

District 3 Meeting Minutes

June 21, 2013

DCM~Joan P Co-DCM~Dennis B Area Delegate~ Brian

3 GSRs and 1 Alternate GSR Present

The meeting was opened with the Serenity Prayer.

Dennis reads Secretary's report.

Read Tradition #6 and Concept #6.

Group Reports

Robin ~ Alt GSR Berkshire Big Book Meeting, Wednesday 7:30 p.m.

- ⌚ Well attended. Three anniversaries last month.
- ⌚ Service positions filled.
- ⌚ Outgoing commitment June 15th to Northhampton Group, (5) members in attendance.
- ⌚ Anniversary this month – Robin(3)

Michael N. ~ GSR – Northern Berkshire Group , Tuesday 7:30 PM , St. John's Church Williamstown & Sunday 7:30 PM, All Saint's Church North Adams

- ⌚ Found out that group was started in 1955 from Jack, GSO Archives information.
- ⌚ Meeting in North Adams had incident where they reimbursed Church for damage to the Church's property, group took responsibility.
(Financial remunerations)

Brian L. ~ GSR Big Book Step, Lenox MA, Thursday 7 PM

- ⌚ Meet at Trinity Church.
- ⌚ Attendance 30-35 average. 10 Group members at business mtgs.
- ⌚ Challenges filling positions; have coffee maker, difficulty finding chair and intergroup rep. Many members that hold positions hold more than one. For example, Brian GSR and General Chair, has been Chair for 2 years wants to step down having trouble finding someone to take position, finding older members do not want to take positions, possibly because they have previously held the position before. SUGGESTION: Make announcements as to the availability of the positions in the beginning of the meeting and then step down at a given date.
- ⌚ Two anniversaries: Brian L. (10) Denny (8).

Lauren A ~ GSR Women's Step Meeting Tuesday 7PM Father Leonard's Hall
Pittsfield, MA

- ⌚ Anniversary – Filene A. (4) Open to all on anniversary night.
- ⌚ Using pie chart, positions filled, many newcomers.
- ⌚ Added new institution commitment, BCHC women's side, three month trial 1st month filled.
- ⌚ Ongoing issue with format related to individual and group. Closed meeting, blue card read, some group members uncomfortable with this member's mannerisms, sharing, and seating.
- ⌚ Suggestions – Read pamphlet at group meeting “Problems other than alcohol” ; remind members that loving intervention would be appropriate; Disruptions should be considered in relation to Traditions, Brian O. suggested a group inventory with a past delegate facilitating and offered to get Lauren the list of past delegates to contact.

Tony T ~ Co-Chair of Berkshire Inter Group (BIG)

- ⌚ Meet second Monday of the month at 7 PM 152 North Street, Pittsfield MA
- ⌚ 14 attended last meeting; 10 voting; 5 groups represented.
- ⌚ Volunteers needed for office Wednesday 1:30-5 PM. Other days currently covered. Volunteers have to have 6 months of sobriety.
- ⌚ New Summer Hours M-F 1:30 – 5 PM
- ⌚ Service workshop final budget – over budget \$6.10 ☺
- ⌚ New Flyer completed information about Berkshire Intergroup and thank you to groups for support. Wish to encourage group representation and continued support.
- ⌚ When & where PC file lost and changes manually added. Updates will be completed and file will be restored with changes.
- ⌚ Contributions continue to decline, considerations about use of prudent reserve tabled to next meeting.
- ⌚ **Need Alkathon Chair** - George M chaired last Alkathon and has a lot of information to make the position easier to manage.
- ⌚ Regarding Cheshire Step group – Change from HMB to Area 31 almost complete according to Jack Area Registrar.

Brian O ~ Area 31 Chair

- ⌚ Groups interested in Area Members to do a Service Meeting for the group 860-559-0814
- ⌚ Concepts Meeting 1st Thursday of the month 474 Pleasant Street Holyoke MA 7 p.m.
- ⌚ NERASSA flyer out. February 22 and 23rd 2014.
- ⌚ Round – up May 18th and 19th will not be held at Clarion, looking at three

other venues.

