



# AREA 92 BIENNIAL INVENTORY

2022

# Area 92 Biennial Inventory Report

## Fall 2022 Assembly – Discussion & Notes

### I. By the Numbers

- a. The Area 92 Inventory presentation and discussion consumed 2.5 hours (150 minutes) at the Fall Assembly on October 14<sup>th</sup> 2022.
- b. 31 inventory questions were submitted by the body (from GSR's, District and Area Committee Chairs and DCM's) through 8 respective Districts.
- c. After combining 9 “essentially duplicate” topics and eliminating an additional 6 questions that could be readily addressed through references to existing A.A. literature or Area and district handbooks. The committee had 16 remaining topics to discuss and rank.
- d. Ranking was conducted following a thorough committee review and discussion. This process identified the top 6 questions.
- e. The Top 6 questions were then prioritized via a blind vote that led to the sequence of discussion that was followed during the Assembly.
- f. Each topic was allocated 30 minutes, and each respondent allowed 2 minutes. The Assembly was able to address 5 of the 6 questions in the allotted time 2.5 hours.
- g. 51 Assembly attendees, including those online, participated in expressing their views. A few participated more than once. The Area Technology group recorded the proceedings using Zoom and this record, along with individual committee member notes, has been organized to highlight the collective conscience expressed at the Assembly Inventory. There are numerous Actionable Items that are footnoted\*.

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### II. Inventory Questions & Notable Comments:

#### A. Question 1.

a. In Light of Concept XII, Warranty Four (p. C53 in the Concepts) "*...that all important decisions be reached by discussion, vote and whenever possible substantial unanimity;*". Is Area 92 acting in the full spirit and "*high ideals*" intended by this Warranty as it focuses on the pursuit of unity and primary purpose? How can we do better?

b. This topic produced a great deal of interest. 18 trusted servants weighed in with a wide-ranging and productive commentary as the conversation evolved. The time allotment was extended to 45 minutes. Following are participant highlights - paraphrased. There are several Actionable Items

#### B. Commentary from the Floor.

a) The Area seems to be doing well for the most part. For example, the Archives Motion that was just resolved started at the April Assembly, was forwarded to the July Quarterly for more information, discussion, and clarity; then failed by 7 votes and was routed to the groups via the Area Committee. Their viewpoints were brought here. This seems to illustrate a sound deliberative process.

b) Concern was expressed about the potential for late Saturday deliberations and/or deferral on votes to Sunday morning. Will there be sufficient voting members available late at night or on Sunday? \*

c) One problem regularly arises when there are floor motions, because the language is developed and unfolds in real time and lacks input from the body. We need a defined Motion process that mirrors the Informed Group Conscience principles which recommends relevant information be developed, shared, and deliberated at the group and district level before it is brought to a vote. \*

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d) Today was the first time I saw this question and clearly did not have the time to consider a response. Why haven't we received this information. The committee responded that the information was shared with all Area DCMs at the Area Chair's monthly DCM meetings and published in the Newsletter in both August and September.

e) Some of the Districts have DCM's that are not effective in their communications and there is a need for perhaps a DCM school or some other educational program that will ensure the service communication links. \*

f) We need more effective Service Sponsorship so that new DCMs learn their full responsibilities as a critical communication link in A.A.'s upside down triangle organization. \*

g) Gary P. - Also, if we were able to obtain accurate, up-to-date email addresses for all GSR's, the Chair could communicate directly with GSRs in districts where there is no DCM. \*

h) Concepts are unfamiliar to most incoming GSRs and DCMs and we also need a better mechanism for educating them. \*

i) The technology committee has been working to make information on the website more easily accessible and navigable. While Jennifer W. has been working on a Tutorial, we may need an even more expansive "tool box" over time. \*

j) The principle of rotation ensures that we must educate someone new every 2 years, A nurturing transition is required and we don't seem to have a consistent process for accomplishing that. \*

k) We have been conducting Concept Workshops every Monday and feel it has improved our overall district communications.

Multiple viewpoints were shared regarding the attributes of having separate Service Sponsors or combined "Three Legacy" Sponsors.

m) The Hispanic Community noted that very few of their DCM's and GSR's have much exposure to General Service or the Service Manual and Concepts. Can the Area conduct frequent workshops focused on A.A. Services and Concepts. \*

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### C. Question 2

In the spirit of **Tradition 5** and in the fulfillment of **Step 12**, connecting with alcoholics where they are and through the media they use, is vital. **What Area 92 technology implementations would increase the accessibility of information to the fellowship's program of recovery and its service activities?**

### D. Commentary from the Floor.

This question also produced a lively and focused conversation, albeit with a somewhat smaller contingent. There are also actionable Items identified.

- a. Addressing technology and appointing a technology chair in Area 92 is a fundamental requirement that also needs budget support to be effective. The Area needs more interactive tools, chat rooms, web pages for Medical Professionals, and a continuous focus on the evolution of media. \*
- b. The area needs support for more individual accessibility such as Sign Language (ASL), Closed Captioning, and innovative support for the blind.
- c. The progress made on Hybrid functionality between April and this Assembly has been excellent and we should maintain ongoing Zoom/Hybrid solutions for those with transportation challenges.
- d. For Corrections, incorporate the J-Pay tool. \*
- e. Develop creative solutions as additional options for distributing Newsletter information in condensed and/or electronic forms and provide a searchable archive. \*
- f. Google Workspace at times is known to hamper the use of some Microsoft tools (e.g., excel.)
- g. We should extend the Area Committee Shared Drive concept with the GSRs. \*
- h. Retain existing methods (Face to Face meetings), and certain technologies (print)!

