

**AL-ANON - SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA WORLD SERVICE (SCWS)
AREA ASSEMBLY - SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2020**

Draft Minutes

9:30 a.m. - Starting time

A) Chairperson's Report -- Donna E.

- Moment of Silence -- Serenity Prayer
- Welcome -- Past Delegates: New District Representatives (DRs) and Group Representatives (GRs), Members-at Large and Guests from other Areas (Texas)
- Guidelines for Participation: Zoom Version & Who Has a Voice and a Vote. Only GRs have a vote; everyone else has a voice.

B) Traditions read by: Teresa F., D66

C) Roll Call -- Group Records Coordinator, Mary M. (total voting members = 196)

D03 = 7	D06 = 5	D08 = 6	D09 = 4	D10 = 2	D12 = 11	D17 = 10
D21 = 9	D24 = 6	D27 = 5	D30 = 12	D33 = 2	D36 = 5	D39 = 1
D40 = 2	D42 = 2	D45 = 6	D48 = 0	D51 = 5	D54 = 6	D57 = 13
D60 = 19	D63 = 7	D64 = 9	D66 = 13	D69 = 14	D72 = 10	D75 = 5
D78 = 2						

D) Secretary: Laleña C. -- Approval of September 26, 2020 Assembly Minutes: Connie D69: correction will be emailed to Lalena. Lynn D21: no "e" at the end of her name; she'll email Lalena.

Vote to approve Minutes as amended:

■ Yes=149 (71%) ■ No= 0%, ■ Abstain=23 (11%) ■ Not a voting member=39 (18%)

E) Treasurer's Report --Eva B.

- **Financial Report—2020 Year-to-Date** (from January-September 30): profit and loss which is income and expenses.
 - Revenue dropped 17.99% compared to last year.
 - 19.43% decrease in expenditures.
 - Net operating revenue -7.60% means we spent more than we brought in.
 - Balance sheet: what we own and what we owe.
 - Checking and savings went up 20.32% compared to last year, fixed assets (equipment) -44.58%, total fixed assets: -44.58%, total assets: 13.05% higher than last year.
 - We compare year to year so we can benchmark how we are doing. Area is doing well financially, considering the effects of the pandemic on Area meetings.

Questions:

Pia D57: Why do we pay fees? Shouldn't we be exempt because we are a nonprofit?

Eva: This is a fee for renting the check scanner equipment. We don't pay any other bank fees.

Barbara D3: Where does Ample Reserve sit? The CDs are more than \$35,000, where is the rest? Balance in checking is over \$70,000: do we need that much in there?

Eva: \$35,000 is in CDs, plus the dividends paid by the CDs which we "turn over" into another CD, rather than withdrawing the interest earned. We will address the question about our high balance in checking during the Finance Committee Report on today's Agenda.

Peggy D40: On the statement: we brought in more than we spent this quarter?

Eva: This is a year-to-date statement, not quarterly.

Ellie D12: On the balance sheet under ample reserve: What does "Retained earnings *OE" mean?

Eva: Retained earnings are the accumulated net profit and OE in Retained Earnings means Open Entry.

Ellie: D12: What are those retained earnings?

Eva: Sum of the net income.

Ellie D12: On the balance sheet, when I go to print it, the percent column doesn't fit. Could you reformat so that column will print?

Eva: Yes

Lynn D21: Checking balance: Does that balance include donation to WSO?

Eva: We sent the \$12,641.09 contribution to WSO in September. That is the balance *after* the contribution to WSO.

Comments:

Barbara D3: I like how we compare one year to the other, but there should be an asterisk for this year since it's a very different year. We don't want anyone to be alarmed when expenses go up in future.

Darcy: D63: Thinks that donations are less because fewer people are able to purchase literature.

