

Area 53 Panel 63 Assembly Minutes – June 1, 2014

OPENING OF THE ASSEMBLY – Stephen S., Area Chair presided:

- Stephen S., Area Chair, called the meeting to Order with the “We” version of the Serenity Prayer.
- Stephen called the roll of attendees: 18 GSRs, 5 Alternate GSRs, 1 DCMC, 6 DCMs, 1 Alternate DCM, 3 Standing Committee Chairs, 7 Officers, 3 Past Delegates, 2 interested A.A.s, 1 Webmaster.
- Stephen reviewed the Agenda and handouts.
- Nita S., Area Secretary, presented the March 2013 Assembly Minutes. Luann moved and Steve seconded a motion to approve the minutes. The minutes were approved unanimously.
- Kristi H., Area Treasurer, presented the Treasurer’s Report. Steve D. moved and Ed A. seconded a motion to approve the report. The report was approved unanimously.

BUSINESS MEETING – Stephen S., Area Chair presided:

Unfinished Business

- Area 53 Inventory Status Report – Greg M., Alternate Chair, reported: Inventories are still being received. The Area 53 mailing has not gone out yet because the mailing list is still being updated. The deadline for responses will be 60 days after Area does its mailing.
- Unity Day Update – Greg M., Alternate Chair, reported: Unity Day will be August 17 at Hannah Park in Gahanna.
- “Conscious Contact” Information Page – Stephen S. asked attendees to check the contact information submitted to COGF.
- Financial Policy Guideline Changes – Stephen S. reviewed the suggested changes as presented in the attached handout. See attachment on page 8.
 - Changes to Operating Principles were approved unanimously as in the handout.
 - Article VIII Financial Guidelines of the Area 53 Assembly, Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, and 7 were reviewed as in the handout.
 - Section 1:
 - Peg S., DCMC, proposed an amendment to add the following sentence to Section 1: “Consistent with the principle of non-affiliation, the Area Committee will determine the appropriateness of contributions from other A.A. entities.” Luann G., CPC/PI Chair, seconded the motion. Vote: Thirty-seven in favor; 1 opposed. Motion carried. No minority opinion was given.
 - Motion to approve the amended statement passed unanimously.
 - Section 2:
 - Motion to approve the amendment passed unanimously.
 - Sections 3 and 5 in current Guidelines to be amended and become Sections 3 and 4:
 - Motion to approve the amendment passed unanimously.
 - Section 7:
 - Motion to approve the amendment passed unanimously.

New Business

- Group Checking Account Best Practice. Stephen S., Area Chair, presented “Opening a Checking Account: An Area 53 Information and Sharing Session – June 1, 2014.”
 - Kristi H. expressed concerns about this additional scrutiny and suggested going on a cash basis or using a personal checking account
 - Kristi also mentioned the potential problem of creating a sense of ownership in the person who gives their information to the bank.
 - CPC/PI has gone through the process of getting an EIN and opening an account.

- Frank G. said one group keeps a 4-column ledger and a prudent reserve of \$100 cash and whenever the cash exceeds the prudent reserve, they make contributions to the entities.
 - Frank also mentioned a personal checking account with two signatures
 - Steve D. explained that their District uses a personal DBA account requiring two signatures
 - Stephen S. suggested asking if the group really needs a checking account and if so, why?
 - Chris J. said, if you are making a deposit and your name is not on the account, the bank will ask to see a form of ID.
- Panel 65 Elections (to be held September 14, 2014) – Stephen S. reviewed the “Area 53 Panel 65 (2015-2016) Election Procedures.” Stephen mentioned the motto used in Area 5 “Stand for everything or stand for nothing.” He emphasized the spiritual ideas behind the Third Legacy Procedure. He asked attendees to think about standing for positions and to share this information with their groups.
 - Ad Hoc Data & Technology Policy Committee, Scope & Plan – Bill Y., Area Webmaster, presented: The Data and Technology Ad Hoc (DATA) committee was formed by the Area Committee for the purpose of looking at how Area 53 collects and protects data about our members. Some of the area activities that need data include maintaining group and service position records in Fellowship New Vision, registering people for events like the mini-conference, collecting online credit card payments for contributions, send emails, and posting news and contact information on the Area website. In the past decade or more, some of this type of information about individuals was probably gathered and stored on personal computers used by someone in a service position. We should be mindful of what happens to any data on area members in the long term and whether it is being properly handled to reasonably protect their privacy. Where practical, it should be possible for a member to ask the area to remove personally identifiable information about them if it is not essential for group record keeping as required by GSO.

