

***District 13 Niagara South  
General Service Committee***

***Structure and Operating Procedures***

AMENDED AND APPROVED SEPTEMBER 12, 2011

AMENDED AND APPROVED SEPTEMBER 9, 2013

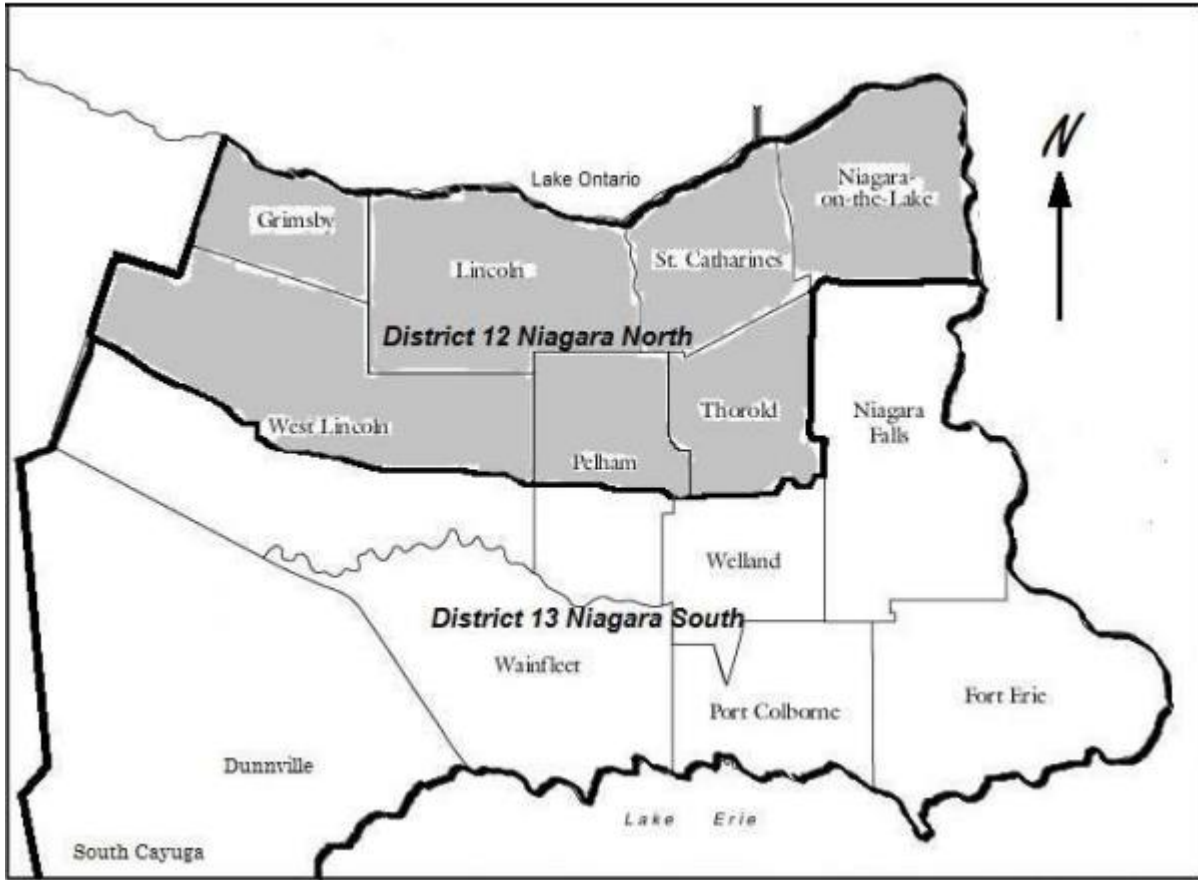
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## ***Structure and Operating Procedures***

The purpose of these Structure and Operating Procedures is to provide the continuing successful operation of unified groups in our district. The Structure and Operating Procedures set out what the groups have agreed upon.

It is suggested that all A.A. members of District 13 carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic within the confines of:

- 1) The Twelve Steps
- 2) The Twelve Traditions
- 3) The Twelve Concepts
- 4) The A.A. Service Manual (BM-31)

### **Section 1 Organization**

#### **Section 1.1 The Name**

The district committee shall be known as “District 13 Niagara South General Service”

#### **Section 1.2 District Committee Meeting**

The District 13 Committee meeting is held on the second Monday of every month at 7:00 pm at Bethel United Church - 1742 3rd Concession, Port Colborne, Ontario.

