

AREA 49 COMMITTEE MINUTES: NOVEMBER 2017

7:30 p.m. Meeting Called to Order

Serenity Prayer & Preamble

Quorum recognized; Housekeeping [Voting, Time, Quorum]

Scott, DCMC-Manhattan, is Parliamentarian

Keith, Alt-DMC 602, Timekeeper

Minutes Reviewed, MOTION to Accept w/o Correction seconded and PASSED by acclamation

Announcement of David S, Incoming Chair Ad Hoc Publications as of 1/18

Evelyn, DMC-404, will submit motion re: Atheist and Agnostic Literature at Assembly

COUNTY REPORTS

Regina, DCMC Nassau: Our Concept Series Continue on 11/20, Concepts XI and XIII

Tom, DCMC Suffolk: 1st Legacy Event 1/27/18, rain date 2/3/18; Unity Breakfast 3/4/18 [\$28]

Rob, DCMC Putnam, Unity Breakfast and Area Assembly Upcoming

Bob, Alt-DCMC Bronx-Upper Manhattan: Joy of Service Workshop Upcoming

Sherry, DCMC-Orange: County Inventory, will discuss, improve, and grow; Safety in AA Workshop [will discuss embezzlement by treasurer]; Big Meeting upcoming

Mel, DCMC-Brooklyn, Bus to Assembly, County Meeting 11/15 [Sally, Service-Sponsorship, will attend], Upcoming Spiritual Breakfast

Jerry, DCMC-Staten Island: Spiritual Breakfast, Upcoming Traditions Workshop, 12/25 Alkathon, January Assembly

Emma, DCMC-Westchester: wonderful fellowship at Share-A-Day, Hosted Bill W. Dance, New Year Eve Dance

Frank, Alt-DCMC Queens: Hosting Intergroup Breakfast, Holiday Share-A-Thons

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Web Committee will meet in Central Library, 7 - 8:30 p.m.

Steve, Intergroup: Next meeting upcoming, exchange information

Brendan, Literature: Picked up for Assembly

Nellie, Accessibility/Special Needs: Meet 1st Friday each month, can be by conference call. Ask that the DCMCs assign an interested person to participate; began a nursing home meeting w/ Bert L., Queens; setting up workshop w/ 601

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Mike, Corrections: Workshop this Saturday, next meeting 11/19, looking for people to bring meetings to prisons

Kathy, Treatment: Met at SENY last Sunday, October; would like to have each County have a rep. or contact like Bridging the Gap. Drive for old Grapevines, meeting 11/26

Sally, Service Sponsorship: Host GSR/DMC orientation, different orientations based on level (county v. group).

Laura, Grapevine, La Vida: Attended events, will attend Assemblia

Jeannie, Agenda Chair: Calendar updated, please email updates and corrections

Richard, Archives: Oral histories of delegates continues [9 more], available for events/assist.

Anthony, CPC: Attended events, will attend more, will speak to social workers classes and attend LGBTQ Convention

Domi, Link [by Jim]: Please pick up, will have at Assembly

OFFICER REPORTS

John, Delegate: Chair Literature and Archives, #1 job is to prepare for Conference. Issue of literature for atheists and agnostics, Area support makes things weightier. New literature “Bill W. Conference Talks, Our Great Responsibility” proceeds. Uptick in SENY groups contributing, 34.64% in 2016, 36.69% so far in 2017

Chair Literature and Archives, #1 job is to prepare for Conference. Issue of literature for atheists and agnostics, Area support makes things weightier. New literature “Bill W. Conference Talks, Our Great Responsibility” proceeds. Uptick in SENY groups contributing, 34.64% in 2016, 36.69% so far in 2017

The manuscript litigation; wrote Link article, but no new news yet, but an opportunity to think about our understanding of Steps, Traditions, and Concepts, and learn. Will make our fellowship stronger. Money for lawsuit is from publishing stream., which is distinct from 7th Step Contributions (as set out in Final Conference Reports). At GSO the 7.27 funding campaign raised app. \$80,000. There is a movement to sanction, censure, or remove and reorganize Board, under Article 4 of the Conference Charter this would require 75% vote, meaning all delegates and all the GSO staff would have to vote for and against Board (which has right to vote also). There is also an agenda item to add the preamble to Big Book.

Manny Alt-Delegate: Attended and will continue to attend and present at multiple events and made efforts on behalf of many AA activities; a full report available on request. Available for Group Inventories and other AA activities.

