

**CONNECTICUT AFG ASSEMBLY**  
**MINUTES**  
**JUNE 13, 2020 12:15 P.M.**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Elaine M. at 12:17 p.m. She announced that no others would be admitted to the virtual assembly and that no one use the virtual background in order to protect our anonymity and names.

Elaine M. welcomed all new DRs, GRs, and their alternates, as well as CT past delegates, other areas delegates, Al-Anon and AA guests. She also asked for patience in this 'grand new experience.'

Roll call was taken by secretary Taffy P. Absence from the assembly were Kelly D.-Group Records and Deanna S.-Website coordinator. Since the minutes for the 2019 Fall assembly were sent out and no corrections were made, Taffy P. asked for a motion to be made to accept the minutes as presented. Jim H-GR Dist 1 moved to approve the minutes; Jill-GR Dist 8 seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**Treasurer's Report** - Jackie B. read the letter concerning the adverse financial impact that Covid is having on the World Service Office. Groups were asked to read the 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition appeal letter to their members and to continue to send in their contributions to WSO.

Area finances as of month ending May 31, 2020 is as follows:

Starting checkbook balance	\$42,597.10	After reading Reserve Fund Guidelines:	
Income received	708.00	Beginning Reserve Fund	\$17,953.28
Less expenses	<u>(1,836.55)</u>	Interest since 3/29/97	<u>4,358.69</u>
Ending checkbook balance	\$41,468.55	Ending Reserve Fund	\$22,311.97

MaryAnn P. GR Dist 1 moved to accept Treasurer's report as presented: seconded by Gwen GR Dist 3. Motion carried with 76 yes and 1 no vote.

Elaine M. presented a PowerPoint on assembly etiquette before turning floor over to Alternate Delegate, Pat S.

**Alternate Delegate's Report:** Pat.S – thanked the 28 who attended her virtual workshop for DRs and Alternate DRs. She reported that so far this year, she has attended three district meetings (Districts 12, 1 and 11) mostly by using Zoom. She expressed pleasure that Districts 2 and 7 have a new Alternate DR and District 13 has a new DR and Alternate. Pat encouraged GRs to consider stepping up to new positions when their term expires. She also thanked Gina R. who assisted her with planning and speaking at the workshop.

**2019 Fall Assembly Report** was given by Robert, T. DR from district 4. He and Karen V. DR District 5 reported that there were approximately 168 paid attendees at the Fall 2019 assembly. All seed money (\$2,000) was returned to the area, along with an additional \$538.41 of unforeseen returns. Assembly expenses were \$1,143.59.

**Delegate's Report:** Marcia M. immediately put on her 2020 glasses to have some fun. She recounted her very unique experience at her first World Service Conference [WSC]. It was

divided into two parts—the Hybrid WSC was done through **AFG Connects**. The delegates were presented with Thought Force, Task Force, Work Group presentations and Chosen Agenda Items. They had 24 hours to view and respond to each presentation.

The Hybrid items for discussion included:

- A Thought Force on Fear of Change.
- A Task Force on Reaching and Unifying Rural and Large Geographic Populations.
- A Thought Force on identifying ways to look at Al-Anon Service in relation to roles, terms and possible roadblocks.
- An Electronic Meeting Work Group.
- A Chosen Agenda Item (CAI) included *Our Envisioned Future sees Al-Anon being a global organization with barrier-free access to the program, how do you see this manifesting?*
- A Chosen Agenda Item (CAI), *How is AL-Anon going to reach new members in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the millennial generation?*

The second part was virtual and took place on April 21 and 22. It was reformatted to encompass legal obligations of the World Service Conference (WSC) including the 2019 Audit, WSO Annual report, 2020 Budget and voting in of new Trustees. All other business was deferred to the 2021 WSC.

The highlights of the 2019 Audit included: (The auditor gave it the highest accolade.)

- The General Fund net assets increased by \$84,519.00.
- A net increase from the Reserve Fund was \$998,237.00.
- Literature Sales were down by \$280,000.00.
- Group Contributions increased by \$233,000.00 secondary to an increase in bequests.
- Overall Revenue was down by \$89,000.00.

2020 Budget presentation is highlighted as follows:

- The Budget Process includes Program Department [Public Outreach, Literature, Group Services, AFG Records, International, Conference and Digital Strategies] Finance and Operations, and Administration expenses:
- Revenue sources utilized for 2020 World Service Office budget:
  - a) Literature Sales- 54%
  - b) Contributions- 40%
  - c) Forum subscription- 5%
  - d) Investment Income 1%
- The 2020 Budget showed projected expenses to be \$129,866.00 more than revenue for the year; However, we are currently experiencing a \$1.6 million dollar deficit secondary to a marked decline in literature and member contributions. This is projected deficit is based on estimated Literature sales and contributions to not increase until end of the September.
- Overall expenses were budgeted to increase in 2020. The increase is related to the costs of French interpretation at the 2020 World Service Conference, execution of Strategic Plan Initiatives, expanded digital market for Public Service Announcements and

facilitation of the International Al-Anon General Services Meeting (IAGSM) in London. Salaries are budgeted for normal cost of living increases, which represent only 1% increase.

