

# Western Georgian Bay District 9 Guidelines

Accepted by Group Conscience: 2011.05.15

## **A Declaration of Unity**

This we owe this to A.A.'s future: to place our common welfare first; to keep our Fellowship united. For on A.A. unity depend our lives, and the lives of those to come.

## **I Am Responsible.**

When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that: I am responsible.

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## 1 Introduction<sup>1</sup>

- 1.1. The primary purpose of these guidelines is to document District 9 Group Conscience;
  - 1.1.1. To remember the things we sometimes forget
  - 1.1.2. To reference earlier decisions during times of confusion or dispute
- 1.2. These guidelines are *in addition* to the Alcoholics Anonymous General Service Conference-approved literature such as *The A.A. Service Manual*<sup>2</sup>.
- 1.3. The A.A. Service Manual and related pamphlets ought to be referenced when this document fails to provide guidance.
- 1.4. In particular, these guidelines ought to perpetuate the spirit of ideas found in the Traditions such as unity, a group purpose with one ultimate authority, and our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern, and Concepts such as, the right of decision, participation, and appeal.
- 1.5. While these are “guidelines” and not “rules,” it is *recommended* that the District Committee follow them as a general practice, and deviate from them only when a motion, at the time, is passed to do so.

## 2. The Committee

- 2.1. The District Committee is made up of the following people (in order of authority):
  - 2.1.1. Group General Service Representatives (G.S.R.’s) – one per A.A. Group.

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<sup>1</sup> Each line of these guidelines is numbered for reference purposes when being discussed.

<sup>2</sup> *The A.A. Service Manual Combined With Twelve Concepts for World Service* by Bill W.

- 2.1.2. Officers:
  - 2.1.2.1. District Committee Member (D.C.M.)
  - 2.1.2.2. Alternate D.C.M.
  - 2.1.2.3. Treasurer
  - 2.1.2.4. Secretary
- 2.1.3. Sub-committee Chairpersons (non-voting members):
  - 2.1.3.1. Corrections
  - 2.1.3.2. Detox Meeting Chair – Saturday and Monday nights.
  - 2.1.3.3. Grapevine
  - 2.1.3.4. Public Information – Cooperation with the Professional Community (P.I./C.P.C. – a combined role.)
  - 2.1.3.5. Special Needs/Remote Communities
  - 2.1.3.6. Treatment
- 2.2. The Term of Office for District Officers and Sub-committee Chairpersons shall be two years.
- 2.3. Terms of Office shall coincide with the Area Committee; traditionally starting in even years.
- 2.4. Elections for Officer and Sub-committee chairpersons shall be conducted at the Regular October District meeting prior to the end of the term.
- 2.5. To be elected to and assume a District Officer or Committee Chairperson position, the candidate shall have been an active member of the District for at least one two-year term – either as G.S.R., or Alternate G.S.R..

### **3. The Meeting**

- 3.1. Regular
  - 3.1.1. When: 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month at 2 pm.
  - 3.1.2. Where: Knox United Church basement, in Owen Sound at the corner of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 9<sup>th</sup> Street – entrance off 9<sup>th</sup> Street.
  - 3.1.3. Who: Group Representatives, Officers, Sub-Committee Chairpersons
  - 3.1.4. Agenda:
    - 3.1.4.1. Moment of silence
    - 3.1.4.2. Serenity Prayer (for those who wish)

- 3.1.4.3. Reading of the Traditions
- 3.1.4.4. Roll Call
- 3.1.4.5. Secretary's Report
  - 3.1.4.5.1. Call for errors or omissions.
  - 3.1.4.5.2. Motion and vote to accept.
- 3.1.4.6. Treasurer's Report
  - 3.1.4.6.1. Call for errors or omissions
  - 3.1.4.6.2. Motion and vote to accept.
- 3.1.4.7. Correspondence
- 3.1.4.8. Announcements
- 3.1.4.9. D.C.M. Report
- 3.1.4.10. Alternate D.C.M. Report (optional)
- 3.1.4.11. Sub-committee Reports
- 3.1.4.12. Group Reports
- 3.1.4.13. Old Business
- 3.1.4.14. New Business
- 3.1.4.15. Motion to adjourn accepted by the Chair and vote on motion
- 3.1.4.16. Close with the Lord's Prayer (for those who wish.)
- 3.1.5. Quorum:
  - 3.1.5.1. A quorum shall be necessary in order to vote on Group Conscience motions brought before the committee at a Regular meeting.
  - 3.1.5.2. If a quorum is not available, the meeting may take place but "motions of substance<sup>3</sup>" may not be voted on.
  - 3.1.5.3. The purpose of the quorum is to prevent the disunity caused by Group Conscience decisions that are made by too few committee members.
  - 3.1.5.4. A quorum shall consist of 40% of the G.S.R.s (or their designated Alternates in their absence.) plus 1/2 of the voting Officers.
- 3.1.6. Cancellation<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Defined as any motion *other than* those made concerning the conduct of the meeting; for example, a motion to accept the Secretary's Report, or to close the meeting itself, is not considered a motion of substance.