In the event of a widespread emergency which might prevent in person meetings, the committee meeting may also be held virtually. All members of the district committee (see section 1.3) shall be notified of the change prior to the meeting.

#### **Section 1.3 Structure**

The district committee shall be composed of the following elected “Trusted Servants”

- 1) District Committee Member (D.C.M.)
- 2) Alternate District Committee Member (Alt. D.C.M.)
- 3) Treasurer
- 4) Alternate Treasurer (Alt. Treasurer)
- 5) Secretary
- 6) Alternate Secretary (Alt. Secretary)
- 7) General Service Representatives (G.S.R.s) one from each registered group in the district

8) Subcommittee Chairpersons:

- Public Information (P.I.)
- Cooperation with the Professional Community (C.P.C.)
- Treatment
- Corrections
- Grapevine (G.V.)
- Bridging the Gap (B.T.G.)

## Section 2 **Elected Positions**

### Section 2.1 **Committee Officers District**

#### **Committee Member (D.C.M.)**

##### Qualifications

- a) A past G.S.R. or Intergroup representative well grounded in A.A. service work
- b) Enough sobriety time to run for the Delegate position (generally 4 or 5 years)
- c) The time and energy to serve the district well

##### Position Description

- 1) Hold and chair monthly District Committee meetings
- 2) Prepare and present an agenda for each District Committee meeting
- 3) Follows the duties provided in the current Service Manual (page 15)
- 4) Be present at all Niagara South Spring Roundup meetings and fulfill all D.C.M. responsibilities
- 5) Responsible for everything pertaining to the storage unit for the Spring Roundup (keys, contract, swipe cards, etc.)
- 6) Attends all Area 86 Committee meetings and Area 86 Assemblies
- 7) Attends and participates in the District Subcommittee meetings
- 8) Holds at least two (2) review meetings a year with the Sub-Committee Chairpersons: the first being in January after the election of new Subcommittee Chairpersons
- 9) Ensure that the Area 86 Secretary/Registrar is notified of new G.S.R.s therein facilitating delivery of G.S.R. kits from the General Service Office to the new G.S.R.
- 10) Ensure that the bank statement for the month being provided by the Treasurer be exactly what is reported in the financial report to the district
- 11) Have access to the bank account online to be able to view all transactions
- 12) Act as a liaison between the aaniagara.org website and the district
- 13) Responsible for forming an Ad Hoc committee responsible for reviewing the district Structure and Operating Procedures to be completed by September of the odd year
- 14) The outgoing D.C.M. is responsible for setting up the transfer of banking to the incoming committee at the end of term

## **Alternate District Committee Member (Alt. D.C.M.)**

### Qualifications

- a) A past G.S.R. or Intergroup representative well grounded in A.A. service work
- b) Enough sobriety time to run for the Delegate position (generally 4 or 5 years)
- c) The time and energy to serve the district well

### Position Description

- 1) The Alt. D.C.M. is a backup for the D.C.M. In the event that the D.C.M. is unable to serve for any reason, the Alt. D.C.M. steps in. Usually the Alt. D.C.M. is elected at the same time as the D.C.M. by the same procedure. The Alt. D.C.M. should be encouraged to assist, participate and share in the D.C.M.'s responsibilities at district and area meetings. (Refer to current Service Manual page 16)
- 2) Expected to attend as a liaison to the District 12 Committee meetings and Intergroup meetings monthly and provide them with a report on behalf of District 13, and report back to our district on the relevant information from those meetings
- 3) Provide any contact information pertaining to Intergroup e.g. Answering Service, etc...
- 4) Make an effort to be available to assist District Subcommittees
- 5) Organize at least one (1) workshop per term in District 13
- 6) May be called upon to act as liaison with the Area Remote Communities/Accessibilities Chairperson

## **Treasurer**

### Qualifications

- a) A past G.S.R. or Intergroup representative well grounded in A.A. service work
- b) The time and energy to serve the district well
- c) It is suggested that they have an understanding of basic bookkeeping, if possible, or the willingness to learn the present system, or set up a new one

