

READING AND REVIEW OF FORMAT *Revised June 28, 2011 06/09*

Welcome to the Monthly Area Service Meeting of the Narcotics Anonymous Groups in the Lake Agassiz Area of Narcotics Anonymous. My name is _____ and the only qualifications I have for chairing this meeting are that I am an addict and a member of Narcotics Anonymous

This format is all you will need to get a basic understanding of what is happening during this meeting.

We also want to give you, if you do not have them, a copy of all our policies and a copy of A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous as well as an updated copy of our Motion Log. The Motion Log is a record of the decisions made by this body. We encourage you to study the Guide, the rest of this document, and the motion log. They will help you understand what Narcotics Anonymous is and how NA wants us to provide services on its behalf. Does anyone need a format, guidelines, or Guide to Local Service? 08/10

This format will be used for the monthly service meeting. Other committees of the LAASC will adapt this process to meet their needs, but will use a similar approach to extend the serenity of recovery meetings to all our service meetings. 09/09

Please help me open this service meeting with a moment of silence for those we are here to serve, the still suffering addict, followed by the Serenity Prayer. 09/05

We read the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts to remind us of our commitment to carry the message of NA to our local community by practicing all these principles in our recovery meetings, our service meetings, and as productive members of society. We find that our services are stabilized when we conscientiously apply these 12 Concepts for NA Service, much as our 12 Steps have stabilized our lives and our 12 Traditions have stabilized and unified our groups. 09/05

*Would someone please read the Twelve Steps.
Would someone please read the Twelve Traditions.
And would someone please read the Twelve Concepts. 09/05*

This monthly area service committee meeting, open to any NA member, is the event at which the work of the subcommittees and the well-being of the groups all come into focus. 09/05

If you have a question simply raise your hand. The Scribe, _____, will place your name next on the list to speak, nod to you, and you can put your hand down. This same procedure is followed throughout this service meeting. A new list is begun for each new issue. The Chair will call on each person in the order named on the list. If the Chair needs to express an opinion on a matter, they will turn the chair over to the Vice Chairperson, raise their hand, have their name put next on the list and will not take over as Chair until that matter is finished.

It is the job of the Chairperson to know all the guidelines the GSR's have asked that we follow here. More importantly, it is the Chair's job to help you appropriately form your question or concern in a way that respects the ground rules for communication we have agreed to here.

Our Parliamentarian, _____ is responsible for helping us all remember what our guidelines are and has the responsibility of telling us when we might be not respecting those guidelines. In matters where we have no policy, the Parliamentarian will be asked to make a suggested temporary policy for us to follow. The GSR's will vote whether to use the suggestion. Are there any questions before we proceed? 09/05

Let's have a round of introductions. 09/05

Recognition of new groups. 09/05

Approval of last month's minutes 09/05

This meeting has 8 parts. They are:

1. **QUORUM**
2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
3. **REPORTS**
4. **SHARING SESSION**
5. **OLD BUSINESS**
6. **NEW BUSINESS**
7. **VOTING**
8. **CLOSING**
 - A. **MOTION TO CLOSE**
 - B. **NA RELATED ANNOUNCEMENTS**
 - C. **BEEFS AND BOUQUETS**
 - D. **GRATITUDE PRAYER**

OUR SERENITY CLAUSE

When caught in a conflict for which there seems to be no resolution today, anyone present can call for a moment of silence, and we will each ask ourselves privately, "What does this discussion have to do with carrying the message? Whenever any NA Member present asks for a Moment of Silence, discussion will end, and the Chair will read OUR SERENITY CLAUSE to the Group.

Discussion continues, if the conflict on the issue continues, any NA member can ask that discussion on the topic be closed and that the issue be placed on the Sharing Session for next month. A second by a GSR is needed. The Chair, without comment or discussion, will call for a vote. A 2/3 majority is needed to close the discussion and put the issue on the Sharing Session for the next month. We call this our Serenity Clause.

