

December 12, 2012

The Area Chair, Mark N., opened the meeting at 7:31 PM with a moment of silence followed by the Serenity Prayer and a reading from Chapter 5 of the Service Manual (p. S 44).

Secretary's Report:

- ⌚ Secretary read the old and new business from November Area Committee Meeting
 - Motion to accept Secretary report – Motion passes.

Treasurer's Report:

- ⌚ Beginning November Balance: \$3,522.36; Group Contributions: \$1,816.00; Total Area Expenses (260.49): \$; Closing Balance (November): \$5,077.87 plus Prudent Reserve (\$9,000.00) = Total Funds Available (November) \$14,077.87
- ⌚ Motion to accept: passes

Registrar's Report:

- ⌚ Groups are electing new GSR's. I expect within the next two to three months, there will be plenty of work for me to do. I will be updating them as they come in.

Area Archivist Report:

- ⌚ We had a really good year filing. Carl and I met once a week to do some work. There are some people coming onto the committee that are excited to do things. People will be transferring the tapes onto CDs. We have about 167 tapes, allowing them to go out 5 at a time, allowing us to keep an ongoing inventory for what is going out and being taped.
- ⌚ Thanks Carl for your service. Looking forward to working with the new positions.

Adhoc Committee Reports

GSR CD

- ⌚ Final Report to Area Committee
 - We met last Saturday on December 8, 2012 to review the comments and suggestions made after our presentation at the Fall Assembly. We found that the comments were very positive, and that comments made to committee members over the course of the last few months have also been quite positive. There were a few suggested changes that we carefully considered at our Saturday meeting. After lengthy discussion, we decided to make no changes to the presentation. So what you reviewed back in August and September is what we are offering for your consideration and approval.
 - We do have a few suggestions to the Area Committee regarding the GSR PowerPoint presentation:
 - That this be presented in a live presentation (not only handed out)
 - Post on Area 31 website as a PDF
 - Get a projector for future presentations and for use by any committee or district
 - That the Area Committee approve sharing of our presentation with any other Area or service body.

Standing Committee Reports:

Accessibility:

- ⌚ Working with Area Committee to purchase hearing assistance equipment.
- ⌚ Question:
 - \$1,336 charge – what was that for?

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- That was for the hearing assistance equipment. The amount was originally slated for the ASL services, yet it wasn't used, so it was used for the purchase of the headphones

Archives:

- ⌚ 5 members present at last meeting
- ⌚ There are no upcoming board commitments
- ⌚ Bobbi shared on continued sorting, filing, 1st edition Big Book rebinding. She will calculate and submit final committee expenses for the year. She also will purchase file storage before year end.
- ⌚ We reviewed the 2011 committee inventory, 2012 goals and looked as an overview of the past year.
- ⌚ Jamie shared her experience with recording Ann H
- ⌚ Will email Bob B and Jack A asking them to return the tapes that they have at their homes brought for conversion. We would like to keep the tapes within the Archives and distribute piecemeal as they are being done.
- ⌚ The question was raised as to what ideas, and or goals would the committee like to see for the next year
- ⌚ Going forward some ideas brought up for next year are to listen to old timers recordings during the committee meeting and write highlights of each for indexing in some manner.
- ⌚ It was also thought that maybe we could ask Western Mass Intergroup to publish parts of the Area History in the FYI each month.
- ⌚ Discussion was also brought as to thoughts of material that the committee may want to see on the new Area 31 General Service website.
- ⌚ The next committee meeting will be January 1, 2013

CPC:

- ⌚ Made presentation to about 25 supervisors of the Hampden County Sheriff's dept at the Ludlow Jail and it went well.
- ⌚ Discussed ways to encourage CPC membership. A CPC member will attend a bookie meeting at Intergroup early next year to get commitment to speak at group meetings about CPC service.
- ⌚ Also discussed the possibility of recombining CPC and PT into one committee in order to have a larger pool of volunteers to draw on for both types of commitments. However, the point was made that we've never been unable to cover a commitment when we're able to book one.
- ⌚ Once monthly Radio commitment is being covered by CPC. We may tweak the format to accommodate a non AA professional speaking about how CPC has helped to bring awareness to professionals.
- ⌚ Still pursuing potential audiences for CPC presentations and re-contacting agencies we've visited in the past.
- ⌚ Dick W attended the last 2012 meeting to introduce himself to the committee.
- ⌚ Haven't received any requests back from any doctors, even though we sent letters out