- ⌚ Forum great opportunity to learn about General Service Structure.
- ⌚ GSO taking applications for staff members. Due August 1st, 2013 6 years sobriety. Must relocate to NYC. Fluent in French and Spanish. Also, Director Non-trustee due July 15th, 2013. Please contact Brian for specifics. delegate@area31aa.org
- ⌚ Western Mass Picnic August 18th, 2013. 244 Fuller Road Chicopee. Charge for food, reasonable.
- ⌚ 50th Mass State Convention. November 8-10th 2013. Sheraton, 1657 Worcester Road. Framingham, MA. Planning Meeting at hotel July 30th, September 24th and October 29th at 7:30 pm.

Lauren A. ~ Chair of WMYPAA

- ⌚ WMYPAA most service positions filled only open position is ICPAA.
- ⌚ WMPAA Hosted a Third Legacy Workshop June 2nd. Attendance relatively small but favorable feedback. Deficit of \$50.
- ⌚ WMPAA hosting bond Fire July 6th in Easthampton, potluck, please NO dogs.
- ⌚ WMPAA and Western Mass Intergroup sponsoring bus trip to GSO September 6th. \$35 per ticket, limited number of tickets available. See Lauren, WMPAA members or intergroup 474 Pleasant Street Holyoke, MA.
- ⌚ Planning stages to bring a softball tournament to western MA intergroup picnic. August 18th
- ⌚ WMYPAA (Western MA Young People of AA). They meet on the second Saturday at 11:30 am at Grace United Church, 474 Pleasant Street, Holyoke, MA

Old Business ~ None

New Business ~

Dennis B – Dalton Young at Heart – Dalton 8 PM – July 22nd Area Service Commitment.

Joan P. - Southern Berkshire Group, Great Barrington, 8PM. Accepted an Area Service Commitment and 9 representatives spoke about their service position and she noted that there is something for everyone. Had group inventory and was a wonderful experience, with 18 group members in attendance, Sally past delegate facilitated. Process encouraged group to consider options that would further encourage the group to carry the message to the still sick and suffering, such as; having newcomers make coffee.

Joan P. – Area reported 352 registered attendees at Round-up. Recent Area meeting two major items need to be addressed. **Please ask group for opinions on the following two items.**

#1 – Third Legacy Voting will be enacted at the Fall Assembly. It is believed that this will be a more lengthy process of voting than the previously used procedure. Question – Should voting be held on Saturday which is the longer day of the Assembly or Sunday which is the shorter day (1-5pm)?

Discussion - If Saturday will it impede upon the time available for workshops normally held on his day? If Sunday will people tend to leave at designated time or stay till voting is complete and what is the added cost to the increase of time? Determined cost will be relatively nominal (\$50).

Lauren – What do other Areas do that have Third Legacy voting, Brian stated that they have more Assemblies per year (like quarterly) and dedicate an entire Assembly to voting.

Joan pointed out the important learning experience in the workshops on Saturday and that the Area Mtg will be also on Sunday. She suggested Sunday change 12:30 to 5:30.

#2- Another Area encountered an issue when the Area Treasurer absconded with \$30,000 of the Area Treasury. Question – Should the POSITION (not the Individual) of Treasurer be Bonded? Are there any viable options to Bonding?

Discussion – Define Bonding – In the operation a nonprofit organization, a bonded treasurer adds assurance that the money is safe with your organization. Regardless of organizational structure, bonding the treasurer protects your organization's money. If the treasurer mishandles the money in any way, the bond is a guarantee that your company will receive restitution up to the amount of the bond. The organization may desire a “position bond” for the treasurer or an “individual” bond. A position bond is not limited to a specific individual. It insures the treasurer position, regardless of the appointed treasurer. A premium is paid to the “bonding” company. This is basically insurance against mishandling of money in the treasury. However, the bonding company will pursue every and all legal means to hold the individual who mishandled funds responsible for the full amount of the restitution amount, including but not limited to personal restitution by the individual and possibly imprisonment.

Looking to the Concepts - **Concept XII:**

P-8, Twelve Concepts Illustrated

Concept XII

General Warranties of the Conference: in all its proceedings, the General Service Conference shall observe the spirit of the A.A. Tradition, taking great care that the conference never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle; that none of the Conference Members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others: that all important decisions be reached by discussion vote and whenever possible, by substantial

unanimity; that no Conference action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; that though the Conference may act for the service of Alcoholics Anonymous, it shall never perform any acts of government; and that, like the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous which it serves, the Conference itself will always remain democratic in thought and action.