The Area uses secure computer systems, including Fellowship New Vision, online banking and credit card processing at PayPal, and the area website, email and hosting accounts. When elected officers rotate, procedures for passing on the secure credentials should be well documented and well executed. Passwords to our secure systems should be properly protected. As the area expands use of technology to provide services and benefits to our members, it is essential that there be good policies and procedures. These policies, procedures and guidelines should be understood by the members of the area assembly.

The DATA committee will identify opportunities and make recommendations about how the area should conduct business regarding data and technology. The goal is to prepare a summary report by the December 2014 assembly. Participation is open to all area members who want to voice constructive and thoughtful ideas. The scope of work does not include selecting or implementing technology solutions; participating in this important work does not require any particular technical skills or background. Committee meetings and focus groups will be conducted as online webinar meetings, so having a computer with internet access is recommended. Watch the area website for more details. Contact Bill Y. to join.

LUNCH BREAK

OFFICER REPORTS – Greg M., Alternate Area Chair presided:

- Panel 63 Delegate – Dave C., Delegate, reported:

The General Service Conference was held in Rye Town, NY April 27 – May 3. There were 34 Conference advisory actions that received 2/3 vote of the 133 voting members of the Conference.

Actions Taken:

An updated video of “Markings on the Journey” was approved; the video “It sure Beats Sitting in a Cell” will be replaced at a cost of no more than \$70K; a revised “Circles of Love and Service” pamphlet was approved; a new pamphlet titled “Many Paths to Spirituality” was approved; trial electronic voting on all non-election votes for one day each year of 2016-2017 was approved; the 2014 A.A. Survey Questionnaire will be changed in seven of the questions; two public service videos will be discontinued and a new public service announcement will be produced to not exceed cost of \$30K; A 2014 A.A. Membership Survey be conducted by area on a random basis; several revisions were made to the Service Manual that included ‘secretary and registrar’ and ‘advisory actions’ and ‘additional considerations’ descriptions; three revisions/updates were made to two CPC pamphlets aimed at informing professionals; it was recommended the General Service Office report on how a plan to provide to all conference members access to complete GSC agendas and background material in English, Spanish and French.; approved two new regional (Pacific Region and Eastern Canada Region) trustees to start In May 2014; approved ECR Trustee William F. from Marietta, Ohio to begin a 2-year term as A.A. Grapevine Corporate Board member; (elected three non-alcoholic Class A Trustees to be officers of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous; approved an anonymity protected photograph of the flag ceremony be taken at the 2015 International Convention in Atlanta and an encrypted anonymity-protected internet broadcast of same be produced; in addition, clarifications were made to the A.A.W.S. policy on Publication of literature; a revision was approved in the Corrections pamphlet ‘What A.A. does not do’; set the 2017 GSC date for meeting.

Significant items not approved:

No change to Questions and Answers on Sponsorship or to Bridging the Gap; no Circle and Triangle on Conference Approved literature (it came up as a floor action and was voted down by 2/3); no revision could be approved on the “Anonymity Card” (F-20); there was no vote to change the “Alcoholism At Large” section of the A.A. Grapevine; a suggested book title for the Grapevine to produce is changing to a diversity title instead of using “People of Color” title; there will be no ASL book of the Best of Bill produced; the recommendation to re-affirm the right of decision of A.A. Grapevine Board to make formatting decisions for *A.A. Grapevine & LaVina* failed; there will be no change to the “Living Sober” page 5 reference to ‘addiction’ excerpt; there will be no Blue Card change that would have inserted an excerpt regarding non-alcoholics and their participation in A.A. open meetings; and the Literature Committee took no action on the proposal for a pamphlet for alcoholics with mental illness.