### Position Description

- 1) The District Treasurer guidelines are taken from suggestions in the current Service Manual (page 28) for Area Treasurer
- 2) Present a balanced monthly financial statement at the District Committee meeting for the approval of the G.S.R.s
- 3) Provide monthly bank statement to the D.C.M. for signoff and verification against the monthly financial statement to the district
- 4) Reconcile the electronic payment processing system to the district bank account
- 5) Present an annual financial statement after the year end for the approval of the G.S.R.s
- 6) Is responsible for encouraging contribution support at the district level
- 7) Maintain a prudent reserve fund for the district. A reserve fund of \$1600.00 should be maintained
- 8) Receive and distribute monies as required
- 9) Attend monthly District Committee meetings
- 10) Maintain care and control of bank accounts and signing authorities. Two (2) out of three (3) authorized signatures are required for all cheques (Authorized signatories are: D.C.M., Treasurer and Secretary)

## **Alternate Treasurer (Alt. Treasurer)**

### Qualifications

- a) A past G.S.R. or Intergroup representative well grounded in A.A. service work
- b) The time and energy to serve the district well
- c) It is suggested that they have an understanding of basic bookkeeping, if possible, or the willingness to learn the present system, or set up a new one

### Position Description

- 1) The Alt. Treasurer is a backup for the Treasurer. In the event that the Treasurer is unable to attend the monthly District Committee meeting for any reason, the Alt. Treasurer is expected to step in
- 2) In the event that the Treasurer is no longer able to serve for any reason, the alternate treasurer (if willing) is expected to move into the position of treasurer. This move however is subject to the approval of the District Committee by way of vote by the District Committee members and a simple majority is required to approve the move

- 3) The Alt. Treasurer guidelines will follow those of the District Treasurer
- 4) Does not have cheque signing authority
- 5) Is encouraged to assist, participate and share in the Treasurer's responsibilities at the district level

## **Secretary**

### Qualifications

- a) A past G.S.R. or Intergroup representative well grounded in A.A. service work
- b) Computer knowledge is helpful. An effective Secretary needs to have a sense of order, and the ability to capture the essentials of what is happening at a meeting. The job is time-consuming and needs to be carried out on schedule, and the Secretary needs to be sure that ample time is available (Refer to current Service Manual page 27)

### Position Description

- 1) Take the minutes of each District Committee meeting, prepare and email/mail copies to all G.S.R.'s in the district and archive the minutes with the Intergroup website
- 2) Take attendance at each District Committee meeting based on the roll call sheet
- 3) The minutes are to be sent out within a week after the District Committee meeting so that the groups can have up to date information to properly run business meetings
- 4) Send copies of the minutes, only to the following Area 86 officers: Delegate, Alt. Delegate, Chairperson, Subcommittee Chairpersons, Secretary/Registrar, Treasurer and anyone else the D.C.M. gives direction for (i.e. other districts and past Delegates)
- 5) Keep up to date records of all registered groups in the district, complete with group numbers and their current G.S.R.s
- 6) Attend the monthly District Committee meeting
- 7) Maintain supplies necessary for carrying out the duties of the Secretary (i.e. envelopes, stamps, etc.)
- 8) Pass on all information, materials and supplies to the incoming Secretary at the end of the term
- 9) Provide the D.C.M. with all pertinent information such as security questions and passwords for the Secretary's email address. This should be given anytime there is a change with the email information and should be kept up to date
- 10) Obtain from the Subcommittee Chairpersons all pertinent information such as security questions and passwords for each committee's respective email address. This should be given anytime there is a change with



the email information and should be kept up to date

- 11) Maintain a two-step verification process for the Secretary's email account

## **Alternate Secretary (Alt. Secretary)**

### Qualifications

- a) A past G.S.R. or Intergroup representative well grounded in A.A. service work
- b) Computer knowledge is helpful. An effective Alt. Secretary needs to have a sense of order and the ability to capture the essentials of what is happening at a meeting. The job is time-consuming and needs to be carried out on schedule, the Alt. Secretary needs to be sure that ample time is available (Refer to current Service Manual page 27)

### Position Description

- 1) The Alt. Secretary is a backup for the Secretary. In the event that the Secretary is unable to attend the monthly District Committee meeting for any reason, the Alt. Secretary is expected to step in
- 2) In the event that the Secretary is no longer able to serve for any reason, the alternate Secretary (if willing) is expected to move into the position of Secretary. This move however is subject to the approval of the District Committee by way of vote by the District Committee members and a simple majority is required to approve the move
- 3) The Alt. Secretary does not have cheque signing authority