Grapevine:

- ⌚ Meeting last Tuesday, welcomed 3 new reps and said goodbye to one
- ⌚ Since we had a lot of new members, we spent a lot of time going over what the Grapevine committee does, etc.

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- ⌚ Next meeting is on Jan 1st
- ⌚ Grapevine boards are available for anniversary meetings. Anyone interested see Chair
- ⌚ Charlie 860-882-4032

Public Information:

- ⌚ New Chairperson (Jim W) and Co-Chair (Paul P)
- ⌚ Stuffed 150 letters/pamphlets and prepared to send out this week to schools in the area. Letters inform schools that we are interested in speaking to them and how to get in contact with us.
- ⌚ Have 3 radio commitments; an IOP commitment on 2nd Thursday in Northampton, and a commitment to the Phoenix Academy on 3rd Wednesday
- ⌚ Gave a presentation on how to do a presentation

Website Committee

- ⌚ First meeting of newly formed Website Committee was held on November 28th; 6 members present
- ⌚ Recruitment poster – We decided to send it to Intergroup, the districts, the chairs of the standing committees and to post it on the Area 31 Website
- ⌚ Committee structure – We need to write a mission, vision, guidelines of the committee, duties for Area 31 members
 - Who is the website for?
 - All AA members in Area 31 looking for info on service and AA structure
 - Professionals looking for CPC
 - Link to Intergroups for meetings
 - Post GSO activities and events
 - Role of Webmaster
 - Routine updates (text and photos). Changes that will go through the committee will include look/design of the site and page
 - Anonymity
 - At most, first name and last initial. Is there ever a need for even this?
 - Chair and Co-chair could look at proposed text/photos for compliance. What if it doesn't meet the guidelines? Send them back to the committee, or on to the area chair?
 - The site is for one-way communication – no discussion boards
 - What responsibilities do DCMs and committee chairs have to the Website? This should be included in the handbook (review the website, submit minutes...)
 - What is the purpose of the committee pages on the website?
- ⌚ This should be in Spanish also
- ⌚ Sasha volunteered to draft a version of the mission statement, as is in the handbook for other committees and guidelines. She will email drafts to the committee and it can be reviewed/voted on at subsequent meetings.
- ⌚ Paying for web costs (domain name, site host)
 - Webmaster paid for domain name and site host. At some point, we would like to take the payments and not have them associated with the Webmaster's credit card and instead have them paid for by the Area
 - Sasha will discuss at an Area meeting. Two options include an Area debit card or an electronic transfer.

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- ⌚ The next meeting will be Dec. 26, 2012 at 7 pm.

Round Up:

- ⌚ We have a PO Box for 1 year for registrations
 - PO Box 186 West Springfield, MA 01090
- ⌚ We purchased hearing equipment with the Area for \$1377.01 each
- ⌚ We have DJ tickets which are getting made
- ⌚ There will be no banquet this year. We will be putting together a list of the local restaurants though
- ⌚ We are going to try to visit the Districts in January
- ⌚ Next meeting will be on Jan 9th at 6 pm

Webmaster

- ⌚ We have had over 1800 hits to the Home Page
- ⌚ Calendar has received over 85 hits
- ⌚ Area commitments are included on the website
- ⌚ There are a number of sites that refer individuals to the Area site, one of the top one being the Intergroup website
- ⌚ Area commitments are on the site
- ⌚ All committee meetings are on the site, extended through 2013, and will continue to update so that they are always 12 months out
- ⌚ Search Engine Results
 - Google – was westernmassaa.org, yet all links following that belonged to area31aa.org
 - Bing – we came up 4th
 - Yahoo – we came up 4th
 - Bickko – we came up 7th
 - DuckDuckGo – we came up 2nd
- ⌚ We have email addresses for all committees. They are on the website and a decision needs to be made as to whether or not they should be used.
- ⌚ Question
 - Is it possible to get the officers and committees, if they want to use the emails address and have them forwarded to them.
 - The only issue for using Gmail, it is not as anonymous.
 - There is a way to change them to go to personal email, and then when responding, I used the actual email.
 - Point of information, I have been using registrar@area31aa.org, and I have it set up so that it downloads into Windows Live Mail. You can also forward it to another email address if you would like.