Jane, Area Chair: I'd like to give some framing for tonight's business: The Area Chair is the one who appoints and discharges an ad hoc committees. Ad hoc means “formed, arranged, or done for a particular purpose only”. I recommend rereading Chapter 4 in the Service Manual when you have a few minutes.

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SENY's Handbook was first published in 1991. Our last revision was in 2010 published in 2011. Panel 59 the Area chair appointed one person to edit the handbook, who sat in on the Committee Meetings and Assemblies, took notes, reached out to the Committee Chairs and made edits, and the Handbook in its entirety was approved by this committee and a new edition was published every 2 years, at most three, keeping up with changes inherent in a healthy organization. That process was changed in Panel 61 when the Area Chair appointed an ad hoc Committee for Publications Review. It's healthy to try new things. Once tried, they should be evaluated to see if they work, or not.

The Panel 65 Chair started sending regular emails as a communication tool to the Body and it sort of morphed into a digital informational email, now called a monthly email update- the Area already has a newsletter called the LINK. The Registrar took over the responsibility and has significantly expanded the people getting it.

Despite the fact of the Committee having strong and talented people on it, a review committee to edit the handbook has not proven to be the best way to go for timely updates of our living breathing handbook. It has not worked. However, we learned that for editing LINK articles, this Committee is perfect! Articles get edited, it provides continuity for our Area newsletter and supports our future by allowing interested members to get Link experience. That being said, when the Handbook editing is complete, I'll be thanking the Publication Ad Hoc Committee and discharge them and immediately ask them to serve on the Link Editorial Board. It's my hope that the next chairs will return to appointing an individual for the handbook editor and we can make edits every two years and keep up instead of catch up.

Certain things must stay in our handbook because of our structure, but others can be found elsewhere. I asked Publications to reach out to past delegates and chairs regarding job descriptions, and the proposed revisions have been handed. Not counting the job descriptions handed out tonight, there is one more job description to be revised, that of the Archives. We'll be revising the part in the front of the Handbook regarding how to register your group as approved by this Committee in June. Your help is needed- there are some things specific to SENY which must stay in the Handbook (for example: By Laws, registering your group with GSO, and the County "layer"), and there are some which are not found readily elsewhere (for example: alphabet soup, in the back), but there are some lengthy things which are found in other publications. I've heard different views, and all have value. One view is that these items helped people when they first came into SENY service, one is that maybe new people don't have a service handbook, and another view is that if we can find them somewhere else, why not keep our Handbook to items specific to SENY and make the Handbook less daunting. I'm asking that you talk to each other and consider if you'd like to have this Handbook streamlined a bit, or if you'd like to keep it all. Next committee meeting I will entertain a motion to streamline (there is no need to make a motion to keep something we have in place). While we're at a major editing job, we might as well. And it is, after all, the first revision in eight years. Any questions?

Michelle, Treasurer: 7th Tradition bag is making the rounds. I propose making a change to contributions budget line, and we will have a budget meeting on December 10th; I will do a workshop also. We also need to purchase translation equipment, which with Body's approval will come out of equipment budget line, not translation.

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MOTION to accept budget (w/ changes): 37 FOR, 0 AGAINST, 0 ABSTENTIONS - MOTION PASSED

Fred, Registrar: Fred, Registrar: Since our last Committee meeting I've worked with Chris, the Publications Review Committee Chair, to incorporate all the feedback I received re. updating the Registrar's position description.

2009 version:

- Updates group and area committee information in the area's database on the area's computer systems.
- Maintains a backup copy of the area database and related records.
- Updates the area's database with USPS zip + 4 numbers and bar-codes for mailings.

2017 proposal:

- Maintains and regularly backs up the database system shared by the Area and counties.

The first two bullets about updating our Area database have been consolidated & simplified. It also now reflects the Committee's decision in June to move forward with our shared database system. The third bullet about maintaining barcodes and zip codes in a specific format has not been necessary or in effect for at least several years, so that's been dropped.

2009 version: Cooperates with the GSO Records Department to coordinate new and existing group and other area information on AAWS/GSO's Fellowship New Vision (FNV) database system.

2017 proposal: Updates GSO's database.

The bullet about updating GSO's database has also been simplified. The 2009 version was extremely wordy and a little confusing – the updated version makes it clearer that the Area Registrar is making the updates to GSO's database, not GSO's Records Department.

2009 version: Coordinates the annual group records update project with GSO and the GSRs, DCMs and DCMCs.

2017 proposal: Provides DCMs and DCMCs with access to the data for their district or county.

