

District 5

August 2019 Meeting Minutes

August 5, 2019

Opening

The regular meeting of the District 5 was called to order at 7:33 p.m. on August 5, 2019 in Ludlow by Andy, DCM.

Present

13 GSR's were present.

New Members or Visitors?

Mike the Area Chair present.

Reading of S26, the GSR

Bill H, Co-DCM

Secretary's Report from the Previous Month

The minutes of the previous meeting were unanimously approved as distributed.

LCM Report LCM is absent

Reading and Sharing on Readings for the month

Reading 1

Vicky – Tradition 8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

This tradition holds a two-fold meaning – one, that as members of Alcoholics Anonymous we should not be asking anyone to pay us to carry the message. It's part of our program to do so, and we are amply repaid in our continuing sobriety when we practice these steps.

Two, that as A.A. became larger than the first few hundred recovered drunks, the need for central offices to handle more than just the creation of new groups became great. While some volunteers can be quite skilled at their positions, an unpaid volunteer has much less accountability than someone who is actually being paid to do a job. Even though A.A.'s can and do hold paid positions at some of our central offices and at World services, they are being paid to do work other than Twelfth step work. They are being

paid to create and print literature, make sure the website is up and running, the phones are being answered to direct those in need to someone who is providing phone coverage, the bookstore is open, and a host of other jobs necessary to the running of the organization that is A.A.

If it were decided that all these positions should be held by unpaid volunteers, we would quickly find that there is too much of a volume of work to be accomplished than we would have available volunteers to do. Already at the group and district level we feel the lack of volunteers for service work in the unfilled service positions in our groups, and the folks who are missing from the district and intergroup meetings. Imagine what would happen if A.A. world services were to follow that example.

Reading 2

John -Chapter 5 the Area Committee. It's a very short chapter. The chapter mostly discusses the qualifications and duties of the area committee members.

1. Is the A.A. message getting into hospitals, prisons and rehab facilities.
2. Are news media and professionals who deal with suffering alcoholics well informed about A.A.?
3. Are new groups and loners being visited and helped

Re: question 1 yes, the institutions committee is a well oiled machine and does a very good job of putting on meetings in facilities from Enfield to Greenfield.

Composition of the area committee: All the District Committee Members, area officers, and chairs of area service committees. There should be enough districts and committee members to ensure good communication between the committees and the groups. In the absence of a D.C.M., the alternate D.C.M. is a voting member.

In some areas, past delegates serve on the committee, with or without a vote; in others only the outgoing delegate is a committee member, with or without a vote. The decision on the status of past delegates is up to the group conscience of the area assembly.

In our area past delegates are used to facilitate group inventories and to chair our monthly service manual meeting and the traditions meeting. In the past at our assemblies we used to have the askit-basket; members could, if they chose to, write down a question and put

it in the basket and at some point, I think they did it on Sundays, the area would have the past delegates do a panel answering the question.

Andy : what else do delegates do after they retire from being delegates.

Mike: they are a resource on how AA does stuff and how they did stuff and they understand how AA works, and how recovery works. That's my understanding anyway.

Group Sharing Forms

Jack, Green Street in Monson on Thursday 6:15 to 7:15 beginners meeting, 7:30 to 8:30 speaker meeting.

Concerns: it's a concern of mine that attendance is down, we used to have a huge beginners meeting when I first came in, and now we might put 10 chairs around the room and half the tables are full. It's flipped from before now the speaker meeting is bigger. As far as active members it's the same group of people we go on the commitments together and fill the calendar and sometimes we have to double up. Our group anniversary is August 22nd. Coffee 5:30 to 6, food from 6 to 7, and two speakers.

3 to 5 beginners at the meeting as opposed to people with a year or more – 15 to 20 people total more hands go up for a year or more than not.

Mickey, Brimfield Tri Area, Monday Night. 7:30 to 8:30 P.M.

We have 6 to 8 members who attend our business meeting. We now have a bookie, have our first commitment for the 15th in Belchertown. We don't have an institutions person, I volunteered to attend the meeting in Holyoke, I haven't been able to attend in the last couple of months. Just sent in \$200 to the pie, we try to send in twice a year. For the picnic donations, we had been putting up a pickle jar to collect but it keeps getting forgotten so we decided at our last business meeting to do a separate donation. Last business meeting was very brief, we are going to try and make the donation to the picnic. Only other issue is that we'd like to get more involvement with the group, we have maybe one or two within the last two months who are new, it's hard to get new people involved. On the local level it's hard to get people involved.

