

Northern Illinois Area 20 Fall Assembly Minutes September 7, 2024, In Person and Online/Video

MINUTES DISCLAIMER: THE MINUTES ARE CONSIDERED CONFIDENTIAL PUBLICATIONS AND SHOULD BE USED FOR AA PURPOSES ONLY

Meeting Opening: The Northern Illinois Area 20 Chair called the meeting to order at 9am. The group participated in a quiet time the Serenity Prayer. The Area Chair welcomed attendees. The meeting announcements were given.

First Time Attendees: Dominick Alt GSR Remanent Group, John Alt Archivist D42, Amanda GSR Women's Way Out, Diego GSR D40, Rick Alt Accessibilities D70, Allison Grapevine Chair D40, David D40, Susie Treatment Chair D42, Lisa Corrections Chair D22 and GSR. Bill D42 GSR, Jeff GSR D42, Karen D42, Brian GSR D42, Christy.

Anniversaries Since Last Assembly: Anthony 1yr, Sue 35 years, Bryan 6 years, Becky 3 years, Dawn 7 years, Jackie 8 months, Laura 20 years, Dave 6 months, Tom 47 years, Jim 36 years, Marion 41 years.

Approval of 2024 Spring Assembly Meeting Minutes: Moved by Tina R, seconded by Bonnie P. Approved unanimously.

Delegates Report - Erik L.

<https://aa-nia.org/wp-content/uploads/2024-Fall-Assembly-Delgate-Report-EN.pdf>

<https://aa-nia.org/wp-content/uploads/2024-Fall-Assembly-Delgate-Report-ES.pdf>

Treasurer's Report – Dave F.

<https://aa-nia.org/wp-content/uploads/2024-Fall-Assembly-PL-Balance-EN.pdf>

<https://aa-nia.org/wp-content/uploads/2024-Fall-Assembly-PL-Balance-ES.pdf>

Conference Reports

2024 Big Book Conference – Kim S - With two months remaining we only have 50 people registered. The church has seating capacity of 400. Registration begins at 8am the day of the conference. Lunch will be catered by Jason's Deli, a box lunch with 5 options. October 15th is the deadline for ordering lunch. No lunches can be ordered the day of the event. There are several restaurants near the church. Our morning speaker will be Angie from Rockford and the closing speaker will be Eddie from Chicago. The panels are filled. Each topic focuses on the chapters from the Big Book.

2025 State Conference – Jeff L & Sandy T - The next planning meeting is tomorrow. All committee chairs are full and half of those chairs attended the recent State Conference. Save the date flyers were distributed.

Old Business

Election of open positions: Karen C D42, was elected as Alternate Archives Chair and John L D42, was elected as Alternate Literature Chair. These positions are still open: Answering Service Alternate, CPC Alternate, PI Alternate, Accessibilities Alternate, Area Secretary Alternate.

Bids: 2025 Big Book Conference – While a bid is pending, the assembly scheduled the next committee meeting for the bid submission. 2026 Spring Conference – A bid submission is needed by the winter assembly to secure this Conference.

New Business

Elections of NIA Candidates for:

East Central Regional Trustee– Cheryl V, Kelly L and Rich H stood for ECR Trustee nominee. Rich H's name was drawn as the nominee from the hat, based on Third Legacy Procedure.

Trustee at Large – Robert S stood and was elected as the nominee based on Third Legacy Procedure.

Motion to the General Service Board regarding Founders literature

Move to create a policy where the worldwide membership of Alcoholics Anonymous reaches substantial unanimity on any changes to the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions and portions of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous including, but not limited to: the first 164 pages, the Preface, the Forwards, "The Doctor's Opinion," "Dr. Bob's Nightmare," and the Appendix "Spiritual Experience."

The full motion can be found on this link:

English: https://aa-nia.org/wp-content/uploads/Fall-Assembly-2024-Final_Chair-Report_Agenda_Motions-EN.pdf

Spanish: https://aa-nia.org/wp-content/uploads/Fall-Assembly-2024-Final_Chair-Report_Agenda_Motions-ES.pdf

Based on substantial unanimity, this motion failed. 64% for 36% against, 56/32. There was no minority opinion.