BREAKS

To help maintain maximum focus on issues at hand, we will take a 10 minute break at ten minutes before the hour, each hour. It does not matter what we are doing, we will stop and take a break simply because very few of us can maintain optimal focus even for 50 minutes per hour.

The second important reason for these breaks to make it unnecessary for GSR's and elected trusted servants to be whispering among themselves to take care of business. It is respectful and the wishes of Narcotics Anonymous that we give our undivided attention to each speaker and report. Please make a note of any matter you need to take care of with someone else here and take care of it during the break.

BREAKS IN PLACE

All motions must be put in writing for a full record in the minutes for the benefit of the groups not in attendance. No motion, no matter how small, is exempted. If needed, the Chair will call for a couple of minutes Break in Place while the motion is written. No one leaves the room.

VOTING

1. The goal in all discussions is to arrive at unanimity. That means that all questions have been satisfactorily answered, that all are in agreement, and group conscience has been allowed to develop. It also might mean that the motion has been changed to fit the developing group conscience. As soon as all GSR's are in agreement, for or against, unanimity has been reached. Concepts 8 & 9 describe the process in detail.

B. In matters where unanimity cannot be reached 2/3 of all GSR's present must vote in favor of the motion for it to pass. We will use the following guide. 2/3 of 3 is 2, of 4 is 3, of 5 is 4, of 6 is 4, of 7 is 5, 8 is 6, 9 is 6, 10 is 7, 11 is 8, 12 is 8, 13 is 9, 14 is 10, 15 is 10 and so forth.

- C. In matters where a tie vote occurs, the matter is returned to the next monthly meeting and given priority for discussion during the Sharing Session. A tie vote indicates that unanimity has not been reached
- D. If the maker of the motion, or anyone else present, does not feel enough time was given to the group conscience process, he/she can resubmit the motion in the future.
- E. Only GSR's vote. The Chair cannot break a tie by voting. The Chair is not a GSR and does not have a vote in any matter. The Chair is only there to help the GSR's in their group conscience development.
- F. On any issue a GSR can choose to vote in favor, against, or can choose to abstain for any reason. The Chair will ask and record in the minutes the reason for each vote against a motion. The reason for each abstention will also be recorded. A vote to abstain counts only to determine if quorum exists and is not a vote in favor or against. See the section on Motions Part 1.
- G. The voice of participants against a motion and those abstaining are important as the minority opinion in accordance with our 9th Tradition.

Are there any questions before we proceed?

****Note to Chair: Before each section of the meeting read only the reading for that section.****

Part 1: QUORUM

Quorum is defined as the conditions necessary before this body can proceed with the business at hand. If we find that quorum has been reached, we can proceed and do all business. If quorum is not reached, all we can do are previously approved tasks and adjourn. Quorum will consist of the GSR's present at a monthly meeting if the following conditions are met. Quorum will be recorded in the monthly minutes.

At least 6 GSR's must be present for quorum to be established. The Chairperson asks each GSR to raise their hand and the number is recorded in the minutes' quorum. If less than 6 GSR's are present at any time after quorum is established quorum no longer exists and business must stop. 11/09

The Secretary must be able to show that every reasonable effort is being made to get a copy of the Minutes to every member, group, and/or meeting on the LAA Meeting list and to those which may not be listed but have decided to be members and receive the minutes. Minutes must be sent out two weeks prior to the ASC.

If at least 6 GSR's are present and feel that all members/groups/meetings who want minutes have been sent minutes at least two weeks prior to the ASC, a motion can be made to accept quorum. 07/09

If quorum is not established no reports will be made or given and a quorum report will be prepared and sent to all regular recipients of the minutes, in the same two week deadline. Quorum reports shall include who was present, why quorum was not established, and what if any activities occurred.

The only activities allowed are the following:

- a. *Set the time and place of the next meeting.*
- b. *Take action of matters already approved by the body including; paying bills already approved, accepting donations from groups, and mileage payments as authorized in these guidelines. 11/09*

Are there any questions about this process?