Significant Floor Action:

The mental illness issue came up again as a floor action that proposed ‘literature’ on the topic. There was a long discussion in which several conference members argued that this literature be produced because it might save lives of alcoholics who might hear in meetings to stop taking prescribed drugs for their mental illness. The proposal never got enough votes but it made me more aware of the information in A.A. pamphlets “Problems other than Alcohol” and “The A.A. Member – Medications and other Drugs.”

Example of Minority Opinion:

There was a great example of the Minority opinion this General Service Conference. The Blue Card service piece change that added references to non-alcoholics was approved in a conference vote of 82-41, exactly 2/3. Then a minority opinion was expressed. A person voting in the majority stood up to say they were changing their vote and then the vote was called again and by a vote of 62-61 the question went back to the floor to start a new discussion. When the question was called a second time the new vote was only 60-55 and the Blue Card proposal that was approved was then not approved for lack of 2/3 vote.

Dave C. also showed a slideshow of highlights from the Conference. If you want a delegate's report at your group or district or committee please contact Dave at delegate@area53aa.org. For all information regarding A.A. in Ohio and A.A. as a whole go to the website at www.area53aa.org

- Area 53 Chair – Stephen S., Area Chair, reported:

The Area Committee met April 13 at 1 PM at the Central Ohio Group Fellowship office. Eighteen voting members attended: 9 Area Officers, 4 Standing Committee Chairs, 4 DCMs, and the DCMC. Two interested A.A.s and the Area Webmaster were also present.

Our Delegate again requested volunteers to serve on inter-area panels at the Ohio State/East Central Regional Convention on July 25-27. Financial support is available for Area 53 participants. The Area Registrar announced that the deadline for updating your group contact information for the Eastern Region Directory is May 9th.

Surveys have been distributed for the Area Inventory through the “Conscious Contact” and the Website. The Committee requested that in Information Session be presented at the June Assembly on the Best Practice for opening a group checking account. I researched the topic and prepared a report for the assembly.

We formed an Ad-hoc Committee on Data & Technology Policy to be chaired by Bill Y. A report on the Committee's scope is on the June Agenda. Also on the agenda is an information session on the September Election Assembly.

An up-to-date version of the Area Guidelines was posted to the Area Website and copies will be available at the June Assembly.

Dave and I also attended the District 7 meeting to help organize efforts to reach out to more GSRs. We also met with three GSRs in District 22 that are going to attempt to light the District.

- Area 53 Registrar – Jim F., Alternate Registrar, reported:

Information for the next Eastern Region Directory review process should be submitted by May 9, 2014. Information can still be entered into the directory. It just will not go through the entire review process. Please give updated information to Jim F., Alternate Registrar, or Dan H., Registrar, as soon as possible. It's not necessary to wait for an Assembly. The information goes live as soon as it is entered into Fellowship New Vision. Addresses are instantly checked and incorrect addresses are instantly invalidated. In addition to the mailing of Box 459 and other GSO mailings, Area 53 is using this information to mail the Inventory.

DISTRICT AND GROUP REPORTS – Peg S., DCMC, presided and introduced the segment with the following statement:

“GSR reports can be completed in hard copy or online. They are for the information of Area 53 only. They do not need to be read in their entirety at the podium or microphone. Please come up and identify yourself, your group, any upcoming events, and issues of concern to your group, such as

things you have addressed in your group conscience. Please keep your comments as brief as possible.”

- Reports by District - DCM & GSRs for each District approach microphone together.

District 34:

Dana P., DCM, July 13th planning committee. Workshop October 11, 2014.
Bobby, GSR, New Life Group, planning an Anniversary in August
Terri H., GSR, Good Morning Breakfast Group, Annual Picnic September.

