assembly efficient and effective. If you are going to represent your group in October, go together, go to lunch/dinner afterwards to make it a fun event. One thing I would say as a District, sending out reminders of when they are? Having a group thread? Reminder: it's here, at this time, etc. Heather said that she sends emails, would people in the district like to have a text group thread. There's an APP called "Group Me" that Gavin uses for this type of thing. It sounds like this District would like a different form of communication, other than email. What would be the form? Group Me? What's App? Heather appreciates the questions people ask.

General Service Rep

- 1) Are the GSR's keeping their groups informed? Alt Delegate Courtney – she gets to do the fun part of service, the educational stuff for GSR's, District Committee Members, etc. On Area 72.org is the District Calendars. Heather gets emails of when new GSR schools are happening. They are done in bite-size chunks, some on Zoom, some in person. The types of things they share is helping the GSR with tips and tricks of how to get the groups support. This thing doesn't work unless we participate; Bill, Bob, Bernard Smith set up our structure of service, the upside-down triangle – where our groups are ultimately responsible for the services we provide. What kinds of literature do we produce, what do we put in the CPC kit, what type of technology do we use, how do we protect our anonymity, all of these things are looked at, and Crystal carries that to the Conference to make those decisions. If we all just say, it's not important, then ultimately just a few people make the decisions, and the groups don't have a say, and then the groups are upset. Ultimately the groups and membership are in charge of AA. One of the ways to help the Group with it is to suggest a Group Inventory. Someone from the outside can tell the group – look, this GSR is spending time away from their family, and you can listen "with your eyes" and give them gratitude for doing that. Service is a sacrifice at times – it should be an inconvenience at times, but not detrimental to you, but it can drain on you – you want to get together with other service people and you build each other up, reminds you about why you are doing this. It's a marathon, not a sprint in these 2-year rotations. Samantha also felt "shot down" taking a Group Inventory too. I feel like no one likes service; I've been called the AA Police in my meeting. Part of this is our responsibility, that we are giving efficient reports, etc. If you have a group w/ a low attention span, just give them one thing in a meeting. At Gavin's group, started out informally – asking why the Business Meeting didn't have an agenda or a format, defined service positions, etc. Heather – attraction, not promotion. When I first started at my home group, no one seemed to care about service at all, part of it is because there were a few of us excited about service. I also get my service cup filled by going to the Service Manual study groups – it's how we are portraying service. Participating in other things where you do get filled up is important. Did you go to the District thing with the Welcome GSR thing – it has a paragraph on what the GSR does, the month of the things like Pre-Conference, etc. It's not too early to start talking to your groups about how you are going to talk about the Pre-Conference items. Asking how they want to deal with the upcoming topics.

District Unity

- 1) How are we encouraging those new to the fellowship to become active? Dan – tries to make it look exciting. Why did the new people here join the District Meetings? My predecessor approached me, and after a couple of talks, I decided I wanted to do that. I felt like what I was already doing wasn't enough, felt like it was a good opportunity to see what is going on in his District, and start learning. I've been attending the GSR 101, 201, etc. Did you feel like your AA world got bigger? Yes, I was a little overwhelmed, but got the fever from the people attending the classes and shared with the group. Crystal – the very first thing we do when we get a service position is to find your replacement, by someone personally approaching you and talking to you about it.
- 2) Is the District being financially responsible to the Groups? Area? GSB? Did the group go to PRASA? Yes, but that hit us pretty hard. Yes, I found that the budget was in COVID mode, and we're back now in travel mode? Perhaps. We used to pretty consistently do splits, but we did one in December 2022 but have been below the prudent reserve since PRASA. Some groups very consistently are contributing, others are not. Linda – I think that's true at the District level, but each of the groups need to look at their finances too, because we're going to have a live Assembly this year, and groups need to have that discussion right now. When I first stepped into GSR, I heard about the Assembly, I started putting \$20 into scholarship every single meeting, knowing that was going to travel every single meeting. Dan – his home group already designated \$350 slush fund for the GSR and Assembly. Great to talk about, never too soon, Registration is on the Area 72 Website, so you have an idea of the cost. That's a perfect idea.