Part 2: APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM LAST MONTH

Our second task is to approve the Minutes from the last meeting. The Chair will ask if there are any corrections that need to be made. If there are none, the Chair will ask for a motion to approve the Minutes as read. A 2/3 vote is needed. If there are changes to be made, the Chair will ask that the changes be put in writing and handed to the Chair. The Chair will read the proposed change and ask for a motion and second to approve the motion. Again a 2/3 majority is needed to approve the change.

Before moving on the Chair will make sure that all changes in the Minutes have been written down by the person proposing the change and given to the Secretary with the vote on each.

Are there any questions about what we are doing?

Part 3: REPORTS

In the third section, called REPORTS, our elected trusted servants and Group Service Representatives (GSRs) report on what's happened since the committee met last.

Reports will be given in this order: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Regional Conference Member 1 and 2, Hospitals and Institutions Chairperson, Public Information Chairperson, Activities Chairperson, Literature Chairperson, FDC Chairperson, Web Chairperson, and Ad-Hoc groups.

Following the reports of the elected trusted servants, Group Service Representatives (GSR's) will give their reports.

Any matters requiring further discussion are placed next on the Sharing Session topic list. Anyone present can request that a topic or motion be added to the Sharing Session list maintained by the Vice Chairperson. Questions can be asked during Reports, but all discussions will be done during the Sharing Session.

Before the Sharing Session begins, the Chair will turn the leadership over to the Vice Chairperson. Anyone present can add a topic to the list. Raise your hand and name your topic when recognized by the Chair.

Are there any questions before we proceed with reports?

Part 4: THE SHARING SESSION

The Vice Chair will inform the body of what is on the list for discussion and will ask for additional topics. The topics will be discussed in the order they were received, oldest ones first. *If the submitter for a topic is absent two times in a row the topic will be cleared from the list.*

The person raising the topic speaks first. If anyone wanting to speak has to get on the list by raising their hand until the Scribe nods that their name is recorded.

There is absolutely no reason for anyone to speak out of turn and that includes the Vice Chair.

No one can move that the discussion be stopped since no motions can be made to slow or speed the development of conscience. Nor can the Vice Chair take any steps, other than those included here, to speed the discussion for any reason.

If someone has a question of the person who raised the topic or anyone else, the question will be answered only when the person's name comes up next on the list. No back and forth is allowed.

The only motion that is allowed would be a motion to close the meeting if the Sharing Session goes past 3:30 pm. If the Sharing Session is not over at 4 pm the Chair will stop the discussion and entertain a motion to close. No discussion is allowed. A 2/3 vote of all GSR's present is required to extend the meeting beyond 4 pm.

If for some reason the Vice Chair needs to give a personal opinion on a topic, they will immediately turn the Chair position over to the next in succession as described in these policies. They will then raise their hand, be placed on the list to speak and will not resume the Chair position again until discussion on that topic is done.

The SHARING SESSION gives all NA Members present the opportunity to engage in wide-open discussion of group problems and area committee issues raised by the reports and other issues arising in the NA community. Some of the matters will be for group conscience development only. Others will become formal motions that represent the group conscience. All matters to be voted on during Old or New Business must be first heard in the Sharing Session and discussed there until group conscience is reached.

The goal of the Sharing Session is to openly discuss each issue until all are of the same mind. This is called group conscience or unanimity. It is sometimes also called a unanimous agreement on the issue at hand.

On some issues in the Sharing Session group conscience will not be possible. In such matters, an agreement to disagree without being disagreeable is about all that can be accomplished. This is a form of group conscience in which the group conscience for each GSR has been reached. Such matters can also be referred to Old or New Business for a recorded vote.

The purpose of the Sharing Session is to develop group conscience on each issue. All NA members present can participate fully in this dialogue. .