Motion to Amend the Archives Chairperson Responsibilities in the Service Manual

The Area 20 Archives Chairperson moves to amend the Responsibilities for the Archives Chairperson in the NIA Service Guidelines (Northern Illinois Area 20 Service Manual, version 3/2024 Page 59 of 76), and the Responsibilities for the Archivist (Page 65 of 76) with the following: ELIMINATE IN BOTH PLACES: It is recommended that either the Archivist or the Archives Chairperson attend the annual National AA Archives Workshop on a yearly basis. REPLACE IN BOTH PLACES: It is recommended that the Archivist as well as the Archives Chairperson or the Alternate Archives Chairperson attend the annual National AA Archives Workshop on a yearly basis.

English: https://aa-nia.org/wp-content/uploads/Fall-Assembly-2024-Final_Chair-Report_Agenda_Motions-EN.pdf

Spanish: https://aa-nia.org/wp-content/uploads/Fall-Assembly-2024-Final_Chair-Report_Agenda_Motions-ES.pdf

Based on substantial unanimity, this motion failed. 38 for 46 against. There was no minority opinion.

Motion to Request that Literature be produced in an Accessible Format

The NIA20 Accessibilities Committee moves to request that all new or revised documents, publications and literature from AAWS be produced and/or published in an accessible format. We ask that the Area Delegate forward this request on behalf of Northern IL Area 20 to the General Service Board Trustees Literature Committee and AAWS Publishing Department.

English: https://aa-nia.org/wp-content/uploads/Fall-Assembly-2024-Final_Chair-Report_Agenda_Motions-EN.pdf

Spanish: https://aa-nia.org/wp-content/uploads/Fall-Assembly-2024-Final_Chair-Report_Agenda_Motions-ES.pdf

Based on simple majority, this motion passed. 72 for 10 against. Minority opinion was heard.

Service Committee Reports

Accessibilities - Chris E - Since the Summer Assembly, I have attended the Illinois State Conference, made my display board and brought it to both the Summer Committee Meeting and Fall Assembly, and held three monthly meeting of the Area Accessibilities Committee. I want to say thank you to the districts that have updated the meetings on their district websites to include whether they are wheelchair accessible and/or have wheelchair accessible bathrooms. If your district has not done this yet, I encourage you to do so – it will really help people find meetings that they can access and attend. The Accessibilities Committee today discussed a few topics and came up with a few recommendations we would like to see addressed in Northern IL Area 20: 1. We ask that no portion of the agenda be skipped. Officer reports have been submitted online in the interest of saving time in advance at several Assemblies and Committee Meetings, and those meetings have all ended early. On average this year, through 6 Area meetings, only 5.5 of the 10 (now 9) officers have submitted reports online. Those that are online are not easy for new GSRs to find or are not all named in a way

that's easy to understand. Not all of the officers are listed on the Area website with a way to contact them to ask questions. For some in our service structure, understanding the roles of our trusted servants only comes from hearing what they are doing and having the opportunity to ask questions of them. We ask that officer reports be placed at the end of the agenda and only be skipped if we reach the time limit for the Assembly or Committee Meeting. 2. Information about the upcoming Fall Committee Meeting and Winter Assembly is not on the Area calendar, which is the place most people go to first to look for the information. Even though details may not be finalized or a flyer may not be available, the events on the printed NIA Calendar should all be on the website. 3. Our website used to be translated into Spanish but cannot be found anymore. Further, our website does not have any accessibility tools. We ask that our webmaster and technology committee investigate restoring the translated site and implementing accessibility tools through WCAG standards, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. 4. We thank the Service Manual custodian for having the online version of the service manual match the printed version so whenever we reference page numbers it is the same, but it isn't easily useable because the online version is 2 pages per document page. We ask that it be posted as a single page per document page so that people can turn pages online easily. 5. We ask everyone to consider if the resources they share are easily understandable by those new to service, and further, new to the program of AA. Using full titles and entity names instead of acronyms is a great start. 6. If your group, district, or this Area provide literature – consider if it is available in all accessible forms– do you have big books and pamphlets in large print, different languages, braille, or audio if available? Will you provide the Plain Language Big Book alongside the 4th Edition Big Book when it becomes available? If you provide Grapevines to the community, do you also provide La Vina? We think that La Vina might be self supporting if every group or district that pays for a subscription in a library, treatment center, police station, etc also paid for a La Vina subscription.

