

Madeine P, former Pacific Regional Trustee opened the meeting thanking the group for their service and read from the service manual about the third legacy of service and the importance of the inventory. Encouraged everyone to demonstrate courage.

Please keep your shares to 2 minutes and do not share twice so that we can get through 6 questions.

Linda T., Area 18 notetaker

1. What is the purpose of our Area?
  - a. To assist the districts. And the purpose of the district is to assist the groups in order to carry the message more effectively to the alcoholic who still suffers.
  - b. To elect a delegate to represent the general conscience of Area 15 at the General Service Conference.
  - c. We provide a forum for our groups and districts to share what is working, what isn't and to share ideas.
  - d. Hopeful for more enthusiasm that we take care of business in a more efficient way. Could we do more virtually. This is a hope and a dream. This may be more cost effective and time efficient. This will allow more access to service. This is a large area geographically.
  
2. If we in General Service are the Group's link to AA., what can we do to improve that link?
  - a. Overall making Area 15 more attractive to GSR's. I feel we ask a lot of the GSR's in our area and district. Monthly meetings and travel to quarterly meetings. We need to evaluate how we are communicating and how much we ask our GSR's absorb. We don't have a set format. Some say Roberts rules, some say conference protocol. We are in many ways failing our GSR's by not providing them tools.
  - b. We as people who have been in service for a while need to be more accessible. We need to be open, transparent and willing to foster the relationships with GSRs.
  - c. When I became a GSR it really opened my eyes. It jumpstarted my sobriety and helped me tremendously. We are here to help keep the doors open.
  - d. I try to share everything I get with my home group and other groups. I just shared about tonight with a lot of people. Many are not aware. Even if they don't show up they always ask afterward. Try to keep the lines of communication open with the groups.
  - e. When we visit a group, no matter what our service position, especially the DCM, share about general service. Even if they don't have a GSR. This creates enthusiasm and informs about service opportunities.
  - f. We are just one link. Rely less on our GSRs. Give more work to the Area committee. The GSR's should elect the delegate and carry their group's conscience. All else should go to the Area committee.
  - g. As a GSR, I had no idea what I was doing. I knew how to do things as soon as I was rotating out. I often have people look to me to answer what is going on as a DCM. I see so many people wanting to not do this. I formed a group with service sponsees and others who want to tap in more. We meet weekly to help educate and provide more

understanding. I have seen GSR's not vote because they don't understand what is going on. Idea for a workshop every 8 weeks an info session with a presentation.

- h. There is a GSR sharing session and DCM sharing session at each quarterly.
- i. DCM's are so important. In the past few years we have taken so much responsibility away from the DCM. We are hurting for participation. We need to encourage that and look at the responsibilities that they have and what we have taken away.
- j. I had a sponsor a service sponsor and a DCM who was involved. Back then it was a big job. They had so much to do. Traditions studies and giving the knowledge to the GSR's is important. Unsure if the DCM is giving the knowledge needed to the GSR. I visit groups that have GSR's and not have. We need more instruction for the GSRs.

Reminder that there will be a solution meeting at the end. As we do this, write these things down so that you have what you are thinking about now?

Suggestion from the facilitator: visit to other areas. See what they are doing there and how they may do things differently.

- 3. What could the area add revise, or drop from the Area Assemblies that would make them more inclusive and informative?
  - a. We should rescind the motion from 2008 giving the vote for GSRs to reduce the work for DCM's to constantly be "selling" general service. Move the meetings to Saturday.
  - b. We would benefit from adding Area sharing sessions to contribute as outlined in our service manual. Similar to what's on your mind, but more structured and goal oriented. Notes are taken and followed up on. For example, what issues or problems are your groups encountering?
  - c. We need to find a better way of communicating the district and committee reports. People leave at noon. People are "talked at". Restructure the quarterly. It's too long and the distance is too much. The agenda for July will be a very long day and then have to drive 4-5 hours home.
  - d. I have been in two other areas, both did business in one day. Two days is "brutal" it's a hard weekend. Is it necessary? It wasn't in the other two districts. Most people would still need to come Friday, but the folks who were local could go home.
  - e. So many good suggestions! To add, we alcoholics are all the same when it comes to addressing things about our groups. What I missed during the pandemic there was no real interaction between individuals. We were not sharing with each other. A real sharing session would be so helpful. We never talked about online meetings. As a DCM I had 33 groups. How are we best serving our groups? Are we too big?
  - f. The DCM and Sharing sessions happen concurrently. I believe they should happen one after another. So that the DCM can hear what is happening in the GSR meeting. Also, start identifying people to step in when you rotate out and train them. Why do we have a Saturday night speaker? We could be doing so much more with that time.
  - g. My experience with the area meeting. I'm learning a lot, but I'd like to see planned breaks. Lunch. Set a time to end and stick to it.
  
- 4. How can the area attract more GSR's to attend the Area Assemblies?