District 1:

Keith Q., DCM, reported that efforts continue to light up the district.
Andy A., GSR, By Now We Know But Little Group reported.

District 11:

Brenda B. GSR Friday Night Closed Discussion: The group is having its 33rd Anniversary on June 24, 2014.

Lisa H., GSR Rise and Shine Meeting, Ninth Anniversary to be held in August

District 12: Frank G., Alternate DCM: District is planning a yearly gathering. One issue to be discussed will be how to be autonomous. They are working with the Registrar to make sure group information is accurate. Three GSR packets were delivered as a result of that. Additionally the District was asked to speak to some people attempting to create a sober house for women.

District 15: Matt P., Alt GSR of Hand in Hand Group reported for the DCM. The District is looking for a location for late July, early August event.

District 16: Stephanie S., DCM: The District is planning an event on “The Home Group.”

Jay, GSR, Athens Monday Night Big Book reported.

District 18: Bob H. reported that Circleville Friday Night Open Speaker Meeting will have its 43rd Anniversary Meeting June 20 at 6:30PM.

District 19: Steve D., DCM: The District is changing elections so that not all GSRs change at the same time. There is an upcoming event on history of A.A. The District will also have a picnic August 16. District members are visiting dark groups and have doubled GSRs attending.

Andy W., GSR Greenfield Freedom Group: The Group is having its 32nd anniversary dinner June 8, 2014. Group is learning about A.A. structure and what it takes to keep the doors open. New members are curious as to how to carry the message. Some old-timers like things “just the way they are.” The group and members are starting on a growth process.

District 21: Greg H., DCM: The District is changing terms of service positions.

Aaron B., GSR, Living Sober Group: The Group just began paying rent once a month.

Melissa B., GSR Monday-Friday Nooners Group: Melissa currently fills all service positions.

District 23: Tommy O., GSR, Early Bird Big Book Group: 25th Anniversary is Saturday, June 28th beginning at 6AM.

District 26: Ed A., DCM: The District is conducting a District Inventory. Rule 62 Day will be September 21 from 10am to 4PM at Hanna Park.

Ed A., GSR for On the Way Home Group: The Group will hold its Anniversary on August 5th with the dual lead of a couple from New London with 30+ years of sobriety.

Dominique M. Northeast Discussion Group, GSR, Northeast Discussion Group reported.

Luann G., GSR, Solutions Group reported.

Becky M., GSR, After Work Group: The Group is now a literature meeting. They requested permission from GSO to make copies of literature specific to the history and founding of A.A. GSO granted permission so long as they include a “credit line” GSO provided.

Kim M., GSR, Crossties Group: At their recent group conscience, the group expressed its opinion that it would like central office to stay at its current location.

Laura, GSR, North American Sunday Group: Typical of other meetings in the District, they have good group attendance, but few home group members.

District 28: Taffy J., DCM: The District decided to meet monthly. They are discussing upcoming events. They need a new secretary. Their last event was a service fair with chili cookout with a turnout of over 50 people.

Chris T., GSR, Maple Grove reported.

Kathy P., GSR, Clintonville Big Book reported.

Becky R., GSR, Women's Early Bird Group: The group addressed the issue of what to do if a man comes to their meeting

District 30:

Terri G., GSR, Monday Night Steps and Traditions: The group will begin the second half of the traditions and show a movie of Bill discussing them.

