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**FINAL APPROVED
SENY ASSEMBLY MEETING
MINUTES**

*SENY REUNIÓN DEL ASAMBLEA DE ORDEN DEL
DÍA*

**Sunday November 7, 2015 (9:15am-3:15
PM)**

ACTION:

(9:15am) Service Workshops (Talleres de Servicio)

Meeting called to order 9:15 am

- Serenity Prayer Rick W., Chair
- Daily Reflection (*Reflexión Diaria*) – Linda
- Preamble – group / Preamble - Beverly, Manny A
- SENY Statement of Purpose (*Declaración de Propósito SENY*)

General Housekeeping –

- o GSR's DCM's and DCMC's vote
- o Roberts Rules of order and 2/3 unanimity

Introductions (*Presentaciones*)

- New GSR's, DCM's and DCMC's (*Nueva de GSR, DCM y DCMC*)

Approval of Minutes from Previous Assembly Meeting (*Aprobación del Acta de la reunión anterior del Comité*)

- Motion made and seconded
- Yes = 66 No = 0 Abs = 0
- Motion passes

Treasurer: Manny A., treasurer@aaseny.org

- Financials for October were distributed

Motion to accept was made and seconded

Yes = 88 No = 0 Abs = 6

Agenda

2017 SENY Convention Presentation – Dean J.

Discussion:

- Clarification of room meeting space charge
- Does Marriott know we are in negotiations with another hotel? Yes and in fact these two are sister companies and they are wanting to take business from sister company.
- Question about competition
- Question about the literature and grapevine sales, does Renaissance have similar space? Yes space outside banquet is twice the size for literature
- Special needs questions at renaissance? Yes they are familiar in terms of staff and well versed in dealing with groups like us.
- People at these hotels want us there because we pay our bills and don't do damage
- How many rooms does the renaissance have? 400+
- Renaissance Restaurant menu looked to be a bit pricey. I am concerned about that. Can they put together items that could be a bit cheaper? I am also concerned about the travel to a diner is a 10 minute drive for the Renaissance, but the Marriott has more of an option for food.

- Clarification about accommodation rooms and meeting rooms

Marriott = 16

Renaissance = 89

Motion to move to renaissance seconded

Yes = 94 No = 15 Abs = 1

Motion carries

Minority opinion:

Voted to stay at Marriott because I believe it is a win-win situation wherever we go. I am familiar with geographic. We have gone to two different places in the SENY Convention and have always wound up back at the Marriott. I believe what makes the SENY Convention good is SENY not the place. I am not sure we have a reason to change.

I do not like change and this could cause quite a few issues and I am not sure that we would make the room nights. If less people go to the convention because then we might not make the room nights.

1 year Contract vs 3 year Contract

Discussion:

-If we do not take the 3 year, we would have to come back and book for the second year before the first year happens anyway.

-If we took one year and then wanted to do a three year, would we get the same price or renegotiate? We would renegotiate

-What is the penalty if we break the three year contract? Penalty would be a financial fine, the further out would be less

- If we did the three year contract and were unhappy with it, we could tolerate it for the additional two years

- We might need to get through the aches and pains of change for the three years to see vibrant

- Will presentation be available in Spanish? Yes

- Will shuttle be available? Possibly working on it

- Do you have a sense of how the renaissance will work with us if we start with a 3 year and then want to opt out after 1 year? Nothing official, but possibly

- can we look at 2? Yes possibly

Motion to have a 2 year contract, seconded

Discussion:

-I feel like we don't have all the information we need, do we need to know this today? Yes we do

-When do we negotiate for 2018? 2016

-3 years would give us a real chance to cut our teeth on this change

-The committee recommended 1 or 3 years, why would we put a motion in for 2 now?

-Our area history is when we change places to do a 1 year contract. I am afraid that if we take a 3 year contract we might be stuck for 2 more years with a bad situation.

-Two year contract has the exit strategy but still has the support for having an experience with more than a year

- We need to make a decision and jump into it

- Would Renaissance add time to the contract? Not guaranteed for prices beyond 1 year

Yes = 11

No = 83

Abs= 5

Motion to have 3 year contract, seconded

Call to question?

Continue discussion

Yes = 2

No = lots

3 year contract? Yes= 82

No = 27

Abs = 1

Minority Opinion:

- I would like to have a 1 year contract because I think we are running a risk of falling attendance.
- I would like to hear the opt out clause
- I would like to have the option of going back to Marriott
- Taking a leap of faith is good, but let's use a lifer preserver

Reconsider?

Y = not enough

N = Majority

Renaissance for three years.