Vote: to accept Treasurer's Report (total voting members = 198)

■ Yes=194 (81%) ■ No= 0%, ■ Abstain=3 (1%) ■ Not a voting member=42 (18%)

• **Recommendation from Treasurer and Finance Committee: Increase SCWS Ample Reserve to equal 12 months' annual expenses**

Cathy S. Chair, Finance Committee: Cash on hand as of 9/30: \$114,228.56 minus current \$35,000 Ample Reserved leave \$79,228.56 remaining cash on hand. Finance Committee recommends increasing our Ample Reserve to equivalent of 12 months' operating expenses (per G-41, *Reserve Fund Guideline*). If we increase the Ample Reserve to \$70,000, we will have \$44,228.56 in the checking account.

Questions:

Sandra D3: Confused, is \$35,000 the ample reserve?

Donna, Chair: That is the current ample reserve. The Finance Committee is proposing increasing it from 6 months' expenses to 12 months'.

Mary D75: Does that mean we could give more to WSO?

Eva, Treasurer: The Finance Committee will probably make a recommendation in November that we send a contribution to WSO for 2020. We have to do things one at a time.

Nancy D66: Thanked everyone, found the presentation helpful. Questioned the \$114,228.56 total and asked if the contribution to WSO (of \$12,641.) had been deducted. Is this the adjusted amount?

Eva: The amount on the presentation is incorrect. It should have been \$101,587.47 minus \$35,000= actual amount is \$66,587.47 remaining.

Connie D69: Has the Finance Committee taken into consideration the special situation we're in right now, and that in the months to come members might not be able to contribute like they have in the past?

Cathy S.: Yes, that's exactly why we are making this recommendation--so that we will have an ample reserve, if that were to happen.

Eva: CDs are staggered every year, concern I hear is what happens if we need money? We have been receiving contributions. Based on what we see, there is nothing to fear. Worse comes to worse, we have our Ample Reserve which is available when needed.

Peggy D40: Is the 12 month's amount an interpretation or did you change it?

Donna: Guidelines are published by WSO, and it lists suggested guidance for ample reserve amounts for Areas, Districts, and Groups. It recommends that Area's reserves equal 6 to 12 months' expenses.

Comments:

Jayne: There are 4 members of the Finance Committee, selected by the Area Chair. These members are financial analysts and/or have CPAs, and two of them run their own businesses. They are our trusted servants who have been meeting almost weekly to look at all aspects of the Area's finances. Warranty One suggests that sufficient operating funds include an ample reserve. Referred everyone to the *Warranty One* section of the *Service Manual* (p. 212-215) to see that the ample reserve ensures continuation of essential services in case there is a decline in income.

Marcia: Is the additional amount coming from savings, checking or CDs?

Donna: The funds are in our checking account. Our CDs are our current ample reserve of \$35,000.

Joyce D69: When was it changed from 6 months to a year?

Donna: We're discussing increasing it today, based on the amount of cash we have on hand in our checking

account.

Carol: I hear some concern. In my years in Al-Anon, I have never found a financial need surface when our members have not risen to the occasion. Please think in abundance, as well as prudence.

Lorraine: D69: I think the opposite: to increase the ample reserve is operating in fear. I believe God is taking care of us, and she doesn't see the need to increase the reserve. We'll need that money for insurance as well as other additional costs when meetings go back to meeting face to face.

Nancy D66: This is an unusual time so expenses are down and there is an increase in contributions. What year of operating funds are you basing it on? Doesn't agree with the increase, thinks waiting would be more prudent.

Lynn D21: If we increase it, how would we get to that goal of increase? What is the plan for that?

Cathy: We have sufficient money in account already.

Donna: We would shift the additional amount into CDs which would leave us with approximately \$66,000 cash on hand.

Miriam, Past Delegate: The G-41 can be downloaded from the al-aon.org website, for free. Read the *Guideline*--that the Ample Reserve for Groups is 1-4 months' expenses, so GRs know.

Josefa D64: Agrees with Jayme. It's better to put more money in reserves as suggested otherwise this will keep coming up. Otherwise, we will have to increase contribution to WSO. The money has to go somewhere. We can't hold onto it.