Betsy T., GSR, Women's Sunset Group: The Group recently held their anniversary which was attended by more than 400 women.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS – Greg M, Alternate Area Chair presided:

- Corrections Committee – Chris J. reported: The April 26 Correctional Committee workshop included Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections director and other staff members and inmates. The current chair and the alternate chair will not be able to stand next panel so he encouraged others interested to participate in the Committee.
- CPC/PI Committee – LuAnn G., CPC/PI Chair, reported: The Committee's first annual workshop was held. Twenty folks attended. Dave C., Delegate, spoke about his experience at the Conference in New York. A panel spoke on CPC/PI projects, what we do when we attend health fairs, and about speaking to non-AA audiences. The Committee will attend the Addiction Studies Institute in August. The Committee will work with Corrections for a reentry fair. Bill Y. is using the CPC/PI Committee as a mailing list guinea pig and you can subscribe and unsubscribe to Committee correspondence.
- Group Services – Greg S., Group Services Chair, reported: They are going to hold a GSR school and are working with the DCM Committee and Bill Y. to make that happen. Greg S. will be attending some other meetings in Area 53 and will bring Group Services material with him. He also has three of the commemorative Big Books available at cost.
- Liaison Committee – Chris T. reported: Area Liaison Committee Chair, Paul H., attended the May 4th COGF Advisory Board meeting and the May 10th special members meeting and has the following to report:
 - 1) The members meeting voted 62-33 to not renew COGF's lease at 100 W. 3rd Avenue.
 - 2) The members meeting voted with substantial unanimity to move to 645 & 651 W. Broad Street 43215.
 - 3) COGF'S first day of business at the new location will be September 1st 2014.
 - 4) Unity Day will be held on August 17 in Gahanna at the same location as where the Rule 62 picnic was held.
 - 5) The new location for COGF will have a meeting room that can hold 57 people and possibly 80 people if it is remodeled.
 - 6) The Board approved IRS form 990 for submission.
- Mini-Conference Committee – Kelly C. reported: There were 104 attendees at the Mini-Conference. The location for the March 6 - 8, 2015 Mini-Conference is Deercreek State Park. A deposit has been paid. The Committee will meet the first Monday of the month at 6:30PM at Oakland Park United Methodist Church.
- Special Needs Committee – Sue M., Special Needs Committee Chair, reported: They are working on making pamphlets available at nursing homes, treatment centers, deaf school, blind schools. They need suggestions on pamphlets. They are trying to get more interpreters at meetings. The Daily Reflections is available in braille.

- Treatment Committee – Bob H., Treatment Committee Chair, reported: The Committee Chair received correspondence from GSO on loners, homers, and internationalists. He's working on an inventory of treatment centers in Area 53. He is seeking members for the Committee and looking for a Committee Chair for the next panel.

WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND? - Stephen S., Area Chair, presided: Three minutes to express your views or ask questions. Ask-it basket questions will also be addressed.

Steve D.: During the reports he heard that a meeting was making contributions to (Amethyst House). Is that affiliation in violation of our Traditions? Peg S., DCM Chair, who attends the meeting clarified that a second basket was passed to buy literature for the women at Amethyst House.

Chris J.: Corrections Committee needs folks near Belmont Correctional and Lucasville who are interested in service.

Ask-It-Basket: What are the criteria when a standing committee is not represented at the Assembly? Stephen S. explained that this is a difficult position because people who serve as Chairs do so because they are interested in service associated with that Committee. The Chair wears two hats. First the Chair must do its committee work and meet regularly with its committee. Second, the Chair is asked to do Area Committee work and attend Assemblies.

Sharon F. – There has been a lot of information about affiliation and tradition six and not all of it she agrees with. She would like the Assembly to address that issue.

CLOSING OF THE ASSEMBLY – Stephen S., Area Chair, presided:

- The September Assembly will be held September 14, 2014 at Lancaster Moose.
- The Area Committee Meetings will be held at COGF: July 13, 2014 (at current location) at 1:30PM; DCM location is at 10AM. Officers and Standing Committee Chairs will meet at 10AM to go over the Guidelines. The October 12, 2014 Committee meeting will also at COGF (at new location)
- Ohio State/East Central Region Convention – July 25-27, Holiday Inn French Quarter, Perrysburg OH
- Terri G. moved and Peg S. seconded that we adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.
- Stephen S. closed the Assembly with the "We" version of the Responsibility Statement