## **Section 2.2 Subcommittee Chairpersons**

### Qualifications for all Subcommittee Chairpersons

- a) A past or present G.S.R. or a past Intergroup representative well grounded in A.A. service work
- b) Have the time and energy to serve the district well and be prepared to present monthly reports at the District Committee meeting
- c) Familiarity with the appropriate handbooks and committee procedures would be an asset
- d) Make an effort to attend all Area Assemblies during their term
- e) Subcommittee chairpersons may frequently be required to communicate with persons outside A.A. therefore, it is important the subcommittee chairpersons have access to their subcommittee's static email account and/or personal voice mail/text so that such people are able to contact the chairperson. These emails and voice mail/texts should be checked on a regular basis. It is expected that the Subcommittee Chairpersons use these email accounts to conduct district business. Subcommittee Chairpersons shall keep the Secretary apprised of any

changes to passwords or other security information

## Position Description for Subcommittee Chairpersons

### Public Information Chairperson (P.I.)

- 1) The Chairperson and committee are responsible for creating greater understanding of – and preventing misunderstanding of – the A.A. program through the public media, electronic media, P.I. meetings, and speaking to community groups such as schools, colleges, libraries, the Banyan Peninsula Youth Center and community agencies within the district. The media plays an important role in the community. It is important the committee be ever mindful of Tradition 11
- 2) Chairperson to be available to make presentations in conjunction with other Subcommittee Chairpersons

### Cooperation with the Professional Community Chairperson (C.P.C.)

- 1) The Chairperson and committee are responsible for carrying the “A.A. Message” to the professional community within the district: those coming into contact with the still suffering alcoholic. This position entails working with those involved in the field of alcoholism. Some of the professionals the chairperson may come into contact with are: police, judges, lawyers, doctors, nurses, social workers, clergy, pharmacists and probation and parole offices. It is important that this committee be ever mindful of Tradition 6
- 2) Chairperson to be available to make presentations in conjunction with other Subcommittee Chairpersons

### Treatment Chairperson

- 1) The Chairperson and committee are to carry the “A.A. Message” to hospitals, treatment facilities and related institutions within the district. It is A.A.’s position that we cooperate with outside agencies. We must abide by the institutions criteria while keeping within the traditions of A.A.
- 2) An important function of this committee is “Bridging the Gap” between the facility and Alcoholics Anonymous by informing the clients and facility staff about what the “Bridging The Gap” program has to offer
- 3) Acts as a liaison between the facility and the B.T.G. Chairperson. It is important that this committee be ever mindful of Tradition 6
- 4) Some other duties may include putting on meetings and/or distributing literature at various facilities (i.e. Newport Treatment Centre)
- 5) The Treatment Chairperson is to arrange an information session with the facility staff at least once during their term

### Corrections Chairperson

- 1) The Chairperson and committee are to carry the “A.A. Message” to those in correctional facilities and halfway houses. We try to keep all positions open to all A.A.’s in the Fellowship, but in this case, the correctional facility dictates who may enter the facility
- 2) The Niagara Regional Detention Centre has requirements that must be met for clearance into the institution. It is A.A.’s position that we cooperate with outside agencies. We must abide by the institutions criteria. Since the Corrections Chairperson deals mostly with this facility, they should fit this requirement
- 3) This is a unique position in that the Chairperson will share responsibilities between District 12 and District 13
- 4) An important function of this committee is “Bridging the Gap” between the facility and Alcoholics Anonymous by informing the clients and facility staff about what the “Bridging The Gap” program has to offer
- 5) Acts as a liaison between the facility and the B.T.G. Chairperson

### Grapevine Chairperson (G.V.)

- 1) The Chairperson and committee are responsible for “Not Keeping the Grapevine a Secret”. The Grapevine committee works within the district and serves all functions requiring the committee’s assistance (i.e. groups, meetings, conventions, the Roundup and service days)
- 2) The Chairperson will maintain the Grapevine display kit and the electronic payment processing system, fill orders and will present a monthly financial report stating opening balance, sales and purchases for the month, value of inventory in dollars, petty cash on hand and closing balance. For additional duties please refer to the current service manual (Chapter Twelve page 79). The Grapevine Representative has the distinction of being a promoter within the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous
- 3) The Chairperson can make monthly orders up to \$300.00 without asking for approval from the district. The Chairperson must submit an invoice to the Treasurer to have the order paid
- 4) On orders over \$300.00, the Grapevine Chairperson will bring a pre-order invoice to the district for prior approval
- 5) The Chairperson shall maintain an inventory of approximately \$2000.00 (Passed by the District Committee July 10, 2023)
- 6) The Chairperson will keep a \$30.00 float for each box that the Grapevine Committee has for setup
- 7) Maintain the electronic payment processing system
- 8) The outgoing and incoming Grapevine Chairperson will meet with the outgoing and incoming D.C.M. to inventory all Grapevine stock, supplies, passwords and cash. All to be transferred to incoming Grapevine Chairperson