Invited Committee Reports:

Institutions:

- ⌚ Serving more Institutions now than a year ago, but we are getting a lot more requests.
- ⌚ There is room for groups to take over meetings, which has been very popular this past year. If a whole group takes it over, then we only need one name and number, and the

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group can be the co-sponsor.

- ⌚ No old business, as group elections were last month.
 - Results:
 - Chair – Suzanne L
 - Co-Chair – Charlie
 - Secretary – Janis
 - Treasurer – John R
 - Librarian – Paul R
- ⌚ Spent \$686.11 on books this month.
- ⌚ Suzanne will be taking over next month as Chair

Western Mass Intergroup:

- ⌚ Not present, no report

Berkshire Intergroup:

- ⌚ Berkshire Intergroup continues healthy. We regularly have about 10 groups represented and all officer positions filled.
- ⌚ We're getting ready for our Christmas and New Year's Alkathons. Information can be found on the table and on the Western Mass Intergroup website
- ⌚ We have a new treasurer and continue to get a clearer picture of our finances.

WMYPAA

- ⌚ Held meeting on Saturday
- ⌚ Made an amendment to bylaws to add position to have a Roundup liaison and an ICYPAA Bid liaison.
- ⌚ Working with ICYPAA Boston Bid Committee to bid for hosting ICYPAA in Boston in 2014.
- ⌚ In planning stages of Spaghetti dinner/speaker meeting in late January. We will have details by next area meeting
- ⌚ Next month will be holding elections
- ⌚ Discussing the option of bidding for 2014 MSCYPAA
- ⌚ Looking to be of service to anyone in the area, see me after the meeting for contact information

District Reports:

District 1:

- ⌚ 6 members present at last meeting
- ⌚ All groups are doing in/out going commitments with other groups.
- ⌚ Downtown group is going through a transitional period and could use support
- ⌚ All other groups reported good attendance, collections and pie chart contributions

District 2:

- ⌚ 12 GSRs, DCM, Co-DCM and LCM present at last meeting
- ⌚ GSR participation discussed. Agreed to coach new GSRs before meeting
- ⌚ Carl from Intergroup present and reported
- ⌚ There was no new business discussed

District 3:

- ⌚ 7 groups attended the last meeting
- ⌚ Distributed group history forms

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- ⌚ Many groups were interested in group history
- ⌚ Planning on putting it together and bringing it to Archives
- ⌚ Working with new DCM, co-DCM and LCM. Working to separate things that really belong to the Intergroup, so that we can in turn put our focus on carrying the message from the groups to the GSO
- ⌚ Making a plan to get in touch with all meetings. There are about 90 groups in the area, we are making plans to get in touch with all these groups and get it all together and make it one district
- ⌚ Short discussion on having a service workshop. More information to come
- ⌚ Concept 11 was read at the end of the meeting with an excellent discussion on it.

District 4:

- ⌚ 13 different groups represented
- ⌚ Read concept 5 to start the meeting
- ⌚ 2 groups reported having issues, main problems being that members were not rotating out of service positions and new group members didn't know how to be a part of
- ⌚ Also issue with not having much money going into the basket was discussed
- ⌚ Spoke about doing group inventories and self support
- ⌚ Discussed role of sponsorship in getting people to join a group and become a GSR, etc.
- ⌚ Discussed doing a workshop
 - In preparation, pulled up a list of topics on workshops
 - Group conscience was to table the workshop until new GSRs roll in at the beginning of the year. Topics will be brought back up in Jan/Feb or next year

District 5:

- ⌚ We had three new GSRs attending the meeting, with a total of 16 groups being represented at the meeting
- ⌚ East Longmeadow Sunday Night reports that the group is looking for a new meeting space.
- ⌚ Several groups are having elections this month
- ⌚ In general, most groups are doing well and meeting their financial commitments. The groups represented at the GSR meeting are active, fulfilling their weekly and monthly group commitments to Detox, Howard Street, and other AA groups, they offer books and coins to newcomers, and enjoy an active membership and attendance.

