

# **Area and District Committees**

**Without committees, it is doubtful that any  
District or Area would be able to function effectively.**

**This packet can be downloaded from Area 36 website: [www.area36.org](http://www.area36.org).**

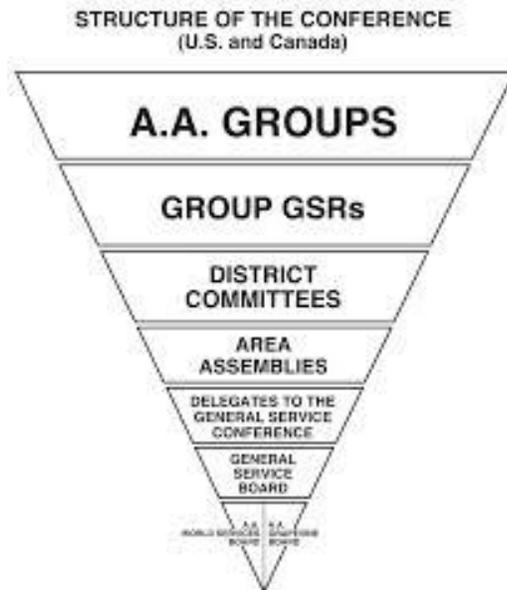


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## STRUCTURE OF THE CONFERENCE (US AND CANADA)



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## A WORD ABOUT COMMITMENT

**Commitment**, in terms of recovery, means recovering some basic principles which we lost somewhere in pursuit of self.

As members of the general service structure, those principles that we must now demonstrate as a trusted servant include willingness, self-sacrifice, honesty, consideration of others, thoughtfulness, love, tolerance and, most of all, basic etiquette.

- Do we show up when we say we will?
- Are we on time?
- Do we mark our AA commitments on the calendar and then work around them, or do we attend only if it doesn't interfere with our own pleasure?
- When we are unable to make an event that the GSR should attend, do we arrange for our alternate to be there?
- Do we keep our alternates well informed and involved?
- Do we attend as many service activities as possible in order to become better informed, or do we do the least possible required?
- Do we tend to our responsibilities cheerfully or portray them as a drag?
- Are we able to offer criticism lovingly and based on the application of our three legacies, or do we let personalities get in the way?

All of these things are important to being committed to service in AA, but the bottom line is: Are we giving in proportion to what has been given to us? Gratitude is an action word. It is something we show, not just something we talk about. If we give only a tenth of what has been given to us, we should all be shining examples of service and commitment in AA.

## TRUSTED SERVANT LEADERSHIP TRAINING FOR AREA / DISTRICT COMMITTEES

### 1. GETTING STARTED

- **Meet with the previous Committee Chair**
  - Get their records
  - Ask what was done last rotation
  - Are there any projects that were started and not finished
  - Consider focusing on one or two projects and making progress on them, rather than working a little bit on a lot of projects.
- **Meet with your District Committee Member (DCM) or Area Chair**
  - Are there projects/activities in mind for your Committee to work on?
- **Find out what your Committee is all about**
  - Review the AA Guidelines and Workbook for your Committee.
  - Register with the Area Group Records Chair ([grouprecords@area36.org](mailto:grouprecords@area36.org)). They will register you with the General Service Office (GSO).
  - GSO will send you a workbook/kit for your committee.
  - Get in touch with the Area Committee Chair for your committee.
- **Review the Area/District's Financial Policy**
  - Learn how your Area / District appropriates and spends money.
  - Do you have a budget for your committee?
  - Do you have projects budgeted for your committee?
- **Get an Area 36 Calendar**
  - Mark the Area events on your calendar.
  - As a Committee Chair, it is your responsibility to be sure that you or your designated Alternate Committee Chair attend every Area standing committee meeting.
  - Share your District's experience at the standing committee meeting and share with your District any information from the Area standing committee.

● Cont'd.

## 2. FORM A DISTRICT COMMITTEE

- **Find out your District's conscience**
  - Ask your District how you can serve them.
  - Bring some suggestions from the AA Guidelines and Committee Workbook.
  - Remember, a Trusted Servant acts for those they serve, but does not boss.
  - See Concept IX - **Leadership in AA: Ever A Vital Need**
  - The **AA Service Manual Combined With Twelve Concepts for World Service.**
- **Find people to serve on your committee**
  - Participate in your District's outreach to Groups
  - Invite people to participate in something specific ("I'm looking for people to do (project/activity) on (date).")
  - Ask someone to serve as your designated Alternate.
  - Look for appropriate volunteers ("mining for service workers") wherever you go in AA.