Special Election: Area Registrar

Position commitment was reviewed

Third Legacy Procedures were reviewed

Fred M won the election, vote went to the hat.

Lunch

Inventory: (Moderator J. Gary L. Immediate Past Regional AA Trustee)

Review purpose of inventory

Review of Ground rules

1. Overview:

- What is the purpose of the Area? Are we doing our best to fulfill it?
 - To give group conference to delegate and bring back information of what was acted on. We do a good job from the delegate's job as well as the other trusted servant jobs.
 - So we can get the delegate to bring our group conscience to the conference. Our Area is a little different because we have the counties. We need a wider cross section across all the counties for participation.
 - This assembly should be full of GSR's. We should be promoting assemblies better so we have a wider cross section of GSR
 - Our literature speaks about this Area being the voice of the area, the democratic process as well as
- We need more clarity in our purpose. What is less clear is the taking care of services that facilitate 12th step recovery. Figure out what our responsibility is in light of 12th step work would be helpful
- Service, recovery, unity, communication between groups, conference, area, training, maintain AA for future generations through active participation
- Unity so that we are all from 13 different counties we are one area 49. Sometimes we don't have that unity promoted from county announcements or even committee announcements
- It is helpful to have the audio-visual so when it comes time to take down events and reports to take back to my groups, being able to see it as well as hear it is helpful. It is helpful to see the re-cap in the mailings as well. Then I can bring more accurate information to my home group
- How do we get GSR's from our county to our area meeting?

2. Community Representation (Who comes here?):

- Accessibility/Special Needs
 - Time management at these events. Why do we have workshops in the morning and conduct business in the afternoon? Maybe conduct business in the morning when people are awake. While I appreciate the work that is done here, maybe business that needs to be conducted in the morning. We now have a lot of people attending the county meetings, but not as many come to assembly.

- Years ago we stated that these assemblies should be handicapped accessible. Now we use schools that aren't really accessible. We need to get back to having the assemblies in places that are handicapped accessible again.
- We lost two GSR's by them coming to the Assembly and getting shell shocked by things that are conversations in progress almost. We need to pay attention to the new GSR's and take into account that this can be very scary.
- Participation is a huge problem. Maybe we need to find a central location place that will have our needs met and will provide us with some uniformity. Often we are not getting out the information to our GSR's that Assembly attendance is part of the requirement for the commitment
- I feel that we are trying to get the message out there to individual counties. There were people standing outside waiting for other people to come to help them with assistance to just get inside the meeting
- Scheduling conflict can be challenging. On the same day as this assembly, is the Hispanic Convention. Next Saturday there are quite a few activities planned. Can we work harder at spreading those events out?
- Age of new people seems to be getting lower and lower. Are we attracting the young people to Assemblies? How are we working with them?
- I wish there was more access for people from the Spanish Speaking groups. Maybe it is because the district is not attending the Hispanic Groups. The community is not being informed. Involvement of more ethnic groups, other nationalities. There needs to be more unity and information so that more participation.

3. New Members (What do we do to help them?):

- Educating
- Service Sponsorship
 - We encourage young people in our group. And we need to let the young people come in and do service and let the older people move aside.
 - I would like to see more of an atmosphere of integration rather than separation. Maybe more positive interactions. Access without a vehicle is challenging to some of these assemblies
 - we have an orientation at our County meeting to work with new GSR's and to train people on what goes on at assemblies and their role. Service Sponsorship helps to train the new GSR's
 - I know this is daunting, but for new GSR's please come back, you are very important. I was brought in gently, I was not told I was going to attend a boot camp, or a university. It is about love and service. It was very sad that we did not have the Hispanic community included for today.
 - Folks are spending an entire day here and are not having a meaningful experience. Having smoother, more efficient meetings where what we are talking about is directly connected to our primary purpose. People need to feel that they spent here time well in AA at the end of the day and I am not sure that we do that.
 - We may be the only copy of the service manual that some people may see. How we act at assemblies we need to place principles before personalities.
 - So much of people coming in, can we tell them and show them they are the most important person here. We collectively have to carry on to those around us how to carry the message to the still sick and suffering.
 - I grab someone with 6 months and take them to an assembly and to a district meeting. I am a steward of my GSR's
 - The reason I went to my first assembly is that I saw the enthusiasm of a GSR who came to an assembly. Enthusiasm goes a long way. If I am sitting here upset, why aren't I more patient and kind and loving?
 - There is a pamphlet for every commitment in AA, we become better in service by becoming educated, experienced and learn traditions. How am I being better at being self-less and self-sacrificing?