District 6:

- ⌚ There has been low attendance of GSRs at the past couple of meetings. It appears that there has been a definite drop off in attendance throughout this year, and the fire seems to have extinguished
- ⌚ Sent out an email to all GSRs that I had email addresses requesting their attendance

Delegate's Remarks:

- ⌚ 2013 theme and presentation topics. This will be forwarded in case it has applications for workshops
- ⌚ In the next 3 years, the conference will be discussing doing an inventory
- ⌚ New 2012/2013 service manuals are out, and the old ones are now on sale!! 48 copies for \$51. If area is interested in purchasing some they can put in an order.
- ⌚ GSOs archives received 2 valuable donations
 - Original certificate awarded to AA in 1949

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- 1st edition 1st printing bb
- ⌚ Issues of Box 459 discussed
- ⌚ 12 Traditions Illustrated added to GSR kit
- ⌚ BTG 23rd annual workshop –in Chicago next year
- ⌚ Unofficial report by Panel 61 Area 32 – prepared report on 501c3 – will forward onto the Finance committee
- ⌚ NERAASA will be held Feb 22nd – 24th – Registrations are on the table – can also forward the PDF to you
- ⌚ Questions
 - Sales and projected sales, what was that?
 - Publishing department
 - \$9.553 million

Alternate Delegate Remarks:

- ⌚ Encourage to save the date Jan 29th 2013, first planning committee meeting for Mass State Convention

Area Chair Remarks:

- ⌚ Spring Assembly – emailed all to see if April 6th and 7th okay, yet church is not available
- ⌚ April 13th and 14th – will be the Spring Assembly
- ⌚ Alternate Delegate runs the mini-conference on that Saturday, and maybe the Alt. Delegate can ensure that WMYPAA can meet during the lunch hour
- ⌚ Approached by past delegate to set up a committee to revamp the handbook to include website and YP committee. Would like to have the Website and YP to have input in this. Looking for assistance from past Delegates to coordinate an effective change to the
- ⌚ Filled all Co-Chair positions, except Chair for CPC. If you are rotating out and need a position please see me.
- ⌚ Thank you all for your service to those that are rotating out.
- ⌚ Emailed all awhile back about a commitment in December where I was the only one that showed up. I know that we are all committed, yet we should decide whether or not we can do multiple commitments a month. It is not representative of who we are if only one person shows up.
- ⌚ Next service commitment this coming Sunday 12/16 at 7:30 St. Luke Greek Orthodox Church 400 Prospect St. in East Longmeadow.
- ⌚ Enfield Group will be on Jan. 26th at 7 pm.
- ⌚ Comment
 - Encourage the Chair to check the book for conflicts and not book on those days

Old Business:

Treasurer (Budget)

- ⌚ We don't have a lot of money. Tried accommodating everyone's wishes. I came up with several budgets so that we can come to a conclusion
- ⌚ Reviewing 5th column, which is the requested budget
 - Opening basic balance of \$23K – clearly can't do this one
- ⌚ Budget A - \$23,000.00 had to cut several things
 - Highlighted areas are where we have no wiggle room