- 3.1.6.1. The District Meeting may be cancelled by:
  - 3.1.6.1.1. Group Conscience motion vote at a Regular meeting.
  - 3.1.6.1.2. A Committee Officer for reasons of:
    - 3.1.6.1.2.1. bad weather
    - 3.1.6.1.2.2. loss of venue (e.g., late notification of a church function)
    - 3.1.6.1.2.3. lack of quorum
- 3.1.6.2. Notification
  - 3.1.6.2.1. In the event that a meeting must be cancelled with insufficient prior notice, the Officers are responsible for notifying the rest of the committee members by phone.

## 3.2. Budget

District Officers get together to create the proposed budget for the new year.

- 3.2.1. When: December (preferred) or January
- 3.2.2. Where: At the D.C.M.'s discretion.
- 3.2.3. Who:
  - 3.2.3.1. Officers
  - 3.2.3.2. Sub-committee Chairpersons
  - 3.2.3.3. Any G.S.R. (or Alternate) expressing a desire to attend.

## 3.3. Emergency

- 3.3.1. An Emergency meeting of the District Committee may be called by an Officer with a minimum of 24 hours of notice.
- 3.3.2. A quorum is not necessary to make decisions.
- 3.3.3. The D.C.M. or Alternate D.C.M. shall make decisions on matters of extreme urgency.
- 3.3.4. All decisions:
  - 3.3.4.1. Shall be reported to the committee at the next Regular meeting.
  - 3.3.4.2. Can be overturned by Group Conscience vote of the committee.

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<sup>4</sup> See section **The Committee** for the order of authority for meeting cancellation.

## 4. Voting

- 4.1. The following members are eligible to vote on motions brought before the Regular committee meeting:
  - 4.1.1. G.S.R.s – or, in their absence, their designated Alternates – one or the other but not both.
  - 4.1.2. District Officers
- 4.2. Methods:
  - 4.2.1. Simple Majority
    - 4.2.1.1. Defined as 50% + 1 of eligible voters in attendance.
  - 4.2.2. Substantial Unanimity
    - 4.2.2.1. Defined as 2/3<sup>rd</sup>s majority of eligible voters in attendance.
  - 4.2.3. Complete Unanimity
    - 4.2.3.1. Defined as 100% of the eligible voters in attendance.
  - 4.2.4. Third Legacy Procedure
    - 4.2.4.1. Defined in the A.A. Service Manual: *Chapter 1 Introduction to General Service*, section *Third Legacy Procedure*.
    - 4.2.4.2. Used to elect District Officers and Sub-committee Chairpersons.
- 4.3. Deciding on a Method:
  - 4.3.1. With the exception of elections, the chairperson of the Regular District meeting shall choose the method at the time of voting.
  - 4.3.2. Any committee member may ask for a method other than that chosen by the chairperson. If the chairperson disagrees, an immediate Substantial Unanimity (2/3<sup>rd</sup>s) vote shall decide the issue.
- 4.4. Types:
  - 4.4.1. Show of hands.
    - 4.4.1.1. This is the usual type.
    - 4.4.1.2. May be used for elections at the discretion of the committee.
  - 4.4.2. Secret ballot.
    - 4.4.2.1. Generally used for elections and decisions in which high emotions are an issue.

## 5. Motions

- 5.1. A motion is defined as a proposal put before the District Committee for a Group Conscience vote.
- 5.2. Motions:
  - 5.2.1. May be verbal or written (preferred).
  - 5.2.2. Shall have a "second".
    - 5.2.2.1. The person seconding the motion shall be another eligible voter on the committee.
    - 5.2.2.2. If no "second" is forthcoming, the motion automatically fails.
  - 5.2.3. Are recorded by the Secretary in the minutes.
  - 5.2.4. Amendments are permitted and must be moved, seconded, and voted on before the original motion is voted on.
- 5.3. Procedure
  - 5.3.1. Motion is made and seconded.
  - 5.3.2. Motion is recorded by the Secretary and then read out loud to ensure the wording and/or spirit of the motion is correct.
  - 5.3.3. Motion is discussed.
    - 5.3.3.1. Only eligible voters may discuss the motion.
    - 5.3.3.2. The views of non-voters may be heard at the discretion of the meeting chairperson.
    - 5.3.3.3. At any point in the discussion, a voting member may ask that the vote be called. The actual calling of the vote shall be at the discretion of the meeting chairperson.
  - 5.3.4. Meeting chairperson chooses and announces a method of voting.
  - 5.3.5. If a secret ballot type is chosen, the meeting chairperson shall announce its use.
    - 5.3.5.1. A voting member may ask that a specific type be used.
  - 5.3.6. Meeting chairperson calls for a vote.
    - 5.3.6.1. Those in favour.
    - 5.3.6.2. Those opposed.
    - 5.3.6.3. Those abstaining.
  - 5.3.7. Votes are tallied by two committee members.
  - 5.3.8. Pass or fail is announced and recorded in the minutes.
  - 5.3.9. Minority Opinion is called for if anyone was opposed to the motion.