This Concept consists of the General Warranties of the General Service Conference. It is cast in stone; that is, although Bill leaves the door open for alterations and changes in the other Concepts and points out that the rest of the Conference Charter “can be readily amended,” these General Warranties — like the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions — be changed only by “written consent of three-quarters of all A.A. groups” in the world!

Why? Because “these Warranties indicate the qualities of prudence and spirituality which the Conference should always possess These are the permanent bonds that hold the Conference fast to the movement it serves.”

The Warranties also express spiritual principles which apply to all other A.A. entities as well.

Specific to the bonding issue is warranty five.

Warranty Five: “That no Conference action shall ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy.” Although practically all other societies and governments find it necessary to punish individual members for violations of their beliefs, principles or laws, Alcoholics Anonymous finds this practice unnecessary.

When we fail to follow sound spiritual principles, alcohol cuts us down. No humanly administered system of penalties is needed. This unique condition is an enormous advantage to us all, one on which we can fully rely and one which we should never abandon by resorting to personal attack and punishment. Of all societies, ours can least afford to risk the resentments and conflicts which would result were we ever to yield to the temptation to punish in anger.

For much the same reason, we cannot and should not enter into public

controversy, even in self-defense. Our experience has shown that, providentially, A.A. has been made exempt from the need to quarrel with anyone, no matter what the provocation. Nothing could be more damaging to our unity and to the worldwide goodwill which A.A. enjoys, than public contention, no matter how promising the immediate dividends might appear.

Some situations which may require Conference consideration are:

A.A. may come under “sharp public attack or heavy ridicule” — perhaps “With little or no justification in fact. Our best defense in these situations would be no defense whatever — namely, complete silence at the public level. If the criticism of A.A. is partly or wholly justified, it may be well to acknowledge this privately to the critics — with our thanks.

Public violations of A.A. Traditions. Our own members may try to use the A.A. name for their private purposes. “Aggressive or punitive action, even in this area, must be omitted. Privately, we can inform Tradition-violators that they are out of order. When they persist, we can use such other resources of persuasion as we have. in the long run, though, we shall have to rely mainly on the pressures of A.A. opinion and public opinion.” “Another kind of problem is the severe internal disagreement that comes to unwelcome public attention.” As G.S.O. “is not a police operation,” we can only offer A.A.’s experience as a matter of information.

Michael suggested putting this information on the Area website for clarification, so that groups and individuals can more clearly understand the issue.

UPCOMING DATES:

- 🕒 WMYPAA (Western MA Young People of AA). They meet on the second Saturday at 11:30 am at Grace United Church, 474 Pleasant Street, Holyoke, MA

- ⌚ Area General Service Meeting - 7:30 pm 1st Wed. after 2nd Tues.
Grace United Church - 474 Pleasant St., Holyoke, MA
- ⌚ Western Intergroup Picnic – August 18th, 2013. 11:00 AM to 6:00 PM.
Moose Family Center 244 Fuller Road Chicopee MA.
- ⌚ Bus trip to GSO sponsored by WMPAA and Western MA Intergroup.
September 6th. 6 AM to 9PM. \$35 per ticket, limited number of tickets
available. See WMPAA members or intergroup 474 Pleasant Street
Holyoke, MA.
- ⌚ Fall Assembly. October 12th and 13th 2013. 395 High Street
Holyoke, MA 01040.
- ⌚ The 2013 Round Up Committee meeting on the Wednesday after the 2nd
Tuesday of the month at 6 pm at Grace United Church, 474 Pleasant St,
Holyoke MA. * Need more participation from Berkshire County.
- ⌚ 2013 HMB Convention. November 1-3 213 Hotel Utica 102 LaFayette St
Utica, NY.
- ⌚ 2014 NERASSA February 21-23rd 2014. Warwick RI.
- ⌚ 2015 Northeast Regional Forum. May 29-31st 2015. Albany, NY.
- ⌚ 2016 NERASSA Springfield, MA.

NOTES:

BOX 459 comes from GSO to GSR quarterly newsletter. Can get delivered to
email by signing up at www.aa.org

GSR – General Service Representative is a liaison from the group to district.

Closed the meeting with:

I am responsible...

**When anyone, anywhere,
Reaches out for help,
I want the hand of A. A.
always to be there.
And for that: I am responsible.**

Respectfully Submitted: Robin