Archives - Carol H, Karen C – I attended the last committee meeting and participated in the discussions of the motions. I have not been active due to personal things in my life. Having a new alternate will be help. Our breakout had 3 people from D42 and D43. During discussion we realized some have more experience than others. We want to somehow capture that experience. We plan on recording past archivists to capture that experience in documenting and preserving archives within the districts. In one district, the group history form was shared with their groups.

Bridging the Gap Jim T, Joey B - Our BTG Alt. Chair, Joey B, is in Montana at the [BTG National Conference](#) this weekend. He will give us a full report on his time there at the next NIA meeting. Our fellow service committee volunteers on the Treatment and Corrections committees continue distributing the QR coded book labels and business cards. With the renewed emphasis on using existing AA volunteers (TF, CF, Ans Svc) to help newcomers find their way to AA, it is important that those AA volunteers share the BTG message about what AA is, and what AA isn't, as well as being a live person for help and support. If you are a volunteer on TF, CF, or the Ans. Svc., please contact me, or your specific Area Chair, for BTG informational materials that will help you, help the newcomer. As a reminder, when you see a newcomer at your meetings, ask them how they found you. It would be nice to get a reading on how effective the QR codes have been.

Concepts Susan H – Beth formats the newsletter and I collect the articles. It is my responsibility to get the newsletter out before each assembly. I did that last night. It still needs to be posted as well as getting the Spanish translation. The next newsletter should be completed by early December.

Cooperation w/ the Professional Community Lisa G – There are three sections for CPC. Cooperating has become drop-in events. We have many of these coming up in October and November such as NAMI, National Alliance of Mental Illness, Shatterproof down at Diversey Harbor, Recover Com in Dekalb and anyone else requesting our hand at these events. There is a group in Huntley going to Shatterproof the Stigma of Addiction on September 28th which is the same day as the CPC/PI D10, 11 and 12 workshop. They will be coming to the workshop after their event to share their experience of doing a drop-in event. The P in the middle of CPC is reaching out to attorneys, DUI schools, food pantries, you name it. You can bundle, look up addresses, write on envelopes. You can learn these at the workshop on September 28th. Finally, the community in the final C of CPC includes having these AA business cards in English and Spanish. Every district now

can call a phone number, give them your phone number for your district and they will give you 500 of these cards for \$37. The Area will pay for shipping of these cards. NAMI walks are going on all the time and CPC Club Connect is the next thing which is the clubs having all their members come and get cards to go out in 2's to hand out to businesses then come back to the club for pizza. We can cooperate with out clubs.

Grapevine Terry M, Karen W – While at the State Conference I saw an Area Grapevine display. I am hoping to connect with them and learn what they are doing. We gave away two subscriptions for the Grapevine magazine to individuals who had never subscribed before. We now have a display board in English. We have ordered display materials from GSO. Karen and I have discussed possibly having a Grapevine Newsletter. Susan, the Concepts Editor suggested possibility merging with the Concepts Newsletter. We are discussing a workshop with D40.

Literature Jan S, John – We talked about workshops in the breakout today. The elements we're currently working on and the elements we're reviewing for the future. CURRENT: International Convention 2025 information has been sent to literature chairs hoping they can get to as many groups as possible. We are forwarding information on the Plain and Simple Big Book to district literature chairs to distribute as well as Grapevine information. I may be ordering the new books for them. They are on sale November 1. Price \$11.00. Installation of small literature displays in libraries for the "Month of Recovery." FUTURE - Review the three-drug pamphlets for similarities. We will revise the Literature Matrix to make it easier to review. The district 40 Literature Chair visited the State Conference literature room in August to get ideas to present to the Literature Committee for the 2025 State Conference. The Committee welcomes any ideas from members about improvements and possible changes.

Treatment Kevin A, Jeff L - I will be traveling on the day of our assembly. We continue to hold sharing sessions on the third Thursday of each month via zoom. From that we have had some success in helping each other. There is money in the green can account for literature to go into treatment centers. Please contact Jeff or Kevin to help fill your needs. We were at the State Conference in August and sat on the treatment panel.

