

**THE 2024 VIRGINIA AREA AL-ANON SPRING ASSEMBLY
MINUTES
May 4-5, 2024
Hybrid Meeting (In-Person DoubleTree, Midlothian, VA and Webex)**

“Back to Basics – Panel 62”

S A T U R D A Y, May 4, 1:00 PM

GENERAL SESSION

Welcome (Debbie P.)

The general session was opened with the Serenity Prayer and reading of the Assembly Purpose from the Service Manual, pg. 67.

Notes/Reminders (Debbie P.)

Debbie went over housekeeping items: Webex attendees mute and use raised hand feature; silence cell phones; NVSC is hosting the literature table; Assembly documents are on the Area website; Ask it Basket

Fun Facts/Area Updates:

- Ellie F. has been conducting the GR101 sessions, which can be found on the Area website under Members.
- The Area held a Sponsorship Workshop in February with 92 participants. A report can be found on the Area website.
- Documents for the Area Inventory can be found on the Area website.
- Training is available for opening/closing meetings on WebEx.
- A recording of the Treasurer Workshop conducted in April 2023 is posted on the website.
- Area convention 8/9-11/2024
- MEAC jar for donations is located in the back of the room.
- Fun facts: Number and type of Al-Anon and Alateen meetings; largest/smallest District; longest registered group; number of coordinators/liaisons/officers.

12 Steps – Patty M.

12 Traditions – Katherine P.

12 Concepts of Service – Ann S.

New Groups (Debbie P.)

6 new groups were introduced.

Introductions (Debbie P.) All past Delegates, guests, Officers and Coordinators were introduced.

VA BOUNDARY PROCEDURES (DISCUSSION) (Val P./Debbie P.)

- Debbie P. gave process for discussion and vote.
- Motion was read.
- Asked who has read policy. About ½ raised their hand.
- The Policy was revised with a focus on improved links of service and recognizing conditions that require boundary changes; i.e., district not active; district too large
- Informed Group Conscience will be used.
- We need the policy to be able to accomplish moving boundaries.

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Questions

- Troy, Nansemond - Dissolving a district, would all groups have to move to the same district or would groups be able to choose which district they move to. Debbie - Groups do not have to move to the same District but the group must be contiguous to District they join (exception Overlay Districts).
- Sophie L. Arlington – if not passed does it mean that the Spanish Overlay District can't be approved. Debbie - Officers would need to make decision as to whether we can proceed without the Policy's approval.
- Maureen M. – which actions require WSO approval? Debbie – a change in Area boundaries.

DR AND GR ROLL CALL (Deb T.) Attendance was taken using the list of those registered by District, both in-person and virtual attendees with a verbal response.

APPROVAL OF 2023 FALL ASSEMBLY MINUTES (Deb T.) Minutes are posted on Area website. No changes were received. No changes were received from the floor.

MOTION: *That the 2023 Fall Assembly Minutes be approved as written.*

Made by: Deb T.

Second by: Rick A., North Richmond

Voting results: *standing in-person vote and Webex poll. Standing in-person: Approved - majority. WebEx: Approved – 100%.*

APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT FOR THE 1st Qtr. 2024 (Laura L.) Report posted on Area website.

- Prepared April 8, 2024; numbers as through March 31, 2024.
- Income at 32% of budget; expenses at 10%.
- Still getting contributions that are not identified, please put group name and number on the check.
- Laura has the WSC summary from 2023 for VAWSC members.

MOTION: *That the Treasurer's report, prepared for the First Quarter 2024, be approved as written.*

Made by: Laura L.

Second by: Doug D., Peninsula

Voting results: *standing in-person vote and Webex poll. Standing in-person: Approved - majority; WebEx: Approved –100%.*

AREA DELEGATE'S REPORT (Stacy L.)