## 3. ONGOING COMMUNICATION

- **Submit an article to the Area or District newsletter**
  - This will help inform the Area / District about your Committee's activities.
- **Keep the DCM informed about your committee's activities.**
  - This may help them to identify additional opportunities for your Committee, opportunities they may have learned of that you might not be aware of.
  - For Area Committee Chairs responsibilities, see Area Trusted Servant Guidelines.
- **Submit a written report at your Area Committee/District meeting**
  - Helps the General Service Representatives (GSRs) to take information about, and opportunities in, your Committee back to their Groups.
  - Include information from your Area standing committee meeting, to let them know what's going on at the Area and in other Districts.
- **Delegate responsibilities to your committee members**
  - People like to be included.
  - It may be difficult and/or inappropriate to try to do it all yourself.
  - The more opportunities you have available for assigned volunteers, the better.

Cont'd.

- **Attend all District events**
  - District meetings
  - Workshops
  - Area Committee meetings
- **Become familiar with the General Service Conference Agenda Items**
  - Give a Report on the content and background to help the GSRs bring the Conference Agenda Items information back to their Group
- **Keep records and submit them to Area/District archives**
  - Keep a record of your Committee activities and submit copies to your District Archives chair.
  - If your District doesn't have an Archives Committee, you can send them directly to the Area 36 Archives.

#### 4. CONTINUE LEARNING

- **Study:**
  - **The AA Service Manual;**
  - **Twelve Concepts for World Service**
  - **Area 36 Trusted Servant Guidelines**
  - Consider getting a Service Sponsor, who has more service experience, and learn from their experiences.
- **Study the Traditions**
  - Some Committees use part of their meeting to do this.
  - Encourage other Committee members to learn the Traditions.
- **Read the Literature**
  - Committee Workbook and AA Literature Guidelines and pamphlets.
- **Area Archives**
  - Check for past actions.

#### 5. ROTATION

- **Incoming Chair**
  - Meet with and turn over all your records and information to the next incoming Chair
  - Be available, as needed, to share your experience with them as they take on the new Committee responsibilities.

## **SUGGESTED DISTRICT COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES**

### **Archives**

1. Invite Area 36 Archives Chair to your District meeting to talk about what you should preserve and how and why.
2. Visit the Area 36 Archives Repository to find out what kinds of projects were done in the past.

### **Corrections**

1. Take a meeting to county detention facility.
2. Correspond with inmates in Corrections facilities.
3. Inform Groups about the Pink Can Plan.
4. Jail meetings.
5. Take meeting directories to social worker's and probation officers in your District.

### **Communication with the Professional Community (CPC)**

1. Do outreach with the National Guard Offices to help AA'S in the service.
2. Place Big Books in school libraries through guidance counselors.
3. Become involved in the many events in Area 36 reaching out to GBLT, Asian, Homeless and Veterans.
4. Get literature out to health care facilities in your District.
5. Focus on clergy. See if you can put literature in your churches common area.
6. Provide Meeting Directories to professionals, clergy, doctors, social workers, police departments, and libraries.
7. Sponsor a Professional (clergy, lawyer, doctor, etc) and sign them up to receive the About AA newsletter.
8. Do AA Informational presentations before professionals and civic groups.
9. Buy Grapevine subscriptions for your professionals.

### **Finance**

1. Encourage member or their sponsors to contribute to the Birthday Plan on their sobriety date.
2. Have a 7th Tradition Presentation at your District meeting.

## **Grapevine**

1. Encourage members to contribute articles to the Grapevine.
2. Sending Grapevines to Service members overseas
3. In your District newsletter talk about new articles from the Grapevine.
4. Suggest to your home group giving people a subscription to the Grapevine on their 1st Birthday.
5. Give a Grapevine subscription to people in prison whom you write to.
6. See if your doctor's office would like the Grapevine available in their waiting room.
7. Sponsor your local library.

## **Group Records/Outreach**

1. Visit all Groups in your District to get more GSRs to attend the District meeting and more Groups to participate.
2. Make sure your District's directory is current.

## **Literature**

1. Show your group new Literature that is available.
2. Literature-presents an AA pamphlet or book at your District meeting and takes a minute to describe it.
3. Adopt a location that you will provide AA literature.
4. Understand ordering Literature from the Literature catalog and provide catalogs to Groups.

## **Public Information**

1. Set up an answering service for 12 step calls and requests for meeting locations and time.
2. Have a P.I. (Public Information) booth at the county fair.
3. Get your District to help with the State Fair.
4. Have a P.I. (Public Information) luncheon.
5. Get AA contact information into the local papers and PSAs on the local cable community TV channel.
6. Public Service Announcements to radio stations.
7. Provide literature at the government offices.

## **Remote Communities**

1. Sign up to write to a Loner.
2. Work with language barrier communities.
3. Work with hearing, visual and physically impaired communities.
4. Work with the homeless community and senior citizen Groups.

## **Treatment Facilities**

1. Reach out to Detox and Treatment Centers.
2. Contact treatment facilities to see if they need meetings and if the temporary contact program is in place.
3. Inform Groups about temporary contact program –treatment.
4. Show the Video Hope at your local treatment center and District meetings.
5. Present an Alcoholics Anonymous Information talk to Treatment Center staff and counselors.