### Bridging the Gap Chairperson (B.T.G.)

- 1) Maintain communication between Treatment and Corrections Chairpersons and provide B.T.G. Temporary Contact request forms as needed
- 2) Maintain outer district “Bridging the Gap” (B.T.G.) master list (this list is provided by the Area 86 B.T.G. Chairperson)
- 3) Maintain a current list of District 13 “Temporary Contact Person (T.C.P.)” Volunteers
- 4) When a B.T.G. Chairperson receives an outgoing T.C.P. request, they are responsible for bridging this referral with an appropriate contact in the destination district by using the Area 86 B.T.G. master list. If a referral is destined for a location outside of Area 86, the Chairperson should pass the referral along to the Area 86 B.T.G. Chairperson for handling
- 5) When a B.T.G. Chairperson receives an incoming T.C.P. request, they are responsible for bridging this referral with an appropriate T.C.P. volunteer from our local list. It is imperative that this contact be bridged as soon as possible once the client is released from the facility (24 hours if possible)
- 6) Act as a liaison between district and area on B.T.G. matters
- 7) Be responsible to put on at least one (1) workshop each year of their term
- 8) Report back to the district for group conscience on matters of B.T.G. progress and direction

### Section 3     **General Guidelines**

- 1) It is suggested that you be willing to use your surname and provide your address, email address and telephone number to be used within the service fellowship of A.A. (Pamphlet: Understanding Anonymity)
- 2) Can a Committee Officer vote on issues brought forth by a motion at a District Committee meeting?  
**No**, the D.C.M., Alt. D.C.M., Treasurer and Secretary may not vote on motions, nor may they bring forth a motion. There is one exception:  
The D.C.M. is obligated to vote in the event of a tie
- 3) Can a Subcommittee Chairperson vote on issues brought forth at a District Committee meeting?  
**Yes**, a Subcommittee Chairperson may vote on a motion, as well as bring forth a motion.
- 4) Should a Subcommittee Chairperson or Committee Officer be a G.S.R. for their group?  
Experience shows us that it is not practical or recommended for a Subcommittee Chairperson or committee officer to serve as a G.S.R. at the

same time

- 5) Can a non-alcoholic attend District Committee meetings?  
It has been decided to leave it to our own discretion as to whether a non-alcoholic may attend District Committee meetings
- 6) In the spirit of rotation it is strongly suggested that those present assume the responsibility of taking charge of the key and the opening and closing of the District Committee meeting
- 7) **An Ad Hoc Committee** is a fact finding committee who reviews or gathers information in order to make educated suggestions to the District Committee to be voted on or adopted to address any topic of concern to the district. An Ad Hoc Committee is without power of decision. It is the responsibility of the D.C.M. to invite members to participate on the committee
- 8) All motions from the floor must pass with a 2/3rds majority (Substantial Unanimity) unless otherwise specified
- 9) All motions other than “General housekeeping” will be written out and submitted to the district Secretary
- 10) “Calling the Question” (as described on page 23) in order to bring a long discussion to an end requires only a simple majority (50% plus 1)

## Section 4 Expenses

It is expected that every effort will be made to keep expenses to a minimum and that any surplus funds will be returned to District 13. All district members who receive monies from District 13 to attend area functions or to purchase supplies must submit to our Treasurer an itemized list of expenses, along with receipts where possible.

- |                 |             |                   |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------------|
| 1) Area meeting | D.C.M.      | \$250.00/meeting* |
|                 | Alt. D.C.M. | \$250.00/meeting* |

\*The D.C.M. and the Alt. D.C.M. may require extra funds to attend Area Committee meetings due to the location of the meeting in Area 86

- |   |             |                   |
|---|-------------|-------------------|
| 2) Western Ontario General Service Assembly | D.C.M.      | \$500.00/Assembly |
|   | Alt. D.C.M. | \$500.00/Assembly |
- Subcommittee Chair, Secretary and Treasurer (who are not a GSR)  
- \$350.00 to attend Assembly workshops on Saturday

- |                         |  |          |
|-------------------------|--|----------|
| 3) Floats to be issued: |  |          |
| Secretary               |  | \$100.00 |
| P.I.                    |  | \$50.00  |
| C.P.C.                  |  | \$50.00  |
| Treatment               |  | \$50.00  |
| Corrections             |  | \$50.00  |
| B.T.G.                  |  | \$50.00  |