- Love gifts are on table for taking.
- Lots of info in WSC Summary that expands on Stacy's report.
- Their first task at WSC was to discuss ways to focus on World-wide Al-Anon.
- After sharing Area highlights, Stacy's group discussed attracting service positions. Two of Stacy's favorite ideas was to have coordinators and officers wear badges that say ask me about (list their area); reach out to Districts not represented at your Assembly.
- New literature – WSO tracks requests and when it reaches a threshold, they talk to WSC about creating a new piece of literature. Finances in Recovery will be a new literature, coming out in 2 yrs.
- Chosen WSC agenda topics:

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- Membership and unity of purpose. When is something diverting us from our purpose and spiritual aim?
- Talk about sponsorship.
- Encourage group conscience to check in with everyone, new and old. Ask why they kept coming back?
- International Coordinator Committee (ICC) (see Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual pg. 211) – 112 meetings were held with International Service Structures to discuss things like public outreach, social media, and Alateen. The ICC received requests to translate our literature from Bulgaria, Latvia, Mongolia, Thailand, and Romania.
- WSO needs translators.
- The Dominican Republic started with only one member and now has several meetings.
- The Conference Leadership Team plans the WSC conference agenda. There are no delegates in this agenda planning session. The Delegate panel created a motion, that was passed, to frame a task force that will develop a process to have 2-3 Delegates on every conference leadership team that plans the agenda.
- Alateen Task Force – action plan to introduce materials to professionals on Alateen.
- Auditors report – literature sales are back to pre-pandemic levels, thanks to the new daily reader. Director of finance can't be Al-Anon member because they decided long ago that the person handling their money should be unaffected by the disease of alcoholism.
- 60% of VA groups donate to WSO and the average donation is \$182. Nationally groups contribute \$196. The average cost for WSO to support a group is \$330.
- Stepping Stones – removing from WSC visit due to cost. Area pays equalized cost for Delegate to attend WSC. WSO covers part of the cost of WSC. 99% of delegates feel it's a spiritual experience.

SPANISH SPEAKING OVERLAY (DISCUSSION) (Debbie P.)

- The Motion for approval of the formation of a Spanish speaking overlay district using District 11 was read.
- There are six Districts that have one or more Spanish speaking groups, Alexandria – 1; Loudon – 2; Falls Church/Vienna/McLean -1; Arlington – 1; Bull Run – 1; Springfield/Annandale - 1. 6 have rec'd approval to leave District.
- Officers are in place for the Spanish Overlay District.
- An Overlay District is contiguous to all Districts.

Questions

- Virtual Attendee: What will an Overlay District do for the Spanish groups that isn't already being done? Debbie P. - commonality of language; communication.
- Springfield/Annandale – Groups outside of VA can join VA's Spanish Overlay District? Debbie P. - Yes, but procedures must be followed.
- Maria N. – A group in her District still needs to go through a group conscience and ask the District? Cheryl L. - a newly formed group can join an Overlay District without following the Boundary Policy. An existing group must follow policy.
- Jacqueline, Alexandria – her group emailed their DR saying they want to join the Overlay District. The DR sent an email to all District GRs about request. Everyone said yes. DR sent email to Area approving the request. Spanish speaking people can talk more effectively together and provide translation of material.
- Troy H., Tidewater service center – which service center will they be assigned to? Debbie – Officers will discuss.

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- Carito S. – manual talks about creation mostly because of language. Spanish speaking groups have been around for a while but don't know each other, this will unite groups and potentially create more groups. Carito and other have been working on this since 2016 and training themselves to fill service positions.
- Maureen M – Will DR overlay be required to be bi-lingual? Debbie - not a requirement.
- Terry W., Fairfax – we could acquire translation services.
- Cheryl L. – only need one person that is bi-lingual to communicate at VAWSC. Currently groups are scattered, overlay would improve lines of communication.

JOB DESCRIPTION (DISCUSSION) (Debbie P.)

Job descriptions were reviewed by the job holder and changes to were presented to the Officers, then the VAWSC. Final step is for Assembly to approve.

All job descriptions were written within guidelines of the Area By-laws.

Questions

- Maureen M. – can we go over the major changes? Debbie – the job descriptions can be viewed online, too many to go over here. Most of the changes were in formatting.