- a. It costs about \$1500 a year to have a fully active GSR. Hotels, travel and meals. Cost is an enormous barrier for a group. For us it is \$145 a month. There is a large economic barrier for GSR's to participate.
- b. The time commitment and distance to participate in assemblies.
- c. If a GSR asks a question without the institutional knowledge, it is problematic that others roll eyes and be divisive. We should encourage their participation at the mic.
- d. Ad Hoc committee is working on virtual options, can we also explore how to expedite voting. It's easy online. We lose people during the discussion of the voting process and during the voting process.
- e. The area should compensate the GSR's who's meetings cannot pay for them to travel. At the area we have enough to fund those GSR's in order to get them involved. A lot of groups cannot afford to send the GSR, let alone the individual.
- f. Point of information, when we met virtually our attendance went down. We have signed contracts with hotels through April of 2024.
- g. It is difficult to get a hotel. Most sell out very quickly. Our area is very large.
- h. This is eye opening. I have been able to attend the online assemblies the last quarterly. The workshops are phenomenal. It's mind stimulating. But not everyone can get to them. The elephant in the room, we need hybrid. We will get more involvement. Change the time of the concepts workshop. Hold the DCM and GSR meetings back-to-back. Longer workshops. I am from a virtual group. We are a local group. Our district has been very accommodating to virtual meetings.
- i. I was the hotel liaison. The hotel being filled up can be discouraging. Everyone on the wait list was served. Put this information on the flyer.
- j. I've been an online GSR for about a year now. The last virtual assembly we had was 12 hours. It gave me the ability as an alternate GSR to "be" there. If it was in person my group would not have been able to pay for it and I would not have been able to pay for it.

*Point of information, Oregon used an online voting system for people in person and online. (Madeleine)*

5. Do we emphasize the importance of Service Sponsorship? How can we do better?
  - a. I am an alternate GSR. When I started, I remember being on the zoom quarterlies, I did hear from multiple people to get a service sponsor. I heard it right away.
  - b. I am the alternate delegate. I do not emphasize service sponsorship except in 1x1 situations. Perhaps we can include it in our format. Also, in our Friday orientation. Perhaps we could have a "buddy". Match up the new GSR with someone more seasoned.
  - c. We need to make sure people know they are in the group and get a service sponsor asap. Motions at are confusing as they have nothing to do with the group. They are business motions. Not much to take back to the group.
  - d. My first sponsor is very active in General Service. And now she is my service sponsor. I didn't have to search. But if I hadn't had one I wouldn't have know what one was. We have a workshop before our district meeting where we study the service manual.
  - e. We have several opportunities when we could discuss service sponsorship and third legacy sponsorship. We don't have a format for that. For our concept/traditions workshops etc., we don't have a format. Perhaps some suggestions on how you might benefit from this we could include service sponsorship. We have an outreach committee

that is fairly new. This committee could be one of those who could provide this to the area.

6. Does the Area effectively prepare their trusted servants for their positions? If not, what can we do better?
  - a. I think we could do better. I think we could underscore the importance of alternate positions. We don't think about that enough. Perhaps District Charis and GSR's could remind each other of. Bill did this. We need a plan. And keep our position descriptions updated. In another area, after the business meeting, another meeting was held and the rotating servants needed to prepare and provide all of the information for the incoming trusted servant. A passon. And to continue to be available to answer questions.
  - b. I've had support every step of the way willing to help me to learn the job. It was my responsibility to ask and not to pretend I knew how to do the job. Pamphlets, service manual, every piece of literature can provide us with the information about the job description. I always consulted with the previous servant.
  - c. I think it is important to remove barriers to get people to stand for office. We can do a better job of promoting what is concept 9. You may not have the "qualifications" but you should know the leadership qualities. Flexibility, tolerance, responsibility and vision. Don't talk people out of standing. If you believe you are qualified and available, then you are qualified and available. I think we need to take down all those barriers.
  - d. The comment on Concept 9 is excellent. Instead of making decision based on the "mechanics". We need to need a lot more motions than should be required. By placing something in a motion, allow the servant to have autonomy. We need to get beyond micromanaging.
  - e. I think that everyone should be able to stand for a position if they meet the qualifications of being a DCM and 5 years of sobriety. For those of us who rotate, you are responsible to share your experience and then step back. And not micromanage.
  - f. I have not served in an area position so I can't speak from experience. But overall, based on conversations with my GSR's, there seems to be an air of "us and them" and an unwillingness for change. This is extremely unattractive. Those of us who have been here for a few years, we could do a better job of encouraging the next generation, not shutting them down. The leadership could have an impact.
  - g. Area 15 tries to do very well is utilization of our area website. There is so much information there. We need to use this and share it. All of our meetings with the exception of the Sunday business meeting are open. We want people to attend on Saturday. I would hope that the members of our district and fellowship embrace that and get the word out.
  - h. We have 53 participants. 12 are GSRs, 8 past delegates. Let's look at not making this so intimidating. The voice we are getting here is not the people we are trying to get to answer the question. We need to look at that.
  - i. Who are these people who don't have their cameras on? We only have a very few people here at this very important event.
  - j. The elephant in the room is that we are interested in streamlining the business of area 15, the people we know are not here today, but it is our job to give the information to the GSRs. How do we emphasize the need to make a change? This is the way we have always done it is no longer a good excuse.

- k. We have had great trusted servants. There is too much micromanagement. We can delegate to our officers. When I was new, I did feel like there were two groups, the ones who knew each other and then the newbies wandering around and not feeling a part of. We can all do a better job of reaching out to the newcomer to make them feel more welcome.

*My experience has been that the weight of much of the Pass-ons falls on the area chair. And it really is the collective who should be responsible. (Madeleine)*

*Oregon Area does their inventory every other year at the last assembly of the panel. This time the area committees did their own inventory. This was done in the hopes of getting wider sharing. (Madeleine)*