Motion: Barbara D3 made a motion: To accept the Finance Committee's recommendation to increase ample reserve to 12 months expenses; Peggy D40 seconded.

Vote: ■ Yes=162 (66%) ■ No=33 (31%) ■ Abstain=6 (2%) ■ Not a voting member=44 (18%)

Donna: we need 2/3 majority of the "yes" and "no" votes. Ben: 129 would be 2/3rds.

New count of voting members: 202

Yoly: Referenced p. 214 in *Service Manual*.

F) Observe 7th Tradition – Eva – “Contributions” link on SCWS website

G) Old Business

- Area Insurance for Groups Task Force (Update): Donna close to having all the members. She will send an email out soon regarding the Task Force, once it is filled.

H) New Business

- **Vote on revisions/changes to *Southern CA Policy for Resolving Group and Member Concerns*:**

Marcia: The red font in the version of the *Policy* posted on the SCWS website indicates changes made to the original document. Some were minor. She will be explaining the significant changes today.

Policy revisions/clarifications history: Delegates have brought concerns about Groups in their Areas to the World Service Conference (WSC) since at least 2005. In July, 2018, there was a motion from the Board of Trustees that WSO offer guidance to Areas regarding creating their own *Do Not Refer and Re-refer Policy*. These criteria allow WSO to support Area “Do Not Refer” group conscience decisions. The SCWS Area revised/clarified 2016 policy based on WSO's recommendations. The *Policy* and the history of it is on our website as well in today's PowerPoint presentation.

In Sept. 2018, *SCWS Policy for Resolving Group and Members* was submitted to WSO. Based on their input, the following changes were made:

1. Clarified DR's role as the primary person to begin the dialogue and education process with Group members.
2. Multiple opportunities for dialogue and education were added to the process.
3. If resolution is not achieved, the SCWS Board becomes involved in the dialogue and education process. If there is not a resolution, the Board is the body that votes to remove a Group from the local meeting directory and advises WSO of its decision, so that the meeting is removed from the WSO directory.

In March 2020, WSO responded positively to our *Policy* revisions. Their final approval is contingent upon approval by the SCWS Board and the Assembly. That is why the Assembly is voting on this today.

Donna: There is a process for the delisted group to appeal to be relisted. Also, even if a Group is removed from a directory, it is still an Al-Anon meeting and its GR has a voice and a vote at the Assembly.

Questions:

Martha D57: How is the record keeping done? Is that the responsibility of the DR or the Area?

Donna: By the Area

Mike D24: What percentage of the 21 member Board needs to vote to delist the meeting?

Donna: It requires substantial unanimity, which is 2/3rds of the Board members.

Rene D17: Are conventions mentioned? Can a group have a separate convention if they are not associated with the Area? For example, YHA?

Marcia: The *Policy* only addresses Groups and does not address conventions.

Peter D27: Is there a separate policy to delist a group and it's no longer an Al-Anon group?

Marcia: Right now there is no vehicle through our *Policy* to remove a group from being an Al-Anon group. However, WSO has handled particular situations on a case-by-case basis. Our hope is that Groups will make changes to their practices, once they understand our Traditions and the *Service Manual*.

Donna D57: If a group is removed from listing can they still vote? In the future, if there is a group that is not following the Traditions, can we move quicker on this?

Marcia: Yes, the group can still have a Group Representative and the GR can participate and vote at Area Assembly. The Policy process is slow to make sure all opportunities are taken to communicate with the Group, GR, DR, and follow the procedures for education and dialogue.

Patricia D72: What do we do if Groups are not following the Traditions? What do we do if they live somewhere different?

Donna: We have a group and members concerns email address, one in English and Spanish on our website. Our first recommendation is to call a business meeting, for the GR to take the *Service Manual* to the meeting to educate the members about the issue. Then if that doesn't work, email the Area.