- 5.3.9.1. If no minority opinions are voiced, the result stands.
- 5.3.9.2. If minority opinion is voiced:
  - 5.3.9.2.1. The chairperson asks if anyone in the majority wishes to change their vote.
  - 5.3.9.2.2. If anyone indicates they wish to change their vote, voting is done again.
  - 5.3.9.2.3. If no one wants to change their vote, the result stands.

## **6. Finances**

- 6.1. Prudent Reserve
  - 6.1.1. A prudent reserve of three months operating expenses shall be maintained.
- 6.2. Banking
  - 6.2.1. District funds shall be placed in a bank account in the District's name.
  - 6.2.2. Disbursements are made by cheque.
  - 6.2.3. Individual disbursement cheques shall require two signatures; usually the Treasurer and D.C.M.
  - 6.2.4. Three Officers shall be authorized to sign disbursement cheques.
- 6.3. Bookkeeping
  - 6.3.1. The Treasurer shall maintain a ledger and/or a bank book providing itemized details of deposits and withdrawals.
- 6.4. Budget
  - 6.4.1. Reference section *3.2 Budget* for information on budget creation; including when, where, and who.
  - 6.4.2. The budget shall be presented by the meeting chairperson and discussed at the January meeting; quorum, circumstance, and weather permitting.
  - 6.4.3. The budget shall be accepted by Substantial Unanimity vote at the Regular February meeting; quorum, circumstance, and weather permitting.
- 6.5. Disbursements
  - 6.5.1. District funds may be disbursed without vote by the Treasurer in accordance with the budget line items (once the budget is accepted by vote), these guidelines, and financially-related motions passed

by the District Committee. Any disbursement that falls outside of this guideline shall be reported to the committee as soon as possible.

- 6.5.2. Disbursements include operating expenses, and trusted servant expenses.
- 6.6. Operating Expenses
  - 6.6.1. Itemized as line items in the budget.
  - 6.6.2. Examples include Hawthorne Communications and Bell Canada.
- 6.7. Trusted Servant Expenses
  - 6.7.1. Itemized as line items in the budget.
  - 6.7.2. Examples include:
    - 6.7.2.1. D.C.M. expenses; travel to Area Committee meeting, travel and accommodation for Area Assemblies, etc.
    - 6.7.2.2. Literature; Beginner's Pamphlet, PI/CPC literature, etc.
- 6.8. Contributions – Passing it on.
  - 6.8.1. As part of the District budget, funds may be allocated for contribution to the Area and the General Service Office (G.S.O.) in New York.
  - 6.8.2. The Treasurer may disburse budgeted contributions without vote during the year as funds are available.
  - 6.8.3. The District can vote to make additional contributions over and above the budgeted amounts.
- 6.9. 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition
  - 6.9.1. The basket is not passed at the District meeting.

## **7. Guidelines**

- 7.1. These guidelines shall be reviewed at the beginning of each new Term of Office – January or February of the year following District elections.
- 7.2. The review shall be conducted by the District Committee itself, or an ad hoc committee appointed by the D.C.M. with the approval of the District Committee.
- 7.3. The product of the review shall be either a "No Amendments Required" determination, or an itemized list of proposed amendments.
  - 7.3.1. Each amendment item shall be individually moved, discussed, and voted on by the District Committee. This process need not be accomplished during a single District Committee meeting.

7.4. Motions to amend these guidelines shall require Substantial Unanimity (2/3<sup>rd</sup>s) in order to pass.

7.5. Amendment Procedure

7.5.1. A motion to amend these Guidelines shall be made in writing and given to the Secretary at a Regular meeting.

7.5.2. A Notice of Motion, along with a copy of the motion, shall be included with the minutes of that meeting that are distributed.

7.5.3. The motion may only be voted on at a *subsequent* Regular meeting, after members of the committee have had a chance to review them and discuss them with their groups.

7.6. Distribution of These Guidelines

7.6.1. Who: Group Representatives, Officers, Sub-Committee Chairpersons.

7.6.2. When: January, or when a new person comes onboard.

## 8. Document History

Date	Amendments
2011.05.17	Accepted by Group Conscience vote.