John, the Randall Group, Sunday and Thursday (Sun 1 pm and 2:15, Thurs 7:30 PM)

At our last business meeting we had a very good business meeting, We passed around the calendar to have people sign up and at the end there was only one slot open which is very new. We have a Thursday meeting and on Sundays we have two meetings. To see just one slot open that was pretty good. This last business meeting we had a pretty good discussion on the treasury issue. I contacted Intergroup when the last time our group had

donated. We have two treasurers, two signers on the account. The main treasurer went into Intergroup in person and made a contribution between the last District meeting and our business meeting. This was brought up at the business meeting and there was a pretty good discussion. (Discussion about the Main Treasurer and his attendance at the group) Pie chart was brought up, John brought up that the pie chart has 4 slices and they all need their contributions, and if we are consistent with it, that'll be good. He also contacted the Institutions treasurer, and she emailed back that since she's been the Treasurer in January, and there have been no contributions from Randall. She also checked, and verified that there have been no contributions since November, 2017. The theme is that nobody mistrusts the main treasurer, it's that he's just not doing the job. The other treasurer is good. Issue has been tabled until next month, and a lot of people feel next elections we should elect a new treasurer.

Overall, the group is good, the doors are open, and we're there for A.A. who need a meeting.

Rob, Miracles in the Making, Saturday 7 p.m. Chicopee.

Changing the business meeting increased membership from 2 to 7. Our bookie is not doing his job, our institutions rep is from another group so she can't vote for us but she can bring the information back to us. It can use support, it's the summer thing.

Art, Wilbraham Men's Group, Grace Union Church Thursday 8 PM

Average every two to three months a regular contribution. We now have an intergroup rep, one of our longstanding members rose up to the challenge. Art will meet him there, we have someone doing PI, and we do the WMASS wellness center last Tuesday of every month. We had a good showing this last Tuesday. It's a one hour meeting and it's just too short. It's just a great meeting and it's good to hear other groups are getting into institutions commitments.

Mark, Friday Night Wilbraham 6:30 Beginner meeting, 7:30 Speaker

Speaker meeting has a rotating format. 2nd to the last is the Group Anniversaries meeting. 8 people celebrated anniversaries in July. Mark is GSR, Kate is alternate. Regular contributions to pie chart. GSR, Intergroup, Bookie, PI. Discussing that we are not having a lot of people sticking around after the beginners meeting. Changed the format to suggest that people stick around for the business meeting. All group positions are filled, we generally don't have a problem with getting people to chair the meetings. We do a detox commitment every month, and one to the Ludlow jail every other Wednesday. The big thing that came up at this meeting is that one of the members had been in touch with the minister at United Church in Wilbraham, and the minister is very interested in having

AA groups come into that church. They have met, but haven't talked since then. There is a possibility that we may move, some people think it's a better location.

Laura, Back to Reality, Chicopee, Monday 7 p.m.

Alternate is Eddie. We are in a position to give \$100 to the pie chart this month, which is what we historically accrue to give once a year. We have a GSR, bookie, treasurer, secretary and alternate GSR.

Gwen, South Hadley Friday Night Beginners meeting.

Contribute to the pie when we have a prudent reserve. We had a little glitch in our collections last month and thought we couldn't but there was an error in the bookkeeping and we will be soon. We do only outgoing meetings and this year we will do 6 of them unless our bookie can find another group. We don't do incoming because we went from two meetings to one, and we are now just a beginners meeting so unless that changes we will only be going on outgoing commitments.

John. Chicopee Group. Tuesday 10 AM and 6 PM.

Two speaker meeting at 10 a.m., 6 pm beginners meeting. We try to gear it towards beginners. I'm the GSR, no alternate, that's ok I guess not much we can do about it. We do the pie when we can, I'm not sure how often we do it things are tight most of the time. It does come up in the business meeting so it's not forgotten about. We have an official chair person, bookie, secretary, all those, we go kind of free on that, if something comes up people will jump in and take the responsibility to get things done. We do incoming, outgoing, we do detox first Thursday of the month in Carlson have been doing that for a few years now. We don't have any real problems with our group, it's the same few core members who do all the work and jumping in to do what has to be done. Things get handled and get done.

Juan, East Longmeadow Sunday Night group, 6:30 to 7:30 pm

Our bookie has booked an outgoing for September 16 or 15, and in November. The treasurer is never there, Juan takes the money and makes sure it's all set, last month we didn't get a report. He did check and GSO says the group did contribute money. He's supposed to get the coffee and supplies but Juan goes and does the coins because he's not showing. Juan wants to call for a group conscience a lot of people take positions and don't do their jobs.

Catrese, Hampden Tuesday night

We have a speaker meeting at 7:30 step meeting at 6:30. Jeff is alternate GSR. We give to the Pie chart, last one was in June. Our service positions are filled, no complaints I have heard, intergroup, GSR and Alt, Bookie, we do monthly commitment at Carlson Detox first Monday of the month, we have incoming and outgoing commitments and we're doing good, no problems that I have heard of. Both meetings are full to where I end up standing or giving up my seat.