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- NERF, NERD, NERAASA, Mass State Convention, travel for area officers, liability insurance, and must send Delegate to GSC
- Had to decrease money in what we spend. No money in Committee expenses and District expenses.
- ⌚ Budget B –
 - Some money can go to districts, but not much and to Districts.
 - Less money than we traditionally send to GSO
- ⌚ Budget C
 - Raised postage and printing, more money for District and events.
 - Not enough money for GSO
- ⌚ Budget D
 - \$30K - \$7K more than we spoke about last month.
 - This would bring everything except for districts up to what they requested.
 - Also bring GSO up to \$2500 to pay for Delegate's expenses
 - Reason I didn't give as much to the Districts, over past 3 years, traditionally people ask for money and don't spend it.
- ⌚ Where do we get this money?
 - If we go with B,C or D couple options
 - We took \$3K out of savings and put it into prudent. This is a decision to make, whether or not we want to have a prudent reserve this high, or put it back into service
 - Look at the amount of money coming in from each District.
 - D1 9 groups out of 32 contribute
 - D2 22 groups out of 40 contribute
 - D3 24 groups out of 65 contribute
 - D4 18 groups out of 47 contribute
 - D5 31 groups out of 54 contribute
 - D6 18 groups out of 34 contribute
- ⌚ With all this information, we now need to decide how to move forward
- ⌚ Discussion
 - Thanks for putting effort and time into this. One factor is what do we expect will come in? I know that there will be more money coming in. It appears that we only took in \$19K/\$20K. It appears that this year we didn't even take in what we expected.
 - \$9K in the prudent reserve, which is made for times like these when we really need it. Maybe districts can visit groups that are not contributing to encourage contributions
 - What was the reason for wanting to increase the prudent reserve
 - We wanted to make it 50% of our annual expenses
 - If we want to balance our budget this year, we are going to be about \$3 short of the lowest budget
 - Part of the Prudent Reserve was replacing the cost of the facility and we didn't have enough money on hand if that occurred
 - Another thing that came up over past couple of years that supported increasing prudent reserve, we have ended the year with a big balance. Each year grew a

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\$1K or more, ending with \$8K, and not being redistributed to carrying the message. Should we responsibly leave this amount of money around? That, along with the high rent in this facility, made us rethink having a larger prudent reserve. Another factor, the trend of growing balance at the end of the year has also stopped. IN 2010, we spent \$5K more than we took in for example. It appears that maintaining a prudent reserve at this level reflects fear not faith

- Is this something that we as a committee have to vote on today or can we bring it back to our groups to come back next month
 - We must do this tonight.
- Given the budget choices of A, B, C and D, are you looking for someone to make a motion on which one to use?
- If we use A, no changes need to be made, else we need to do something creative for B, C or D.
- With the idea of decreasing the prudent reserve. We have survived up to this point with a lower prudent reserve.
- We are at \$23K, if we are to use \$3K of prudent
- ⌚ Motion: Reduce the Prudent Reserve from \$9K to \$6K
 - Discussion:
 - It may be that the motion should be to take it out of the prudent reserve and put it into the general account. I am unsure if it is necessary though to move forward with the budget.
 - As of this moment, we are \$2500 behind for this year. If we take the \$3K, we would be even just for this year. If we do \$6K, we may then be able to cover the budget
 - Proper course is to actually pick a budget first. The whole idea of the prudent reserve is that it is there if we need it. It may be premature to take it out of the prudent reserve now. Pick a budget, go for that, and use it as a guide. We will still have the prudent reserve if need be.
 - In 2002, we had no prudent reserve and started the year down \$1K. We are definitely fearful people. Committees do need money to carry the message, and it appears that we all operate on fear. The prudent reserve is there if we need it. Start saying contributions are down to the groups and we will see an increase in contributions.
 - Reason I made the motion is because I believe that a \$9K reserve is too high. It is setting too much money aside for emergencies. I believe that a \$6K is adequate. It is just too high
 - If we took in \$18K this year and we are down \$2500 through spending. We will be further down if we project to use more, and only take in the same, then we will be even farther below.
 - Favor: 19; Opposed: 5
 - Minority Opinion: None
 - Motion carries
- ⌚ Budget choice decision
- ⌚ Motion: To pick Budget C
 - All in favor, none opposed
 - Motion passes unanimously

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GSR Presentation

- ⌚ Motion to accept GSR presentation as ours
 - All in favor, none opposed.
 - Motion passes