- Contributions were budgeted \$2,000,00.00 which is comparable to last years' budget. In 2008, The World Service Conference agreed on the transfer of up to 4% of the fair value of the Reserve Fund to the General Fund. They have budgeted a transfer of 4% for the 2020 Fiscal year.
- The Board of Trustees voted to fund the Strategic Plan Initiatives from the Reserve Fund. The transfer of those initiatives total \$68,160.00. These initiatives are member strategies which are to expand technology and enhance trilingual communication, public strategies, address trademark & copyright violations.

Highlights of the Annual Report included:

- The first trilingual World Service Conference was held in 2019.
- The Member's Blog, which can be found at Al-Anon.org under the membership tab, started in July 2019. New topics are published monthly.
- The Top selling books from 2019 were:
  1. How Al-Anon Works-B32
  2. Courage to Change-B16
  3. One Day at a Time in Al-Anon-B6
  4. Hope for Today-B27
  5. Paths to Recovery-B24
- The AMIAS recertification process was updated for 2020.
- Electronic Meeting registrations are growing. In 2019 there were 252 meetings, and an additional 38 were registered by March 2020.
- The Road Trip," You and Your Board Connect" in October 31, 2020 has been cancelled.
- A new PSA was released in 2020. It represents a diverse population and answering the questions taken directly from the 20 -Question pamphlets (S17, S20 and S25).
- As of 2019, WSO has included International meetings in the meeting search engine.
- The Member's Strategic Plan Initiatives are as follows:
  - a) **Launch the mobile application** to increase access to recovery for all generations. Still working on the name of mobile application so that it is easy to find. Projected launch date July 2020.
  - b) **Enhance Trilingual Communications** by hiring freelance translators to help reduce the backlog of translated materials.
- Public Strategic Plan Initiatives are as follows:
  - a) Identify potential threats from other organizations and determine the differentiating characteristics of Al-Anon.
  - b) Address Trademark & Copyright Violation to protect Al-Anon's name, which is paramount in the face of ongoing and increasing violations appearing on the internet in the form of social media and websites. I recently forward to all of you, a letter from the Chair of the Board of Trustees regarding this very matter.

In 2019, Marcia wanted members to know that 76.2 % of Connecticut Al-Anon groups have contributed to WSO. It should be noted that the cost of WSO service per registered group is \$304.39. Connecticut's individual group contributions were \$142.49.

And finally, the plans for Al-Anon 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2021 is progressing as well. As is the 2023 Al-Anon International Convention in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

#### 10 minute Break

**Alateen Report:** Lisa G. informed the Area that 8 Alateen meeting are via Zoom and that the re-certification for AMIAS and sponsors is in process. Forms need to be returned to AAPP Miguel C. Newcomers to Alateen can get assistance through [alateen@ctalanon.org](mailto:alateen@ctalanon.org) For safety and behavioral policies and procedures Alateen zoom information cannot be posted on website.

Lisa, then went on to speak to members regarding the 'links of Alateen service.' The responsibility of coordinating Alateen speakers for all outside events falls to the Alateen Coordinator. She works with AMIAS/Sponsors to find the best fit taking into account a teen's program and sponsors' knowledge of his/her readiness to speak. Alateens are not to be contacted directly to speak at any event.

**Archives Report:** June C. began her service by taking an inventory of CT archives in storage, then organizing and arranging them for quick and easy access. She was able to visit the LDC before the pandemic and monitored for mold and fragility. It is best to store materials in cardboard containers to absorb moisture as metal, wooden filing cabinets and plastic bins create mold over time. She is planning to rehouse all materials for preservation and conservation. She has been in touch with website coordinator regarding posting photographs on the website.

**Board of Directors:** Deborah C. reported on what has been happening at their January, March and May meetings with formulations of subcommittees, elections of new Board members, and the leaving of those that have completed their service commitments.