Sharon, Eye opener, Ludlow 7 PM–

GSR. We are trying, I'm trying to continue to encourage our group to do the pie chart and what finally came out over the last two or three months is that our treasury was not being taken care of, it was in Florida. We got that straightened out and now it's someone here in Ludlow. This group has been having trouble to get organized. I talked to people who have stopped coming and they said they stopped because it was too chaotic. People were doing two jobs or more, and two months ago we started revamping. Having elections next month, I feel we are getting more organized and I started using the district book and announcing what the positions are. We are getting some new members and they are old enough to take some positions. We have good attendance, I'm glad I'm hearing other people talk about problems with their treasury and with taking positions.

Jennifer, Cold Spring Group, Belchertown, Thursday 7:30 pm

One speaker meeting Thursday. Been making a few more contributions to the pie, as we can afford to. We have some service positions filled but we definitely need more. GSR, CPC, ACCESS, intergroup, Chair Secretary, Treasurer, Bookie, Supplies, Shepherd. Once a month incoming/outgoing and LIPS for institutions. Our institutions person just stepped down. First Saturday of the month we have the Providence detox commitment. We share with Saturday Belchertown. We definitely need more people to get involved. Our biggest issue is that we are cursed with coffee pots – but that got solved the Friday Night Belchertown meeting donated theirs to us.

Vicky Hitchcock Academy, Friday night 7:30 to 8:30 in Brimfield

Pie contributions on a quarterly basis. We have intergroup, GSR, bookie, and secretary. Treasurer has been the same person for at least a decade. Once monthly incoming and outgoing commitment, one for Ludlow jail.

Our group anniversary is August 23. Coffee from 6 to 6:30, food from 6:30 to 7:30, speakers from 7:30 to 8:30. Please come help us celebrate 35 years!

Elections are being held in September to fill our group positions. We have an Intergroup rep and GSR but no alternates and no committee members. I will start mentioning the other committees and what they do.

Visitor's Reports

Mike, area Chair – traditions meeting was done away with two years ago.

October 12 and 13th, at Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament. Saturday Area Inventory 10 to 4. Sunday will be business meeting and elections, 1 to 5. (take address from old meeting minutes)

Grapevine is having a Grape Jam 123 YMCA road, in Becket September 14th. Will be on the area website and will probably be on the intergroup website. Another workshop District 3 has a workshop on the 28th in September in the Lenox Community Center which is where we've had some events in the past. I believe that is where it is, I have it written down as tentative.

In December district 4, December 7th, they have a tentative workshop they are looking for a facility.

Old Business

Andy is passing around the list for the food for the workshop

We have our workshop on Sept 21 from 10 to 1. We have Hitchcock academy from 9 to 2, they are very nice people over there. They usually take \$50 an hour, but they are willing to take a donation. Parking will be on the grass due to the farmer's market. I have a list going around, if you would please sign up for something, plates, or forks. We usually ask a delegate or a past delegate to speak on the subject. Is there anyone here who would like to ask a delegate or past delegate to speak? Bill has offered to find one, Andy has already tentatively reached out to someone. This is what they will be talking about at the delegates convention next year.

Jennifer: Is there a list of the past delegates?

Bill: Go to the concept meeting.

Andy: Belchertown is full of past delegates. Give me a call and I will help you with that. Andy will talk with Renee with how she had the workshop organized and how long for the folks to share. 30 minutes to share, 15 minutes between.

Sharon: You are asking us to find past delegates to share?

Andy: Yes. Bill will work on Practicing the principles, Andy will do Keeping AA Relevant, that leaves Who is Missing in the Rooms?

Jennifer and Catrese will collaborate on Who is Missing in the Rooms of AA.

Intergroup Picnic coming up on the 25th, hope to see you all there. The meeting finder app is going to be updated August 7th, and in order to get the update you might have to wipe it out of your phone and re-download the app. It will give you the ability to text it via Google Maps to text it to another person.

Kate is not here again this month, and she's only been to three meetings this year and she's not doing her job. This committee needs an LCM to go out and check on our groups so we need to find a new LCM to replace her. We will have elections coming up in October, but if any, Jen you stepped up to help her.

Jen: we talked a little bit through text. Catrese: we were talking about it.

Andy: If you two would like to stay on.

Jen and Catrese: when would you like us to start?

Andy: Yesterday?

Rob: What does an LCM do? (Answered – in the Area Service Manual and July minutes)

Mike: I would go as DCM on the night of their business meeting and ask if it was ok to come to their business meeting and speak about service.

Bill: I would go to the person who chaired and asked if I could have 2 minutes of their time during the AA announcements to explain the importance of having a GSR which gives you a voice with GSO.

Andy: You never know. The group might not want a GSR, but someone at the meeting might be interested in service and that might be the start of it.

New Business

No new business.

Next Month's readings and discussions

Tradition 9 – Mark

Adjournment, Next month's Meeting Date:

Meeting was adjourned by Andy D at 9:06 with the Responsibility Pledge.

Meeting date for September is September 2nd.

Contact Information:

DCM: Andy D. **email:** district5@area31aa.org

Co-DCM: Bill H.

LCM: Kate V.

Secretary: Vicky W.