Administrative Reports

Archivist Cheryl V - The Assembly Actions file has been updated with the business from the Summer Assembly. That file has been placed on the NIA website. An effort has been under way to replicate the 1st Edition of *An Alcoholics Anonymous History in Northern Illinois Area 20* that was published in 1996. This document was scanned, converted to Word, and the mess that was created from that effort has now been edited a first time. An attempt has been made to make it as close to a replication as possible. To attempt to find any conversion efforts that I missed, Chris E., Accessibility Chair, has agreed to review my first pass to see if he can find other errors. These are things such as the conversion placed a 1 (one) instead of a lower-case L. Once completed a PDF version will be placed on the NIA web. The effort of OneDrive storage for digital archives has progressed. Regarding Concepts, 100% of the copies we have in archives have been scanned. There are 5 vintage copies of Concepts that we have no copies of. These are: Summer 2004, Fall 2002, Summer, Fall and Winter of 1988, and Winter of 1987. If you know anyone who might have an original of these, please reach out and see if they would be willing to donate them to the Area. If they are not of the mind to do that, perhaps they will consider loaning them to us so we can scan them. Minutes of Area Assemblies and Committee Meetings are next on the list of things to scan. Currently 78% of these have been completed already. Hopefully in the coming months more will be done. Also, I have been supporting our Alternate Web Administrator by pulling copies of older files off the website and placing them in digital storage. This will, hopefully, ensure that no files are lost as the Technology Committee works to enhance the website. The current efforts including pulling all files prior to 2020, including Minutes, Agendas, and Reports. These will then be removed from the website. We cannot make open access to our digital archives since most of them are not anonymity protected. Not only did we use full names in the printed documents, but we put addresses and phone numbers in them. Redaction will happen to copies of Minutes and Concepts so that, in time, these will become available to our general AA population. I was asked about my attendance at the Archives Conference in September. I will be unable to attend as I have other commitments on that weekend.

Conference Advisory Committee Chair Aaron – Dan M has joined the committee. We will be talking with districts about hosting future Area conferences. I attended the State Conference where I secured the banner for our planning committee. At the D21 meeting I discussed hosting the Big Book Conference. I will be attending the ISC planning meeting tomorrow. There is interest in hosting the 2026 Spring Conference.

Electronic Equipment Rick – We are putting a motion together to combine this committee with the technology Committee. Everything is going okay.

Report & Charter Committee – Chris E – We met on August 29th. Dan P, Dave S, Laura V and myself were present. We elected a chairperson, myself and a secretary, Laura. We discussed three requests that were brought to the committee. One was to look at the Big Book Conference planning. We decided the scope of the R&C committee per the service manual is to review assembly approved revisions to documents. This request is a new motion idea which should be looked at by another committee. Possibly the Conference Advisory Committee. The second was a request was to look at a motion approved in June 1994 to read the short form of the Concepts at assemblies and committee meetings. We recommended to adding that sentence to the service manual. On page 36, the section of the Area Committee at the end of the third paragraph add the sentence that reads, the short form of the Concepts is read at all assemblies and committee meetings. The third request was a motion from June of 2006 that changes the sequence of events at assemblies. We recommend adding the sequence of events at assemblies that was passed to page 28 of the service manual after the scheduled assembly agenda items. The new section would show the sequence of events at assemblies as was passed in 2006. The short form of Concepts, the approval of minutes, the Treasurer's report. The Alt. Treasurer's report to occur with the other officer reports followed by the Delegates report, the assembly breakout sessions, NIA old business, NIA New Business, lunch, open microphone, conference and forum reports, NIA service and committee reports and NIA officer reports. Adding these motions to the service manual we get us current.

Service Manual Custodian Cheryl V -Thank you, Chris E., for your motion regarding accessibilities and the printed material. I have reviewed our *NIA Service Manual* and found that we can mostly make it align with these guidelines. Our manual will go from the present 76 pages to 84 pages. There are two graphics that will not comply. This change will be done whenever there is a change to the manual as moved by the Area Assembly. Chris and I also had a discussion regarding accessibilities needs for our NIA Service Manual as posted on the NIA website. His request revolved around a single page printing or the double page printing as we print it. The manuals have been sent to the Alternate Web Administrator in the single page format.

Inventory Committee – Chris E – This inventory was launched at the summer assembly online and in paper form. The responses were slow so we brought packets to the August committee meeting for each District. 12 Districts were not in attendance. Those were mailed out. To date, we have received 116 responses from 19 districts. 7 Districts have not responded at all. We have 14 DCM's, 9 Alt. DCM's, 27 service committee chairs and alternates, 66 GSR's and alternates. We will bring a preliminary report to the October committee meeting.