Lalena, Secretary: Suggested that members can take a group inventory using the *Group Inventory Guidelines (G-8a and G-8b)*

Donna: Guidelines can be downloaded for free from al-anon.org (WSO) website.

Brian D3: Is there a policy yet about holding face-to-face meetings?

Donna: Our recommendation is members follow local public health guidelines.

Josefa: As an Area, what do you do about the meetings where there are problems? Do you eventually go into the meeting to observe and share?

Marcia: We have a flow chart on the website that answers a lot of questions, numerous possibilities how we continue working with the group for education, a visual to see where we are. The flowchart is in Spanish as well.

Donna: Education happens first between the District and the Group, then it evolves from there.

Terri D33: This feels punitive. Why remove a meeting from a directory?

Donna: To keep newcomers from going to meetings that are not following our Traditions and are not an accurate representation of our program. When Groups register with WSO, they agree to follow the Traditions.

Comments:

Marley D21: She was on the Task Force that developed the original *Policy*. She thinks that increasing the number of people who will make the final decision from just 3 to 21 is a really great change.

Bernie D54: He's been in program 31 years, and he doesn't see this as punitive. This is about educating people.

Donna D57: No problem delisting groups, but those who continue to not follow our Traditions should be dissolved completely.

Patricia D72: Agrees.

Jayne: Was on the *Policy* Task Force. When does tolerance morph into ignoring the elephant in the living room? Education is the main part of the *Policy*. Referred members to the Sponsorship bookmark, and the *Service Manual* (p. 52-53) regarding resolving group problems.

Katherine D8: There's a checklist can be printed from WSO?

Donna: No, we are referring to the WSO website that lists meetings by numbers.

Marcia: Everyone can read the *Policy* documents on the SCWS website.

Josefa: D64: We are learning to apply principles, so we teach them what our principles are, rather than our opinions about what we think Groups should do. We would lose our purpose if we didn't follow our principles.

Patty F. Was there any consideration of giving a DR flow chart earlier?

Donna: Yes, that is how it works. Sometimes someone writes to us using the group and member concerns email address and there's been a simple misunderstanding. If we determine that there are Traditions involved and practices that could be hurtful to members, then we get the DR involved.

Mark D66: Thinks rule changes are very important. He's had personal experience.

Motion: To accept the revisions to the *Area Policy*. Marley D21 made the motion, Peggy D40 seconded it.

Vote: ■ Yes=194 (81%) ■ No=1 (0%) ■ Abstain=2 (1%) ■ Not a voting member=42 (18%)

New count of voting members: 206

Marcia thanked everyone.

Alternate Delegate's Report – Eva B. • Sharing of Service (SOS) Report

January 16 9:00am-3:30pm. Two speakers: Jud L, Past Delegate New Mexico/El Paso and Ric B., "Using the Concepts in our Personal Lives." Will be on Zoom, details to come. We can have 1,000 participants. We will send out an email with the details to everyone on our listserv.

I) Delegate's Report -- Marcia M.

What's new in the Area?

There are some "hybrid" meetings -- with some members meeting in a physical location while others join using their cell phones. Most Groups are meeting virtually. Some Zoom meetings have become permanent electronic meetings.

Cautioned against outside issues being discussed before, during, and after virtual meetings. This is particularly important during this time of elections and politics. It's important that members keep political opinions, signs, messages outside of their meetings. Tradition 10: we have no opinion on outside issues.

We've heard more reports about dominance and control, lack of rotation of leadership, lack of group conscience. Important for Groups to hold business meetings so that they can reason things out with one another.

J) New Business: Marcia M.

1. Election Procedures – New Board for SCWS—elections in November of this year!

Resumés are on the website. Please read the resumés before the November Assembly.

Q) AI-Anon-Related Announcements: AFG Convention fundraiser flyer

Closing time – 12:30 p.m. - Closed with AI-Anon Declaration