### **A DECLARATION OF UNITY**

**This we owe to AA's future;  
To place our common welfare first;  
To keep our fellowship united;  
For on AA unity depends our lives, and the lives of those to come.**

### **RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT**

**I am responsible ... when anyone, anywhere  
Reaches out for help,  
I want the hand of AA always to be there  
And for that,  
I am responsible.**

## **REGIONAL AND LOCAL FORUMS**

Regional Forums originated in 1975 at the suggestion of Dr. Jack Norris, then Chair of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous. They were to be weekend sharing and informational sessions designed to help the General Service Board, AA World Services, Inc., the Grapevine Corporate Board, the Grapevine Staff, and the General Service Office Staff stay in touch with AA members, trusted servants and newcomers to service throughout the AA service structure.

### **Regional Forums**

Originally, at the invitation of a region, four Regional Forums were held each year. Since the U.S./Canada service structure is composed of eight regions, a Regional Forum was held in alternate years in each region on a rotating basis. In October 2006, the General Service Board approved the concept of an Additional Regional Forum to be held upon request in each region every eight years also on a rotating basis, bringing the possible number of Regional Forums held each year to five.

The location and agenda for Regional Forums are decided jointly by the Regional Trustee, Area Delegates and GSO. The responsibility for initiating contact with the hotel is assumed by a local AA Host Contact working with the Forums Coordinator and Regional Trustee. The Forums Coordinator at GSO distributes registration forms to groups and service workers throughout the region and, working with the Host Contact and Regional Trustee, coordinates the details of the Forum.

There is no registration fee for Regional Forums or Additional Regional Forums. The General Service Board covers the expenses of meeting rooms. In many places, area committees, districts and groups cover or defray the transportation and lodging expenses of the trusted servants representing them at a Forum.

### **Local Forums**

In October 2006, the concept of Local Forums was approved by the General Service Board. The purpose of Local Forums is to bring Forum information to AA members in remote, sparsely populated areas, urban neighborhoods or underserved AA communities. Any AA community or service entity may request a one-and-a-half or two day Local Forum. Unlike Regional Forums, the responsibility for Forum expenses such as meeting room rental and miscellaneous expenses are assumed by the Local Forum Committee. The General Service Board will send two participants, one from the Board and one from the General Service Office or Grapevine office and display literature at Board expense. Like Regional and Additional Forums, Board participation in Local Forums requires the approval of the trustees' Committee on International Conventions/Regional Forums. The Regional Forums Coordinator works closely with the Local Forum organizing committee to create an agenda that is responsive to local needs.

All Forums are intended to be sharing sessions, no formal actions result. Sharing at Forums is captured in Forum Final Reports which are distributed to all attendees. Regional Forums Final Reports are available on GSO's AA Web site. Forums provide unique opportunities to share and exchange valuable experience, ask questions and spark new ideas. Regional Forums and Local Forums carry

AA's message of love and service by improving communication at all levels of our Fellowship.

## CONCEPTS CHECKLIST

A service piece for Home Groups, Districts, Areas

Some of these discussion points were originally developed by an AA group and further developed by the trustees' Literature Committee to be distributed by the General Service Office. While this checklist is intended as a starting point for discussion by Groups, Districts or Areas, individual AA members may find it useful along with our co-founder Bill W.'s writings, a service sponsor if you have one and reflection on your own service experience. Additional information about the Concepts can be found in The AA Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service and "The Twelve Concepts Illustrated" pamphlet. (The Concepts stated here are in the short form.)

### **CONCEPT 1: Final responsibility and ultimate authority for AA World services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.**

- Does our Group have a General Service Representative (GSR)? Do we feel that our Home Group is part of AA as a whole and do our Group's decisions and actions reflect that?
- Do we hold regular Group Conscience meetings encouraging everyone to participate?
- Do we pass that Group Conscience on to the District, Area, or the local InterGroup meetings?
- Is the "collective conscience" of Alcoholics Anonymous at work in my Home Group?
- In my Area?
- Where do we fit in the upside-down triangle of AA?
- Are we willing to do what it takes to insure that our democracy of World service will work under all conditions?

### **CONCEPT II: The General Service Conference of AA has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole Society in its World affairs.**

- Do we have an understanding of the history of the General Service Conference (the "Conference")?
- What is a Conference Advisory Action? Does our Home Group's GSR, DCM, Area Delegate report back to the Group on the highlights of the Conference and Conference Advisory Actions?
- Is our Group meeting its wider Seventh Tradition responsibilities?

### **CONCEPT III: To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of AA - the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives - with a traditional "Right of Decision."**

- Do we understand what is meant by the "Right of Decision"? Do we grant it at all levels of service or do we "instruct"?
- Do we trust our trusted servants –GSR, DCM, Area Delegate, the Conference itself?

### **CONCEPT IV: At all responsible levels, we ought to maintain a traditional "Right of Participation," allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.**

- Do we understand the spiritual principles underlying the "Right of Participation"?
- What does "in reasonable proportion" mean? Do we understand when it is appropriate for AA paid staff to have a vote at the General Service Conference or in our local service structure?
- Do we expect that, because we are AA members, we should be allowed to vote at any group, even if we are not active members of that group?