- This is like another language at these meetings. I wish there was more outreach and education about what takes place at these assemblies.

4. Membership (Do they stay, participate, pull their weight?):

- Turnover
- Responsibility
- Participation
- Try to better leverage the beautiful new website and post some training online that would quickly and easily develop what an assembly is, what goes on, etc. so that we don't wait until assembly and maybe they lose interest.
- Maybe there is a way to have members feel they are more participating in something active. We are facing a problem with those who want to become GSR's, but their group can't afford it and they can't afford it privately
- We have a big problem with turnover and with participation. Maybe we need to push it more to get people involved in service below the group level. Encouraging others to get active pushes us to be active
- As a body here, we sometimes put personalities in front of principals. We need to stop personal attacks and the idea of being right. We need to avoid that and try to allow for more space. Some people are up at the mic much more frequently than others.
- We have a very serious problem with Spanish translation. We need to stop apologizing for not having translation. We might need to hire someone to translate so that people who come to our assemblies can participate. It is very difficult to sit at a meeting for 5 hours when you don't speak the language. I encourage us to hire a paid service worker.
- There may be no rhyme or reason for why turnover happens. People who want to get involved do get involved.
- An isolated group is like an isolated drunk that is why a group needs a GSR is there. Instead of reducing the amount of mailings we are doing, we should be attending groups that do not have GSR's and bringing them the information. We need to reach out for all of them. We are trusted servants not trusted serpents. We serve you.
- We need other unity experiences to promote unity in the Area, maybe an area breakfast instead of just a convention once for the year.
- 10% of the people do 90% of the work. Sponsorship is what helps us throughout. Group Elders also help to guide newcomers. Being told "you are going to do this."

5. The Assembly (What is our meeting all about?):

- Quality
- Processes
- Same 4 or 5 people speak at the Assemblies and at the Committee meetings. Sometimes that is intimidating for the newcomer. Space needs to be created to allow the newcomer to explore and learn. Also, are we being unifying or divisive?
- Get the conscience of the area and inform the delegate. The variety of committees is good, but focus on what our conscience is about for our delegate to take to the conference.
- We used to have 5 assemblies and 10 committee meetings. We made the changes to hear what the GSR's have said. Please have the DCMC so that it can be brought back to change things up. If you are a GSR, this assembly is the most important thing you can do, we need to hear from you.
- The agenda for assembly goes out, but often we don't get to the full agenda because of time management and we need process to be refined.
- More information before hand would be helpful. I am getting more out of this than I did out of the hour this morning on the presentation.
- Muddling over Robert's rules of Order, there should be a cheat sheet of them so that we can move forward with substantive discussion instead of process discussion.

- These are really long. We have the same people saying the same things over and over again. We need to limit it.
- Pay an impartial person that will keep personalities in check. The service manual needs an overhaul.
- The agenda and the questions and where to look for that might help to know what the meeting is and how to expand on that.

6. Officers (How is our leadership?):

- Selection
- Performance
- I heard some great ideas. I think the elected officials are stretched thin. A parliamentarian would be very helpful. More time limits might help real stuff back in. Maybe an elected position of liaison for translation
- I find the leadership helpful well informed and prepared. Every once in a while, time management needs to be worked on.
- When there is lacking leadership, the area suffers. When there is a decrease in attendance, maybe the leaders need to look at what is going on. The past delegates can be a very helpful resource to help the leadership to manage situation. I would not like to see a paid parliamentarian, but I would like to see paid translators if needed and maybe a paid signer.
- Dis-unifying, destructive critiques of our chair and there are opportunities for more loving, unifying, constructive critiques.
- Leadership is strong and has been strong. I have concerns in selection process. We can show great diversity in our selection. The urban counties seem to dominate over the suburban counties.
- I look to leadership from SENY to help me how to lead at the county level. Recently a committee was unable to come to a group conscience and that was difficult to hear. We need to work harder at that.
- Leadership is important and it is important to take the rotation process through for the entire process. Look for people who have leadership qualities and will help each other. We could use the Assembly buddy system to help new GSR's.
- So far the leadership level has been phenomenal. I am here and I have to look at what is my part in things. That is the nature of step 4.
- The leadership I have seen has been good. I think the election process has been great, but you can only lead a horse to water.