Their greatest challenge was having to close the LDC during the COVID-19 pandemic. After consulting with the Church, the LDC was reopened on May 26. And volunteers are now completing unfilled orders and shipping them out. All donations to the LDC are appreciated and they will continue to accept donations to AFG, Inc. 244 Main Street, Hartford, CT 06106. Literature will not be available for pick up at the LDC. The LDC is now seeking resumes for an Office Manager and Assistant Manager, and currently operating the LDC using volunteers. The church has decided to move all renters out of the basement. The AFG Office and LDC will be relocating to the second floor just above Grey Hall. We will have our own secure entrance at the opposite end on the church. Our storage area will be moved to a space just outside the Hall, which will make for easy access. The move should happen no later than November.

**Convention 2020/2021 Chair Report:** Rick L. recapped this year's cancelled Convention. He presented an accounting of monies spent and how they are hoping to recoup deposits from the Red Lion. Thus far, there is a \$3000 deficit from expenses incurred before the cancellation. At this time, the committee is not recommending the AFG Board to sign a contract with Hartford-

Marriott Hotel for 2021 Convention until they have more information on the safety issues surrounding Covid-19. They may look into the possibility of an on-line Convention format.

**Co-Chair Convention 2020/2021 Report:** Martha N. reiterated Rick's accounting of the Convention finances. Since the Co-Chair kicks off the theme contest at the Spring Assembly, distributes flyers, and plans for the Serenity Breakfast, the committee usually meets in September. However, the committee may need to resume using a Zoom format. Additionally, the committee will need to decide whether to continue with the same theme, *2020 Vision of Hope* or start the process of choosing a new theme. Continuing with the same theme would allow for potential sale of the items purchased to sell at the convention, as well as usage of decorations already purchased. They also need to discuss the feasibility of planning a Serenity Breakfast and what that may look like. If the decision is to move ahead, the breakfast may require a virtual format or social distancing seating and may limit the number of attendees.

**Group Records Report:** Kelly D.'s report was read by Ron S. Updated information is vital to keeping our groups active. Any changes (i.e. current mailing address (CMA), meeting location/time, GR changes, etc.) require a GR-1 form to be filled out and submitted to DR, who submits to Group Records coordinator. Kelly also updates area meeting booklet for the potential newcomer. A GR-1 form can be downloaded by linking to: <https://al-anon.org/wp-content/uploads/GR1-3.pdf> Due to pandemic, WSO has suspended all groups annual update mailings until further notice. But she encouraged everyone to continue to reach out to her at [grouprecords@ctalanon.org](mailto:grouprecords@ctalanon.org)

**LDC Finance Chair:** Ron S. gave the 2019 LDC income from sales and contributions which totaled \$57,930 with expenses of \$58,267. A net loss of \$337 was incurred. Event and personal contributions totaled \$4,403. The first quarter of 2020 income from sales and contributions totaled \$11,578 with expenditures of \$12,822. Again, a net loss of \$1,244. Both were down due to unfilled staff positions and impact from the pandemic. Ron welcomed the new Finance Committee members and thanked those that had fulfilled their service commitments. He reminded all members that the LDC welcomes members contributions and does not accept money from outside enterprises (Corporate matching funds).

**Literature Report:** Morgan R. reported that due to the enforced quarantine of Covid-19 all scheduled Al-Anon and AA in-person events have been cancelled. She encouraged sales by suggesting an online method of perusing the "literature table". This would consist of an online "menu" featuring the books/pamphlets/bookmarks the LDC sells and a brief description of each, a link to the order form, as well as contact information for the LDC. She also suggested a Thought Force for an on-line store for individuals to purchase literature using a credit card, debit card, or PayPal. Since she has experience with creating websites, this could happen in a short time.

**Public Outreach Coordinator:** Kathe L-B showed a PowerPoint presentation on what is happening in Connecticut's attempts to reach the public. Just a few of their accomplishments:

- 45 min University of Connecticut radio interview with an Al-Anon member
- Local newspaper and on-line postings of Al-Anon phone and virtual meetings.
- Social Distancing and Al-Anon article ran in the Granby Drummer

- Dear Abby, Al-Anon letter published. District 4 members encouraged each other to send thank you notes to the editor.
- District 6 and 8 - Nurses in hospitals provide patients with meeting information
- Business cards provided to First Responders
- Alateens sent request to WSO to add an Al-Anon/Alateen information in Snapchat
- Encouraged Spanish Community participation by using materials with Spanish translations.
- Live meetings are on hold in hospitals and institutions, but PO chairs are staying in contact.

Elaine M. concluded our virtual assembly by thanking everyone for their participation. A motion was made to adjourn the assembly by Jackie B-AWSC Treasurer/GR Dist 4; seconded by Bob C -GR Dist 11. Motion to adjourn carries unanimously at 1:51 p.m.

Taffy P. was asked to lead the assembly in the closing prayer – The Al-Anon Declaration.

Respectfully submitted,

Taffy P.  
AWSC Secretary/Panel 42 CT