Cont'd.

## CONCEPTS CHECKLIST (Cont'd.)

**CONCEPT V: Throughout our structure, a traditional "Right of Appeal" ought to prevail, so that minority opinion will be heard and personal grievances receive careful consideration.**

- Do we encourage the minority opinion, the "Right of Appeal", to be heard at our home group, district committee meetings, area assemblies and the Conference?
- What does our group accept as "substantial unanimity"?
- Has our group experienced the "tyranny of the majority" or the "tyranny of the minority"?
- Does our group understand the importance of all points of view being heard before a vote is taken?

**CONCEPT VI: The Conference recognizes that the chief initiative and active responsibility in most world service matters should be exercised by the trustee members of the Conference acting as the General Service Board.**

- Are we familiar with how our General Service Board (G.S.B.) Class A and Class B trustees serve AA? Are we familiar with how our other trusted servants serve AA?
- Are we clear about the terms, "chief initiative" and "active responsibility"? Can we see a direct link to our home group?

**CONCEPT VII: The Charter and Bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments, empowering the trustees to manage and conduct world service affairs. The Conference Charter is not a legal document; it relies upon tradition and the AA purse for final effectiveness.**

- Do we act responsibly regarding the "power of the purse?"
- Do we realize that the practical and spiritual power of the Conference will nearly always be superior to the legal power of the G.S.B.?

**CONCEPT VIII: The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of overall policy and finance. They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly active services, exercising this through their ability to elect all the directors of these entities.**

- Do we understand the relationship between the two corporate service entities: AA World Services, Inc., the AA Grapevine and the General Service Board?
- How can the business term "custodial oversight" apply to the trustees' relationship to the two corporate service entities?
- Does my home group subscribe to GSO's bimonthly newsletter *Box 4-5-9? The AA Grapevine?* Do I?

**CONCEPT IX: Good service leadership at all levels is indispensable for our future functioning and safety. Primary world service leadership, once exercised by the founders, must necessarily be assumed by the trustees.**

- Do we discuss how we can best strengthen the composition and leadership of our future trusted servants?
- Do we recognize the need for group officers? What is our criteria for election?
- Do we sometimes give a position to someone "because it would be good for them?"
- Do I set a positive leadership example?

Cont'd.

## CONCEPTS CHECKLIST (Cont'd.)

**CONCEPT X: Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority, with the scope of such authority well defined.**

- Do we understand "authority" and "responsibility" as they relate to group conscience decisions by GSRs, DCMs and our Area Delegates?
- Why is delegation of "authority" so important to the overall effectiveness of AA?
- Do we use this concept to define the scope of "authority?"

**CONCEPT XI: The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs, and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, and rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern.**

- Do we understand how the roles of non-trustee directors and non-trustee appointed committee members help serve and strengthen the committee system?
- How do we encourage our special paid workers to exercise their traditional "Right of Participation?"
- Do we practice rotation in all our service positions?

**CONCEPT XII: The Conference shall observe the spirit of AA tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government, and that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.**

- How do we guard against becoming a "seat of perilous wealth or power?"
- How do we practice prudent use of our Seventh Tradition contributions and literature revenue?
- Do we insure the spiritual liberties of all AA members by not placing any member in the position of absolute authority over others?
- Do we try to reach important decisions by thorough discussion, vote and, where possible, substantial unanimity?
- As guardians of AA's traditions, are we ever justified in being personally punitive?
- Are we careful to avoid public controversy?
- Do we always try to treat each other with mutual respect and love?

## OVERVIEW OF THE SOUTHERN MINNESOTA AREA GENERAL SERVICE STRUCTURE

**THE AREA ASSEMBLY** is defined by *The AA Service Manual combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service* as any meeting of Area General Service Representatives (GSRs) and the Area Committee - it is further described as - the democratic voice of the movement expressing itself. (See: Chapter 4 of the *The AA Service Manual Combined With Twelve Concepts For World Service*, Page S36, with permission of AA World Services, Inc.) Voting members of the Assembly are all currently serving GSRs (or Alternates) and all members of the Area Committee. Among other things, the Area Assembly hears reports from our Area Officers and takes action on proposals presented by our Standing Committees.

The Area Assembly meets three times a year, at different locations around the Area (see the Area Calendar at [www.area36.org](http://www.area36.org)). Assembly agendas are printed in the Area Newsletter, *The Pigeon*, which is mailed six weeks prior to an upcoming Area Assembly. Any items for inclusion on the agenda should be given to the Area Chairperson at the previous Area Committee Meeting. The Area Secretary will keep a copy of all Area Assembly meeting minutes on file.