Reminder that this should be presented by a presenter and not just handed to GSRs

Finance Committee Statement of Purpose

- ⌚ This committee in September voted for this statement of purpose for the finance committee. The purpose of going to the fall assembly was to get the approval from the Assembly to be in the handbook. It was not voting on the content but to get into the handbook. Any committee that has defined their statement of purpose has the delegated authority to do so. We took approximately 6 meetings to discuss what this committee should and shouldn't do. If it was up to the entire Area Committee then it would have been handled in the AC meetings. The committee has done its work. If a motion is going to be brought up to strike the statement of purpose and create a new committee to create one. Otherwise, the statement of purpose put forth from this committee remains
- ⌚ Unfortunately, I wasn't at the September meeting, and I have some suggestions for changing. I do understand that it is up to the committee to create a statement of purpose and choose them. What do I do with my suggestions?
 - I will print them out and bring them to the committee. We have addressed all the concerns, such as why the Treasurer was the chair and not a past Delegate. We addressed all of these things. We are an advisory board to just the Treasurer. If a Treasurer is not versed in Treasury, then this committee is there to support them.
- ⌚ The motion that was read from the September minutes was to include the Statement of Purpose.
- ⌚ Do you want to put verbatim the guidelines into the handbook?
 - I have a couple of suggestions on this, should I bring this to the Handbook committee, or state them now.
- ⌚ The purpose of putting this stuff in the handbook, it is not about changing the verbiage.
- ⌚ We do not make changes to the last few pages without approval at the assemblies. We do make changes to the front pages. Is the Finance Committee description going into the front portion or the back portion of the handbook?
- ⌚ My point is that we don't have statements of purpose for any other committees, which is why I don't think that they should be in this description for the finance committee. Some of the verbiage in the Statement of Purpose seems to apply to all committees, and having it only listed for the statement of purpose for the finance, then it appears as it is just meant for that.
- ⌚ I think that the Statement of purpose should be removed from the guidelines on the finance committee and that is the only thing that goes into the handbook.
- ⌚ We have completed our job on creating the Guidelines and Statement of purpose, it is now up to the Assembly to determine if it goes into the handbook.

New Business:

GSR Presentation

- ⌚ At the last GSR Presentation committee, we discussed facilitating the presentation by purchasing a projector that would be available to districts and presenters of the GSR presentation to project the PowerPoint on a wall to present

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- ⌚ Motion: To allow the AC to spend up to \$300 on a projector for the GSR Presentation and would be available to the committees, and it would be pulled equally from the District budgets.
 - Discussion
 - The projector used to present this at the Fall Assembly, was this a personal projector? YES
 - Can you get a decent screen, like an inexpensive laptop?
 - The disadvantage of getting a laptop is that it is a small screen
 - Did research on projectors, and found one that is very good for around \$300. Projectors that connect to a laptop or it can connect to a data stick or an iPod, etc.
 - Favor: majority; Opposed: 2
 - Minority opinion
 - I am thinking about going back to my district and having to tell them that we only have \$65 to use on a workshop that our district is excited to do
 - Anyone swayed-YES
 - Discussion
 - Based on the fact that most districts don't spend the money that is budgeted to them, and when a district comes and requests money, they have always received it. I believe that it is safe to go back to your district and plan whatever you want and you will be covered.
 - It is good to know that districts will receive the money
 - My thought is that my district has plans for money. As soon as the vote came though, I realized that we are here to carry the message. We had a brand new GSR and he raved about the presentation. This is how we carry the message, with this presentation.
 - What is the point of doing a budget if every committee comes back and requests more. And I disagree with spending this money since we won't have enough money to do the things we want in the committees
 - I think that we need to think about the enthusiasm that this presentation will generate. I think that it will help, and I think that we will have the money for the workshops as well.
 - Call to question
 - All in favor: majority Opposed: 4
 - Motion carries
- ⌚ Question: What was the final outcome on the Finance Committee Statement of Purpose?
 - We have to wait until the spring assembly for it to be voted in.

Motion to Close:

- ⌚ **Close at 9:37**