Technology Committee Bryan D – Thank you Rick, our equipment guy for setting up and taking down. Dawn B for being our secretary. She is learning the equipment. Scott stepped up this summer as the alternate webmaster with no experience. He has taken classes in his spare time. Earl takes time out from his schedule to help Scott. Cheryl is doing everything she talked about in her report. She has been pioneering the use of OneDrive and has also put forth tremendous effort to learn the website. She is drafting the motions we will be presenting. Rob, who got us situated and has been continuing to guide us. Alan, who shows up every single time and gives us the money perspective. We are now meeting twice a month and are talking about a re-design of the website. We are dealing with many requests for our equipment to be used by various districts and outside fellowships. We are trying to figure out how to utilize Microsoft 365, combine the Tech and Equipment committees, and want to require the use of NIA emails beginning with the next panel. Email is not broken. It is working just fine. If you are not getting emails, it is because you are not using it. I have mentioned before that you can call me personally to help. The change was not smooth and we take responsibility for that. We did not communicate well. We want to make this work.

DCM Reports

D10 – Lori – We hosted the Area committee meeting in August. I am assisting the Alt. DCM with job descriptions in our district. We hope to have a draft by September meeting and finalized by end of the year. This will be helpful for elections in October. The Delegate was at our district meeting, our picnic was in August. I attended the Illinois State Conference.

D11 – Dan P - We average 20-30 people in person and 10-15 online. We have open positions, but are filling up. Most attendees are GSR's, Committee Chairs, Officers, or Alternates. We frequently have two or three new attendees per meeting. District 11 is working to update our meeting directory. We still struggle to have the most accurate information post-covid. We have events coming up: Saturday, September 14th is the McHenry County Soberfest Al-Anon fundraiser and dance. Doors open at 5PM, Speakers at 7:30PM. This is at the McHenry Township building in Johnsburg. Tickets are \$7 that includes a raffle ticket, food, fun, and fellowship. Saturday September 28th Districts 10, 11, and 12 will be hosting our CPC/PI Workshop. The event will run 9:30AM-1:30PM at Shepherd of The Prairie Lutheran Church in Huntley. Please bring a dessert if able.

D12 – Bonnie P – There are many open positions. We had a picnic and workshop. Between D10,11 and 12 we plan to do one each this year.

D23 – Jeremy Alt DCM – Our workshop is next Saturday, 2-5pm on steps 8 and 9 at the EDI Club, then Robin will be speaking.

D40 – John Alt. DCM – We have a workshop September 21st from 1-4pm at First Presbyterian Church in Wheaton with Lisa and Dawn from the Area. Planning for the next ISC is underway. We would appreciate all the help we can.

D41 – Lael – I attended the ISC. Eric will be at our September meeting. The picnic is on September 14th.

D42 – Dave S – Our first workshop is in November. The district is strong. Great team effort with hosting today's event.

D43 – Laura – We have one alternate position open. There are 35-40 people attending district meeting. We had 7 people here today. Our annual picnic is on Sunday, September 22nd.

D61 – Katie R – I attended the ISC. We have 28-34 attending. We continue getting people signed up. Our Accessibilities Chair and Alternate have established a meeting in a nursing home for one of our members. We have the Grapevine Chair involved in distributing the magazine to our community and jails. Our website has been updated.

D70 – Kim S - We're hosting a district picnic on September 28 at Anna Page Park in Rockford. We'll provide grills and paper products, but please bring your own meat and a dish to share. The picnic starts at 11:00 AM, with our speaker, Chris O from Rockford, at 1:00 PM. We are hosting a workshop on October 5th. The event will feature two panels: **G.S.R. & District Committee Chairs Workshop** hosted by Dawn B, NIA Chairperson, and Lisa S, NIA 20 Alternate Area Delegate. This workshop will cover the job descriptions and responsibilities of GSRs and district committee positions like P.I., Corrections, and Answering Service. **The 11th Step – Guided Meditation** led by Andrea H, this panel will explore the importance and benefits of the 11th Step, followed by a guided group meditation. Our next workshop is November 23, focusing on the Post-GSC Delegate Report, presented by our Delegate, Erik L. Both workshops are being held at the Rockford Alano Club from 9am-3pm. And, of course, we're also gearing up to host the 2024 Big Book Conference. Michelle and I are available to assist with registration or answer any questions you may have.

OFFICER REPORTS CAN BE FOUND ON THE NIA WEBSITE.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sue M, NIA Secretary

Next meeting is October 19, 2024 at Lord of Life Church, Elburn.