**THE AREA COMMITTEE** consists of the Area Officers, the District Committee Members (DCMs) from all 27 Districts, and the Area Standing Committee Chairpersons. Past Delegates also participate in the Area Committee, if they so wish, but are not included in the quorum count for voting. The primary function of our Area Committee is operational - it has been directed by the GSRs to act for the Assembly in routine and custodial matters. The Area Committee hears reports from our Area Officers, sets the agenda for the Area Assembly and reviews Standing Committee proposals to be presented to the Area Assembly. (For more information about the Area Committee, see Chapter 5 in *The AA Service Manual Combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service*).

The Area Committee meets in conjunction with Standing Committee meetings in Mankato. The Area Secretary will keep a copy of all Area Committee meeting minutes on file.

**AREA OFFICERS** are the Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Area Chairperson, Alternate Chairperson, Area Secretary, and Area Treasurer. Our Area Officers must provide AA experience and leadership, as well as carrying out the responsibilities of their particular service positions (see the Area 36 **Trusted Servant Guidelines**).

The Area Officers meet monthly, in addition to attending all regular and special Area functions.

**DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEMBERS (DCMs)** are responsible for the 27 districts of the Southern Minnesota Area. *The AA Service Manual Combined With Twelve Concepts For World Service* (Chapter 3) describes the DCM as an essential link between the group's GSR and the Area's Delegate. As Area Committee Members, DCMs should, of course, contribute their experience as well as their respective District's collective conscience to the current issues being considered by the Area.

Cont'd.

## OVERVIEW OF THE SOUTHERN MINNESOTA AREA GENERAL SERVICE STRUCTURE (Cont'd.)

In addition to their responsibilities as Members of the Area Committee, DCMs are the cornerstone of our Area Committee's relationship with our Area's GSRs. In their respective Districts, the DCMs arrange for and chair the District meetings, work with District Standing Committees, coordinate projects with other Districts, distribute the Conference Agenda Items along with pertinent background information, and in general provide for the flow of information and ideas to and from the Groups.

**AREA STANDING COMMITTEES** are the 13 service committees of the Southern Minnesota Area. They consist of the Area 36 Standing Committee Chairperson, an Alternate, District Standing Committee Chairperson, and *any AA members who wish to participate*. Each committee has a clearly defined *purpose* by our Area 36 **Trusted Servant Guidelines**.

The Standing Committees do three basic things: 1) they *provide a clearinghouse of information and ideas*; 2) they *develop projects in their area of concern*; and 3) they *develop ideas to recommend* to the Area Assembly for our Area or inclusion as Agenda Items for the General Service Conference. The Standing Committees meet quarterly in Mankato in conjunction with the Area Committee Meetings.

### **All Area Committee Members are responsible for:**

- Attending all Area functions (including the Delegate's workshop, the Area Recovery, Unity and Service Conference, the Area Inventory, the West Central Regional Service Conference, and the West Central Regional Forum) (See: [www.area36.org](http://www.area36.org));
- Submitting an article to the Area Newsletter, *The Pigeon*, at [newsletter@area36.org](mailto:newsletter@area36.org), each quarter regarding their current activities (articles should be submitted to the Newsletter editor at each quarterly Area Committee Meeting);
- Becoming acquainted with our Area's structure, function, and procedures;
- Participating in our Area's efforts to keep communication flowing in a timely manner.

## VOTING AT ASSEMBLIES

**Who is eligible to vote at an Area Assembly? The following trusted servants in the Southern Minnesota Area 36 General Service Structure:**

GSRs, DCMs, Officers  
Standing Committee Chairs  
Past Delegates

**Who is not eligible to vote at an Area Assembly?**

Alternate GSRs\*, Alternate DCMs\*\*, District Officers  
District Standing Committee Chairs  
Alternate Area Standing Committee Chairs\*\*\*, Archivist  
Corrections Contact Program Coordinator  
Pink Can Coordinator  
Treatment Facilities Temporary Contact Desk Coordinator  
Webmaster