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### E. Question 3

1. As prescribed by A.A.'s Pamphlet P-16, an Informed Group Conscience is achieved by;

- Studying all pertinent information regarding an issue.
- Obtaining individual member's points of view.
- Considering minority opinions with an open mind.
- Working slowly and placing principles before personalities on sensitive issues.
- Discouraging formal motions until a clear sense of its collective view emerges
- The membership is wary of dominant opinions.
- A group's voice is heard when its membership arrives at a well-informed decision.
- The Group Conscience achieves Substantial Unanimity with 2/3 minimum vote.
- Because the result rests on more than a “yes” or “no” count -- it is the spiritual expression of the group conscience.

**In considering these spiritual principles, how can Area 92 improve how the body is informed of area finances?**

### F. Commentary from the Floor.

This question was combined from 6 questions related to developing reports that reflect accurate financial information and distributing it to those who need it to make informed decisions. There were a wide variety of concerns with some acknowledged progress.

- a. Recent financial distributions have helped some of us be more comfortable with the Area 92 our financial condition.
- b. Spread Sheets can be useful if there are T-tables that balance. A general ledger – what came in and what went out.
- c. What concerns me is a column of numbers that do not foot (add up). Have 2 or 3 people run the numbers.
- d. Keep it simple- maybe 1 page with date, account, debit, credit. Make it easy to understand.
- e. Some of us thought we were using the “QuickBooks” system, that is capable of producing understandable reports and graphs. \*
- f. We need reports that allow us to drill down into increasing levels of accurate financial details. \*
- g. Should the Finance Committee be evaluating the financial impacts of any motion that affects funding? \*

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### G. Question 4

1. **Concept 9 – Leadership.** Good service leaders, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are at all levels indispensable for our future functioning and safety. The primary world service leadership once exercised by the founders of A.A. must necessarily be assumed by the Trustees of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, **Also see Appendix I for the Big Book pg. 561** - To those now in its fold, Alcoholics Anonymous has made the difference between misery and sobriety, and often the difference between life and death. A.A. can, of course, mean just as much to uncounted alcoholics not yet reached.

**How can Area 92 instill a culture of Service Sponsorship that focuses the education of members and trusted servants on A.A.'s Principles (Traditions and Concepts)?**

### H. Commentary from the Floor.

In addition to discussions on training, this question reopened the earlier discussion regarding the preferences for separate or combined sponsorship.

- a. In addition to the DCM/GSR Schools, the Area needs to develop focused workshops on both Sponsorship and the Concepts.
- b. One of the benefits of a combined sponsor is potential early exposure to service activities
- c. Establish a program to encourage DCMs and more experienced members in a district, to teach deep dive schools using the online GSR School PowerPoint and Handbook.
- d. The DCMs could set up a monthly tutorial during their District GSR meeting to address either a Tradition or Concept every month.
- e. A Past Trustee shared at one of our assemblies a few years ago, that candidate attributes of availability and enthusiasm were perhaps more important than time in sobriety.

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### I. Question 5

1. Area 92 traditionally conducts all business matters that affect policy and/or significant financial expenditures, under a well-documented Motions Process which is guided generally by Roberts Rules of Order. (Refer to **The Area 92 Handbook and Motions Process**, as well as **The AA Service Manual; Appendix W. - How the Conference Operates?**).

What Area 92 information requirements and operating procedures could be adopted to improve the effectiveness of its "motion driven" business activities.

### J. **Commentary: from the Floor.**

Many of the comments on this final question are elaborations of thoughts expressed on earlier topics that naturally interface with the motion process of deliberating and making business decisions.

- a. Bill W.'s admonition regarding financial obligations concluded that if a service is necessary to fulfill our primary purpose, then fund it we must. Financial consideration come last. \*
- b. We should reevaluate the formalized Motions process that was previously presented by Dave. McCallum. This might include incorporating a committee review process to develop detailed requirements. It could be discussed with groups and members before creating a written motion. \*
- c. We should not ask people to step up to fulfill a service position if we are unwilling to fund it. Perhaps a minimum annual budget should be allotted to each position. This would preclude people feeling they have taken on an unattractive, no-win AA work assignment. \*



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### III. Final Session Comments -- from three participants:

- *“It was good. However, I believe we should dummy down the questions a bit.”*
- *“In my corporate past I worked on quality assurance efforts that focused on continuous improvement principles. This inventory is the same and requires a similar commitment. Let’s keep doing it.*
- *“Given some of the challenges and occasional harsh language over the past couple of years, I found this inventory discussion amazing. We have addressed our issues in a spiritual debate and are now clearly moving forward in Unity.”*

### IV. Recommendations for Area 92 Future Inventories:

- A. Formalize and improve the Biennial Inventory Process by:
  - a. Combining the language from the existing Motion 13.3 with the language published from 2016 Inventory correspondence into a section that can be incorporated into the Area Handbook, or referenced as an appendix.
  - b. Starting earlier in the year.
    - a. Select the diverse set of committee members by the Spring Assembly.
    - b. Develop a time-line that will allow the groups and members to be engaged in identifying and submitting “topics” at the close of the July Quarterly.
  - c. Implement communication methodologies that will provide communication with districts who may not have a DCM link.
  - d. Continue to incorporate Traditions and Concepts in the selected topics, to leverage the opportunity for GSRs and DCMs to expand their knowledge and understanding of these principles.

### V. Thank You!!!

...for allowing us to be of service on Area 92’s, 2022 Ad Hoc Inventory Committee:

- Lorri T. Newsletter Editor, District 7
- Emily W. GSR – District 8
- Gary P. Past Delegate - Panel 70, District 5
- Mike M. Past Delegate – Panel 54, District 3
- Todd D. DCM - District 26
- Valerie D. Archives Chair – District 12
- Dan M. Technology Chair - District 13