7. Committees and Other Service Functions (What else do we do?):

- Leadership
- Participation
- Participation is difficult to get people involved in service. Someone took me to a service convention. Enthusiasm and attraction is what helps to increase participation.
- Some people are looking for sexy service instead of the nitty gritty 5am calls
- Not enough people involved in Treatment and Facilities Committee. Service ensures against a slip. Take a job, participate and be committed.
- The amount of time put in to service for AA by doing this is about 1% of the year that I get to be sober and live a great life. I am able to put my own needs and desires aside because this is more important. What I get to do is more important. We can lead a horse to water but we can't make them drink, but if someone is thirsty, we can help them.
- Very often is that we become a committee of one. Get GSR's excited by having a project for them to jump on board with this. If we spend more time focusing on the committees and what they do, GSR's might be more enthused about the projects.

8. Communication (If this isn't working...):

- Strategies for improvement

- Suggestion: When we have election, can we have a pass it on meeting so that the new person can benefit from outgoing experience strength and hope.
- We don't get the same information on email as we do in paper mail. That needs to improve
- We can lose sight of the personal touch and that needs to be invigorated. Talking to different people at Assembly lunches helps. Our database has shrunk and our job is to communicate to all groups and we are not communicating with them all. We need to go back to the old database because people were removed that should not have been.
- There should be no back channels, everyone should be present here. We need to listen to each other and to the minority opinion.
- Someone mentioned a video chat to spread the word around of what we are doing here. That might help especially for the counties far away.
- Distributing the LINKs to home groups will help with communication. Also, making announcements at meetings about things like assemblies and convention.
- We are often responsible for the break down
- The LINK helps with communication, the website helps with communication. Everything can be found in SENY handbook for communication. It is great we have past delegates involved and valued

9. Carrying the Message (What more can we do?):

- To the "still suffering"
 - Attention needs to be paid to the important work that is being done by CPC and PI and might help GSR's to want to get involved. We forget sometimes that this is our real focus.
 - What can SENY do to help groups that need insurance and may have to close because of that?
 - Intergroup and General Service used to be very territorial, but we are starting to resolve that so that General Service SENY can do more about 12th step work. Keep intergroup informed of what we are doing and keep informed about what we are doing.
 - Communication between SENY and the Intergroups has been not great, but it is starting to get better and needs to still improve. It is vital for someone to be on the other end of the phone when a call for help comes.
 - SENY as a whole and county meetings are carrying the message to jails and to institutions. There are many ways this can be accomplished.
 - GSO is better known than SENY. We seem to be removed from the still sick and suffering alcoholic. I would like to see a committee formed in SENY that would directly work with the still sick and suffering.
 - The way to stay away from a drink is from 12 step work. It works
 - It can grow and we can try to encourage people that we work with to do this work. Harm is not meant to be done, but sometimes it can be done if things get out of hand.
 - We don't get a lot of interaction with an opportunity to learn more about people from other areas.
 - When numbers decrease, it hurts us all. People sometimes leave when stuff gets difficult. We need to communicate better when we are suffering.

10. Wrap Up:

- What did we not talk about that we should have? So now what?
 - Group's delivery of GSR reports especially for conference report, there is a lack of desire to hear about it. There is a bigger purpose here.
 - Communicate with other entities in SENY (LGBTQ, Hispanic convention, etc.), we need better communication about these things.
 - Add an assembly
 - Group Inventory – many groups don't know about group inventory, maybe we need to promote that more

- Thank you to all the people who are not the bosses, but the horses to help do the work. We don't know everything, but we know a lot.
- Language of the heart, motivation for service, more gratitude, principles before personalities, service is a gift to pay back to your fellowship.
- Where are the crazy ideas in AA? Do we allow for change?
- Drug addicts are not always welcome at AA. The old school can be stuck in their ways. Service, Unity = Recovery
- All questions of the inventory could have been presented prior to the event so that we can get the feedback from our groups. I need to be the change I want to see.
- This inventory has helped me to ask the question of myself: How can I be of better service?
- The newcomer is the most important person in the room, because each of us own our own sobriety.
- Traditions and being knowledgeable and able to speak up about the traditions is an important part of GSR.

7th Tradition Report (*7th Informe Tradicion*)
\$ 298

Motion to Close 3:40pm

Thank You for Participating and for Your Service!
(Gracias por Participar y por Su Servicio!)

NEXT AREA 49 COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday, December 7, 2015 – 7:30pm – 9:30pm
Church of the Holy Family, Mechler Hall
2158 Watson Avenue, Bronx, NY 10472-5402

NEXT AREA 49 ASSEMBLY
Saturday, February 6, 2016 – 9:15am – 3:15pm
[HOST: Bronx-Upper Manhattan]
Our Savior Lutheran School 1734 Williamsbridge Road
Bronx, NY 10461