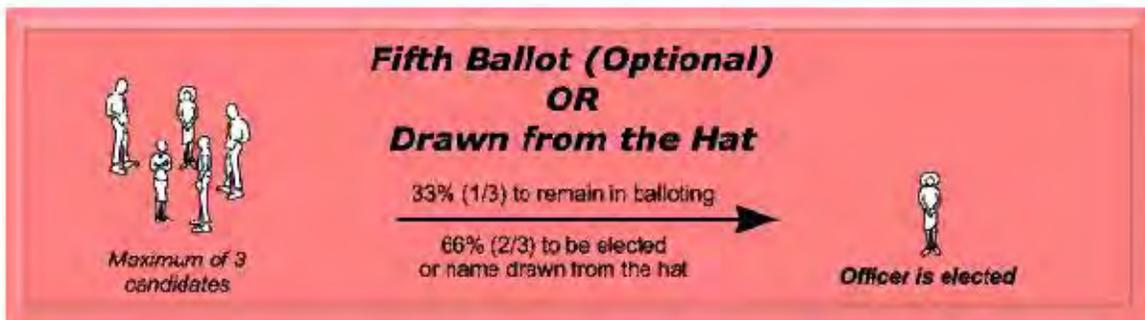
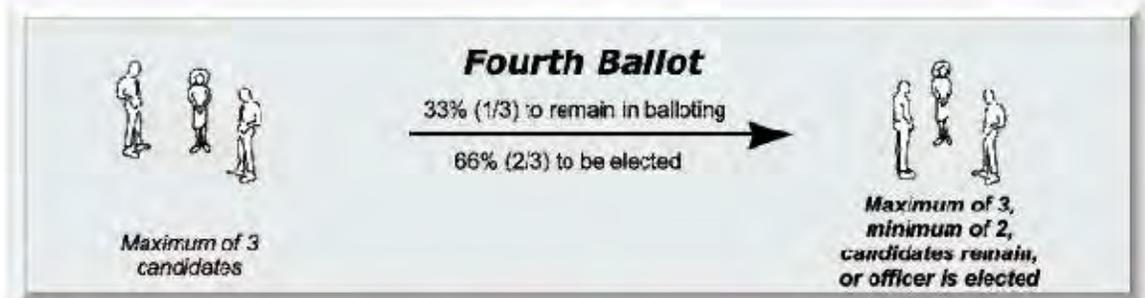
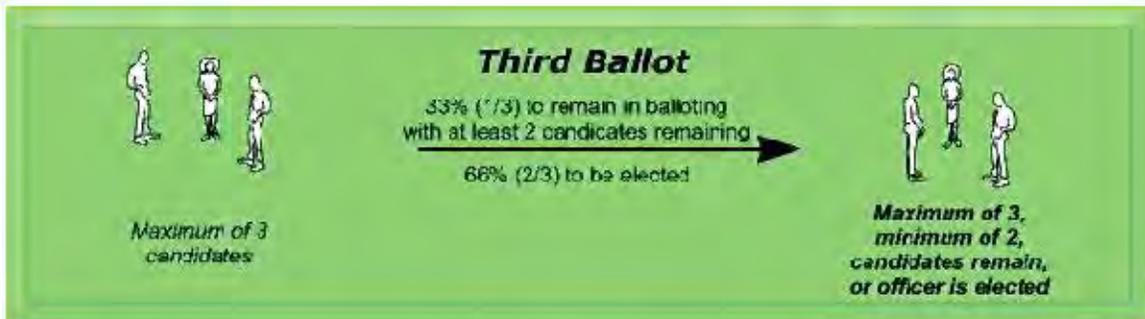
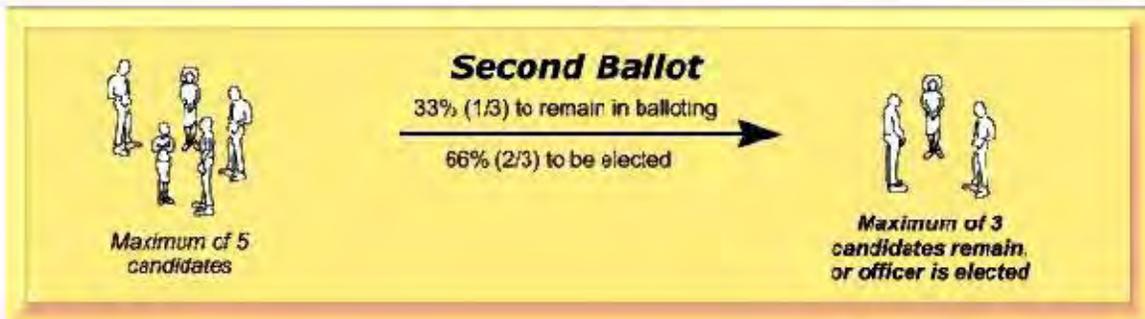
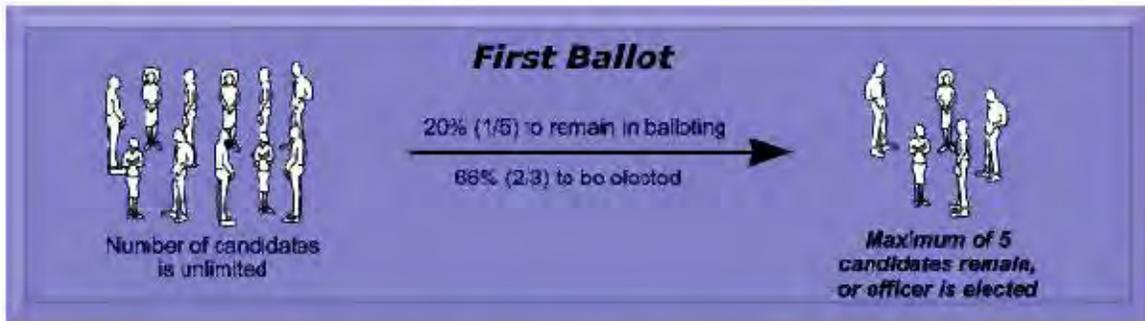
\*Alternate GSRs vote *if and only if* their GSR is not present

\*\*Alternate DCMs vote *if and only if* their DCM is not present

\*\*\*Alternate Area Standing Committee Chairs vote *if and only if* their Area Standing Committee Chair is not present

This outlines who is eligible to vote. All AA members are welcome to attend and participate in all other aspects of the Area Assembly.