COORDINATOR AND LIAISON REPORTS

- Assembly (Mitch M.) - Report on website.
- Literature / The Forum (Ann S.) – Report on website.
- Website (Bruce B.) - Report on website.
- Group Records (Cheryl L.) – Report on website.
- Communications (Becky B.) - Report on website.
- Area Convention (Diana A.) - Report on website.

DR HIGHLIGHTS (DISTRICTS 1-15)

- 1 Albemarle- Ed W.: Report on website.
- 2 Springfield/Annandale – Chris B.: Report on website.
- 3 Arlington - Sophie L.: Report on website.
- 4 Blue Ridge – Lisa R.: Report on website.
- 5 Bull Run – Charlene B.: Report on website.
- 6 Central Valley – Beverly M.: Report on website.
- 7 Eastern Shore – Amy H.: Report on website.
- 8 Fairfax – Romina B.: Report on website.
- 9 Falls Church/Vienna/McLean – Maria N.: Report on website.
- 10 Loudoun – Mary F.: Report on website.

SUNDAY, May 5

GENERAL SESSION

- Debbie P. opened the second day of Assembly with the Serenity Prayer
- Claire R. introduced the spiritual speaker, Pat Q., Retired WSO Staff Member.

DELEGATE REPORT (Stacy L.) continued

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- Questions received during break:
 - How much do the electronic groups support the WSO? I do not have that answer because it was not shared.
 - Are the problems with the bookbinding fixed? Problems with the bookbinding on the new daily reader have been corrected.
 - Service Center – would NVSC closing a burden on WSO? The service centers are more about getting literature to groups and public outreach, so maybe, she will look into it.
- AFG records –Why can't electronic groups be listed in both electronic meetings and geographical lists? Creates less confusion for those looking only for electronic meetings.
- Our meeting lists still have groups listed as temporarily electronic. These groups need to make a decision to go back in-person or not. No temporary designations should be listed.
- Group records in other languages – software is not user friendly, WSO is looking at software to handle all meetings.
- Gender neutral policy – not a lot of work done but conversation still happening.
- International Convention – location will be announced at or near the next WSC.
- Finance – new literature in the Fall 2024
- WSO website – need to use.
- Personal service sponsor – a new task force charged with creating literature and workshops to use. Don't know when will be available.
- Dual members can be sponsors.
- 2023 Annual report – will be posted on AFG Connects.
- More focus on skill sets for Board of Trustees.
- New employment positions coming to WSO.
- Global ebooks – international structure depends on hardcopy books for money. More thought needs to be given to creating global ebooks.
- Healing within Our Alcoholic Relationships (P95), 48 pages, cost \$4, coming in the Fall.
- Still working on creating GEA districts, it's a big project.
- WSO website – 6 million hits this year.
- Road trip 2024 – Columbia, SC. – hybrid considered for future.
- Chosen Agenda Item #2 – What spiritual principles help define good personal leadership? How do we balance service authority and service responsibility? Read Bill's essay on leadership (Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual pg. 200).
- PAUSE – perhaps an unexpected solution exists.
- New Task Force looking at the benefits of working Al-Anon program.
- Membership survey begins June 30 and will be available on AFG Connects and the WSO website.
- Electronic Alateen groups feasibility – want to have Alateen electronic meetings listed. Difficulty in abiding by each State's guidelines. There will be a separate certification process for electronic sponsors.
- WSC – Summary will be updated and made available sooner.

GR ROLL CALL (Deb T.) – GR roll call was conducted for voting purposes. 109 GRs were in attendance for voting. 73 votes represent 2/3 majority.

VA BOUNDARY POLICY (Debbie P.) – 2/3 majority vote required.

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MOTION: The VAWSC recommends to the 2024 Spring Assembly for approval of the VA Area Boundary Policy for establishing VA Area procedures for changing District and Area Boundaries of the Virginia Area.

Made by: VAWSC

Seconded by: Rick A., ~~North Roanoke~~ Richmond North

Voting results: standing in-person vote and Webex poll. Standing in-person: Approved - 74; Abstained – 0; Opposed – 0. Virtual: Approved – 31; Abstained – 0; Opposed – 0.

SPANISH SPEAKING OVERLAY (Debbie P.) Simple majority.