GSO makes an annual push starting each February and ending in May to have us clean up their data. Our shared database system has allowed us to bake that update process into our normal course of business. We no longer have to take on a project once a year, because we're effectively doing it year-round. To use a metaphor from the Steps, instead of creating wreckage each year and then cleaning it up, we're no longer creating wreckage.

Part of the old clean-up process was providing DCMs & DCMCs with a stack of papers, one for each group in their district or county. Of course you still have access and should continue to have access to your district or county's information, and that's important, so we made sure that was part of the position description.

2009 version: Manages the office voice-mail system.

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2017 proposal: Coordinates replies to voicemails and text messages directed to the Area's phone number.

The bullet around the Area's voicemails has been clarified – it now makes it clear that the Registrar is responsible for coordinating replies, and also covers the text messages we receive.

2009 version: Coordinates sign-in sheets at the committee and assembly meetings.

2017 proposal: Creates sign-in sheets for Assemblies and Committee meetings and coordinates the sign-in process.

Same thing for the sign-in sheets. It's now clearer what the Registrar is actually responsible for: creating the sign-in sheets and coordinating the sign-in process.

2009 version: Maintains the area's USPS bulk mail permit.

2017 proposal: [deleted]

The bullet about maintaining the USPS bulk mail permit has been deleted. USPS launched a free tool at the start of 2013 that made it easier to create labels, save money on postage costs, and eliminated the need and the fee for renewing permits. I reported at last year's November Assembly that I had switched us to this tool. So there's no more maintenance involved with our bulk mailing permit, and we're saving about \$700 / year.

2009 version:

- Arranges necessary supplies, equipment and support for the area's mailings.
- Coordinates the area's mass mailings.
- Passes along communications and requests from AAWS/Grapevine of possible interest to the membership.

2017 proposal: [deleted]

At the last Committee meeting, I had proposed new positions to cover sending out our postal mailings and our monthly email update. I believe we have a need as an Area to send out these communications. In this updated version, I'm not creating any new positions but I'm also not suggesting we get rid of these responsibilities altogether. I'm only asking you to agree that they don't belong in the Registrar's position, and we can tackle how to handle them after we get more clarity on the other upcoming handbook updates. A number of people made this suggestion to me after the Committee meeting.

I have worked extremely hard to make this position easier for my successors than it was for me or the people who came before me. There are now far more people who will be able to serve in this position effectively than there were before. It's not enough. Even with all the ways this position has gotten easier – and I know some of you are skeptical about that, but it has – if we don't take these responsibilities out of the Registrar's position, we're setting them up for failure and doing a disservice to our membership who will be under-served.

We've essentially combined three positions' worth of work into one: managing the shared database system & updating GSO's database, preparing & deploying postal mailings, and

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preparing & deploying email updates. It's completely unmanageable. On top of that, each of these sets of responsibilities requires a different skill set – it's very unlikely to come across people who can do all three parts of the job as it currently exists.

In recent memory we've had two Registrars simply refuse to do major parts of their job because it was so unreasonable. It's pretty unusual for someone who makes their way down the triangle to the level of an Area Officer to simply not do their job. The fact that it's happened twice only a few years apart should tell us something.

The Registrar should be focused on maintaining our shared database system, and working with and supporting counties & districts to keep GSR and group information up-to-date. We need to send out our postal mailings and emails, but it's irresponsible to overload this position with that. I'm proposing that we leave it out, and we can return to it as we get more clarity after the remaining handbook updates. Also the last bullet is in every other officer's description, so it's already covered.

Finally there's no change to the bullet related to preparing the incoming Registrar at the end of the rotation: "Late in the second year, works with the newly-elected Registrar to pass along a basic knowledge of the job."

If this motion passes, I will continue to fulfill any removed responsibilities until the Committee has a chance to make a final decision on where they belong.

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

Evelyn, DMC 404, and John, Delegate: This Saturday 404 will look for Area 49's Support for The God Word Pamphlet, either the UK original or a US version, because there is an apparent need for Atheist / Agnostic literature and current material like "Pathways to Spirituality" is insufficient. John notes that this is "3rd Tradition" literature. Any AA member can send a suggested item, but 404 would like the Area's support.

Announcement: 7th Tradition is \$155.

MOTION to Accept Revised Position Descriptions [Accessibility/Special Needs, Convention, Intergroup Liaison, Link, Treatment] made. After discussion, MOTION is WITHDRAWN

MOTION to Accept Revised Position Description [Registrar] and seconded. Discussion. 39 FOR, 3 AGAINST, 3 ABSTENTIONS, Minority Opinion was heard, no change. MOTION PASSED

9:38 p.m.: Meeting Closed