# A.A.'s Third Legacy Procedure



## FLOWCHART OF AN AREA 36 AGENDA ITEM

An idea, suggestion, question, concern, or subject comes from ...



AA members, GSRs, DCMs, Area Committee Members, or Delegates ...



And is shared or discussed at the Group or District level and then is sent to ...



The Area Chairperson who will assign the item to an Area Committee for review and possible action as a

Recommendation

*or*

Report ...



If the item comes to the Assembly floor as a Recommendation then ACTION by the Assembly is required.



If the item comes to the Assembly floor as a Report then NO ACTION by the Assembly is required.

## EVOLUTION OF A CONFERENCE ADVISORY ACTION

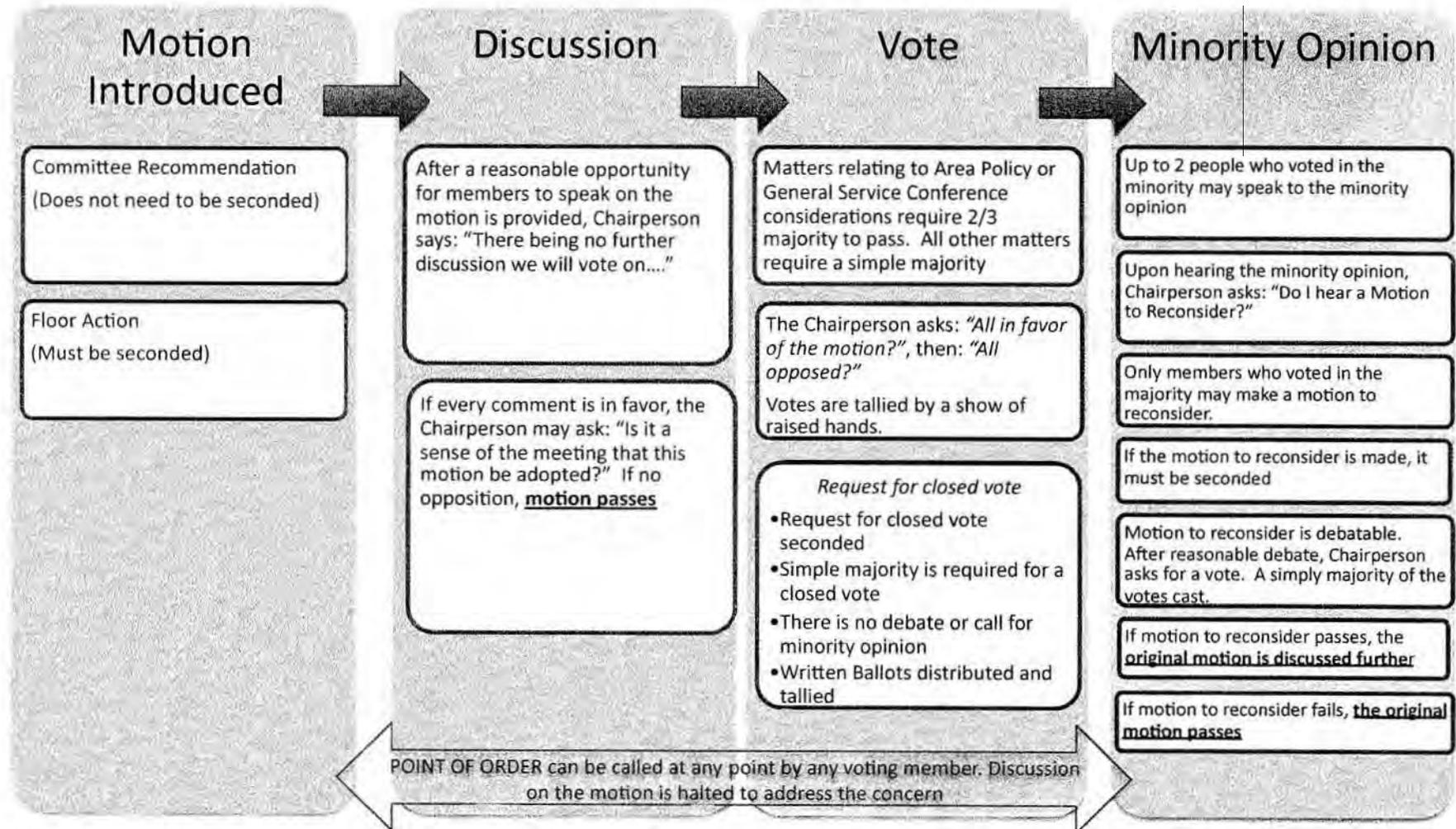
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<b>1</b>	An idea, suggestion, question, concern, or subject comes from AA members, GSRs, DCMs, Area Committee members, Delegates, Trustees or GSO / GV Staff, and may be shared at the Group, District and Area Assembly and sent to the		<b>Conference Coordinator GSO</b>
<b>2</b>	The idea is reviewed by the GSO / GV Staff and forwarded to the		<b>Appropriate Trustees' Committee</b>
<b>3</b>	Which then may refer the matter to the		<b>Appropriate Trustees' Committee</b>
<b>4</b>	Which meets during the General Service Conference week and makes <b>recommendations</b> that are presented in the Committee Report to the		<b>General Service Conference</b>
<b>5</b>	If a Conference Committee recommendation is approved, after full floor discussion, it becomes a <b>Conferenced Advisory Action</b> , which becomes binding when approved by the		<b>General Service Board</b>