MOTION: The VAWSC recommends to the 2024 Spring Assembly for approval of the formation of a Spanish Speaking Overlay District using District 11.

Made by: VAWSC

Seconded by: Patty M., North Richmond

Voting results: standing in-person vote and Webex poll. Standing in-person: Approved – majority. Virtual: Approved – 21 (this was 100% of those who voted; Slido did not open for some virtual attendees).

JOB DESCRIPTIONS (Debbie P.) Simple majority.

Motion: taken from the floor to accept all job descriptions as revised and posted to web.

Made by: Cindy H.

Seconded by: Brett

Voting results: standing in-person vote and Webex poll. Standing in-person: Approved – majority; 3 abstained. Virtual: Approved – 21 (this was 100% of those who voted; Slido did not open for some virtual attendees); 6% abstained.

COORDINATOR AND LIAISON REPORTS cont'd

- AAPP (Patty M.) – Report on website.
- Alateen (Michelle R.) – Report on website.
- Public Outreach (Michelle R.) – Report on website.
- LRPC (Val P.) – No report.
- Northern Virginia Service Center (Michelle R.) – Report on website.
- Tidewater Service Center (Lee N.) – Verbal only.
- MEAC (Diana A.) – Report on website.
- ESAC – No report.
- Archives (Margaret R.) – No report

DR Highlights

- 12 Nansemond – Meg P.: Report on website.
- 14 Norfolk – Cynthia E.: Report on website.
- 16 Peninsula – Robynn B.: Report on website.
- 17 Piedmont – Report on website.
- 18 Alexandria – Mary J.: Report on website.
- 19 Rappahannock - Amanda R.: Verbal report.
- 20 Richmond N. – Rick A.: Report on website.

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- 21 Roanoke/Alleghany – Diana A.: Report on website.
- 22 Seven Hills – Report on website.
- 23 Southside - Cindy L.: Report on website.
- 24 Southwest - Becky D.: Report on website.
- 27 Virginia Beach - Ava B.: Report on website.
- 29 James River South - Sue T.: Report on website.

7th Tradition – Baskets were passed. Use donate button on VA area website.

ASSEMBLY EVALUATIONS (Mitch M.) - Evaluation.

Evaluation is available on vaalanon.org. under members/Assembly/at the top.

Questions and Comments (Ask-it Basket and Floor)

- Maureen M. – Can we get a copy of fun facts? Debbie P. - will have it posted to the website.
- Deborah – Are we exploring hotels outside of Richmond for Assembly? Debbie P. - focusing on this area because its central.

Raffle

- A Little Time for Myself – Susan D.
- 1 year Forum Subscription – Brett H. and Kathy S.

CLOSING REMARKS (Debbie P.)

- Thanking all for their work on this Assembly.
- Robynn B., Peninsula DR has volunteered to chair the next Area Convention.
- The Area Inventory will be available on the website for one week after Assembly if you'd like to review/answer all the questions. The inventory responses will be available for next Panel to consider.
- Carito will be DR for new District 11 Spanish Speaking Overlay.
- Return lanyard with plastic holder to registration table.
- Talk about elections.
- Check out GR101.
- Use three Legacies in meetings.
- Special thanks to Tech Team.

Closing with declaration said facing in and out to those who've yet to find the rooms. 12:35 pm

Let it Begin with Me....

When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, let the hand of Al-Anon and Alateen always be there, and let it begin with me.

Respectfully submitted,
Deb Teer
Panel 62 Area Secretary

Upcoming Dates: 2024/2025

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2024		
June 1	Area Officer's Meeting	Webex
July 26-28	MEAC	
August 3	Fall VAWSC	Webex
August 9-11	Virginia Area Convention	Natural Bridge
October 25-27	Fall Assembly	Midlothian DoubleTree
2025		
January 11	Area Officers Meeting/Hand Off New Panel	Webex
March 1	Spring VAWSC	Webex
May 16-18	Spring Assembly	Midlothian DoubleTree
June 7	Area Officers Meeting	Webex
August 2	Fall VAWSC	Webex
September 26-28	Fall Assembly	Midlothian DoubleTree

DRAFT