Delegate's Report – 73rd General Service Conference – AA's 3 Legacies

This is going to be the shortest report back that I'm doing – this is my 8th and I have 17 more to go.

About the Conference, 93 Delegates, 19 Trustees, 3 Grapevine & La Vina Directors, 3 AAWS Directors, 3 Grapevine & La Vina Staff, 12 GSO Staff (voting member).

Grapevine & La Vina Apps are coming out in 2023. Grapevine lost \$400k, and La Vina lost \$600k – they've been saying for quite a while that subscriptions are going down, but that's the world we're in – people look at their content differently. They made an App, will still have the printed magazine – please pick one and subscribe, daily quotes, sobriety calculator, \$2.99/month or discount to purchase a year – coming out in September 2023.

Finances: 7th Tradition Down \$10.55 million down 2.1% from 2021, self-support covered 59% of Operating expenses, which were up 20% from 2021 (started traveling more, post COVID), the board and staff travel a lot, AAWS Publishing Gross Profit \$4.89 Million down 22.3% from 2021 - from the cost to produce literature (Big Book, 12x12, etc.) which went up. Cost of literature went up in April, because the cost of paper is not going down, and it's been a while since literature costs were increased. Only 33% of all groups give donations to the GSO.

Is there a way to contribute without sending a check? You can send a check, or you can contribute online at AA.org – and it costs a lot less to process an online contribution, rather than a check, and also cash is acceptable (a money order). You can also set up a reoccurring monthly/bimonthly or every six-month contribution. Every service we provide comes up to us from the group, and it's our responsibility to help contribute to that. If every member were to send in \$9, we would be completely self-supporting. Max – are you saying we are not self-supporting? We had a deficit this year – we are under 7 months of Operating Expenses.

Plain Language Book: This year they had a reading room where people could sit and read the draft. Then there was a 2-hour meeting was recorded to go to the professionals that are writing this book. AA In Plain Language: A Tool for Accessing the Big Book – other tools for sharing the message of AA's program of recovery. This book is not intended to replace AA. It is written to make the ideas presented in the BB easier to assess. I knew there were Delegates who were given the "mandate" to stop the project – and after reading it, they didn't feel they could do that. For Crystal, it felt like someone sat down next to her and explained what AA was. People will want to read this book. The fact is, we haven't been growing our membership in a long time, and part of that is because our literature just isn't as accessible. I don't know what exactly will happen next, but there will be progress reports, and I'll talk more about it in Pre-Conference.

Just the first 164 pages? I don't know if the 4th Edition Stories will be attached to this, but if they are, they will go in as written now. There's a Preface, not the medical view, not Dr Bob's Nightmare – they just had the first 6 Chapters ready, that's what they read. They will keep talking about it next year. Would it be a faster read? Oh, yes. What I heard in Pre-Conference, will the 3rd and 7th Step Prayers as is, didn't take God out of it (and I didn't feel that way at all), concerned about gender neutral terms (not consistent, J Walker she, but preface was thousands of men and women). I made sure I got an overall feel for the book – which I could read in a couple of hours. This is obviously not changing the Big Book – yes, and a 5th Edition is coming.

AA for the Native North American – we want their stories by October 31, 2023. pamphletstories@aa.org.

Young People's Video Project – We want video submissions from AA members – over 18 and adhere to AA's principles of anonymity.

Advisory Actions

GSC Inventory 2023

Updated AA in Your Community Pamphlet

Corrections updating language for sponsorship for persons in custody

Delegate expense for the Conference be increased from \$1800 to \$2200

More frequent financial updates w/ more transparency (quarterly)

Conference will meet 2x's/year on Zoom – first one scheduled in July

Service Manual printed every 2 years w/ rewrites of Chapters

Final Conference Report will be available on aa.org

AA for the Older Alcoholics Large Print

General Service Board will conduct an Inventory

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m., after the responsibility statement.