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**“Without Committees, it is doubtful that any Conference would be able to function effectively.”** (Reprinted from *The AA Services Manual Combined with Twelve Concepts For World Services*, Page S59, with permission of AA World Services, Inc.)

# Southern Minnesota Parliamentary Procedure



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## What can happen to a motion?

1. It can be AMENDED. The amendment is debated and voted on, and once that is settled; then discussion of the Main Motion resumes.
2. It can be TABLED either *definitely* (time or place stated), or *indefinitely* (basically, "killed").
3. It can be REFERRED BACK TO A COMMITTEE, either with or without additional instructions.

## Voting members of the Assembly

- General Service Representatives (G.S.R.)
- Area Officers
- Area Standing Committee Chairs
- District Committee Members (D.C.M.s)
- Past Delegates

## Alternates

- The alternate may vote in place of an absent G.S.R./D.C.M./Committee Chair
- For groups and districts only: If the alternate is not available to vote on behalf of the G.S.R./D.C.M., that group/district may appoint a representative. This person must register with Group Records Chair as a voting member

## A SHORT GUIDE TO PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

This information has been assembled due to frequent requests from members of the Area Assembly regarding the method of conducting the assembly business. However, it should be stressed that studying and utilizing the principles in AA's Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts can provide the most useful guide to assembly protocol. We use parliamentary procedure, when necessary, to ensure that courtesy is given to assembly members, and to promote the orderly exchange of ideas. These procedures were developed to *serve* the assembly - not to stifle it. *When we are at our best, we function almost entirely by using thoughtful consideration of our basic principles.*

### Step by Step

#### 1) MOTION

- a) An Area Service Committee recommendation is considered a seconded motion, and will be restated as such by the Committee Chairperson, after he/she presents the recommendation to the Area Assembly. (This is due to a recommendation that passes a committee already has more than one voting member who agrees with it.)
- b) A motion can be made from the floor on any issue by any voting member of the Assembly when there is no other issue being considered.

#### 2) SECOND (to demonstrate that more than one voting member is in support of the motion)

#### 3) CHAIR STATES: — has been moved and seconded that ....

#### 4) DISCUSSION (also refer to THINGS THAT CAN HAPPEN TO A MOTION)

- a) If every comment is in favor of the motion, the Chair may ask - **IS** it the sense of the meeting that this motion be adopted? If there is no opposition, it can be recorded as a passed motion.
- b) A reasonable opportunity is given to all to speak on the motion, and then...
- c) Chair says: -**There** being no further discussion we will vote on ... and restates the motion.

#### 5) VOTE (All in favor of the motion ..., and then - all opposed ... A two-thirds majority is required to adopt the motion.

Cont'd.

**6) MINORITY OPINION, MOTION TO RECONSIDER**

- a) Chair asks: "Does anyone in the minority wish to speak?" Only those who voted in the minority may speak at this time.
- b) Chair asks: "Do I hear a MOTION TO RECONSIDER?" Only someone who voted in the majority may make a motion to reconsider. If this motion is made, it must be seconded.
  1. The motion to reconsider is debatable. After reasonable debate, the Chair will ask for a vote. A simple majority, rather than a two-thirds majority decides this vote. If won ...
  2. Discussion on the Main Motion resumes (same rules as before).
  3. VOTE (same rules as before).
  4. THERE IS NO MINORITY OPINION ON THE SECOND VOTE.

**Things that can happen to a motion:**

- 1) It can be seconded, debated, voted on, etc, as outlined above.
- 2) The following subsidiary motions can be made regarding it (all of these must be seconded, and require a two-thirds majority to carry):
  - a) It can be AMENDED. The amendment is debated and voted on; then discussion of the original motion resumes.
  - b) It can be POSTPONED (tabled) either *definitely* (time or place stated or *indefinitely* (basically, "killed").
  - c) It can be REFERRED TO COMMITTEE, either with or without additional assembly instructions.
- 3) At any time during the discussion, a motion can be made to VOTE IMMEDIATELY ("calling the question"). A second is required. This motion is not debatable. The Chair will immediately ask for a vote on the motion to "vote immediately", and if adopted, the assembly votes immediately on the motion under consideration.