If the matter will require that a decision be made during Old or New Business on the matter, from time to time the Vice Chair will ask the GSR's if they have the information they need to vote on the matter. As soon as each GSR indicates that they feel that they have a good sense of what their vote will be, then group conscience has been reached for each of the GSR's, and the Chair will announce that group conscience has been reached, will announce what will happen next to the issue.

At any time during the discussion, any member can ask for a change in the way the issue is put forward, or in the action proposed. Since the issue belongs to the body once it is proposed, the wording of the action can be changed if ALL GSR's either agree with the change or are not opposed to the change enough to stop it from being made. Abstentions are simply abstentions and are not included in the vote except to record the number of abstentions.

Before each issue is closed for discussion, the Vice Chair will go around the room and ask each person present if they have any more new points to add. When all new information has been received on that topic, then the issue is closed. This is done to make sure that every person, especially new members or more shy members will be heard.

At the close of the Sharing Session, the Vice Chair will give the Chair position back to the Chairperson. The Chairperson will lead the OLD and NEW BUSINESS sections.

All that is recorded in the Minutes is the topics discussed. No summary of comments is included. The outcome of each issue is recorded as one of the following:

- A. For discussion only.
- B. No action needed.
- C. Moved to Old or New Business for a vote to record the level of group conscience.
- D. Discussion tabled until the next Sharing Session.
- E. Other (state briefly what it is)

Part 5: OLD BUSINESS

No matter can come up in Old or New Business if it has not been discussed in a Sharing Session.

The purpose of Old and New Business is to create a record of the group conscience and level of agreement that was reached.

Any motion that will be placed in Old or New Business must be submitted to the Chairperson in writing, must be seconded by a GSR and include intent. As soon as the matter is voted on, the Chairperson will write the results of the vote on the motion and hand it to the Secretary.

After the sharing session the committee is ready to go straight to OLD BUSINESS where matters remaining from a previous ASC are voted on. Only GSR's are allowed to participate in this section. One by one the Chair will announce the issue being voted on in the order they were received by the Chairperson. No discussion will be allowed and no questions will be entertained. Immediately the Chair will call for a vote. The matter is passed if the vote is unanimous or 2/3 or more of GSR's present are in favor. If the vote is a tie or up to a 2/3 vote, the matter will be placed on the Sharing Session list for the next monthly meeting and that vote indicates that the issue is important enough to merit further group conscience development. If the vote in favor is less than 50%, the matter is dropped. Of course any matter can be brought before the body again at a later meeting.

Also, and NA Member present at a future ASC may bring back a motion that receives less than 50% if the person feels it was inadequately discussed. The body is bound to respect that request.

Part 6: NEW BUSINESS

We will go from Old Business to NEW BUSINESS where questions about the work of its officers and subcommittees or the area committee itself, and the group conscience on each matter are officially recorded. The same ground rules for passing and being dropped for Old Business apply here.

Part 7: VOTING

Voting is done through the process of secret ballot. All elections and motions, *except parliamentary motions, 05/09* are decided this way to ensure each GSR the right to follow their group conscience without fear of reprisal.

Part 8: CLOSING

MOTION TO CLOSE

Would someone please move that we close, and would someone please second that motion.

NA RELATED ANNOUNCEMENTS

Are there any NA related announcements?

BEEFS AND BOUQUETS

The Chair will go around the room and ask each person to participate in BEEFS AND BOUQUETS. Each person is asked to give a personal view of what is going well, what is not going well, what can be improved and suggestions for improvement. The Secretary will make note of what can be improved and suggestions for improvement and will include them in the Beefs and Bouquets section in the Minutes. Only the suggestions for change, not the person who offered it, will be on the list. Nothing else will be recorded in the minutes from this section. The Vice Chair will place each of the suggested areas to change, with the suggestion of how to change it on the Sharing Session list for the next ASC.

GRATITUDE PRAYER

Let's all stand in a circle and close with the Gratitude Prayer.