(To be replenished monthly with receipts)

- 4) If a Committee Officer or Subcommittee member has the intention of attending an A.A. service function, a motion for expenses will be entertained if it is brought to the district thirty (30) days prior to the function. It is expected that the attendees provide a report back to our district on the relevant information from those meetings

## Section 5     **Election Guidelines**

- 1) The term of office shall be two (2) years for the Committee Officers and the Subcommittee Chairpersons. Their term begins January 1<sup>st</sup> even years and ends December 31<sup>st</sup> odd numbered years, running concurrently with the Area Committee (see current Service Manual page 15)
- 2) Can a Committee Officer be re-elected?  
**Yes**, at a regular election where there is every opportunity for presenting all available candidates. The fact is though; A.A.'s generally feel that the “**spirit of rotation**” keeps everything more vital and productive
- 3) The roll call for the Committee Officer elections (D.C.M., Alt. D.C.M., Treasurer and Secretary) will take place in September of odd numbered years
- 4) A roll call of outgoing Committee Officers, Subcommittee Chairpersons, Alt. Secretary, Alt. Treasurer and G.S.R.s shall be read for each position to be filled. Each person will be asked if they are willing to stand for election
- 5) Following the roll call, nominations will be taken from the floor (Including letters of intent). Nominations to remain open until the October District Committee meeting
- 6) Prior to the elections at the October District Committee meeting, roll call will be repeated and nominations will be taken from the floor
- 7) Those standing for any position will be asked for a 2 minute service history
- 8) The election for these positions (D.C.M., Alt. D.C.M., Treasurer and Secretary) will be held at the October District Committee meeting
- 9) The roll call for the Subcommittee Chairpersons as well as Alt. Secretary and Alt. Treasurer elections will take place in October of odd numbered years
- 10) Following the roll call, nominations will be taken from the floor (Including letters of intent). Nominations to remain open until the November District Committee meeting
- 11) Prior to the elections at the November District Committee meeting, roll call will be repeated and nominations will be taken from the floor
- 12) Those standing for any position will be asked for a 2 minute service history
- 13) The election for Subcommittee Chairpersons will be held at the November District Committee meeting
- 14) If a position is not filled at the election, nominations will be taken from the floor at each subsequent District Committee meeting for each vacant position (a full roll call will not be necessary)
- 15) How do I get nominated for a position?

Your name must be brought forth by a G.S.R., Subcommittee Chairperson, or the Alt. D.C.M., Secretary or Treasurer at a District Committee meeting. It must be seconded by someone else at the same District Committee meeting. You may stand or decline

- 16) Do I have to be present to be nominated for a position?  
**No**, it is strongly suggested that you be present when nominations are being taken but if you cannot attend, a letter of intent, with a brief service history, will be accepted. Your nomination must be made with a motion and a second
- 17) Do I have to be present at an election meeting if I am standing for a position? **No**, it is strongly suggested that you be present for the election. If you cannot attend, a “Letter of Acceptance” will be taken
- 18) All voting is by secret ballot and will follow the Third Legacy Procedure
- 19) Third Legacy Procedure for voting:
  - Determine who is eligible to vote.
  - Scrutineers are selected. These A.A. members are not eligible to vote
  - Have Scrutineers distribute ballots
  - A 2/3rds majority of all ballots cast is required
  - A motion will be required to have the ballots destroyed
  - Follow procedure in the current Service Manual (Pages 110 to 111)
- 20) “Elected officers and sub-committee chairpersons are considered to have resigned if they lose their sobriety, or miss 3 consecutive meetings, without a report in a one (1) year time frame.” (Passed by the District Committee December 13th, 2022)
- 21) Who is eligible to vote at elections?
  - All Committee Officers may vote at elections.
  - All Subcommittee Chairpersons
  - All current G.S.R.s
- 22) The D.C.M. will appoint an A.A. member to facilitate the election



## Section 6 **Spring Roundup Committee**

The Spring Roundup Committee follows the District 13 Niagara South Annual Spring Roundup Committee Structure and Operating Procedures. The Roundup Chairperson acts as liaison between the Roundup committee and District 13 and has no voting privileges at the District 13 Committee meeting

## Section 7 **Third Legacy Procedure**

For the purpose of all District 13, Niagara South Committee elections, the following procedure will be followed.

### **THIRD LEGACY PROCEDURE**

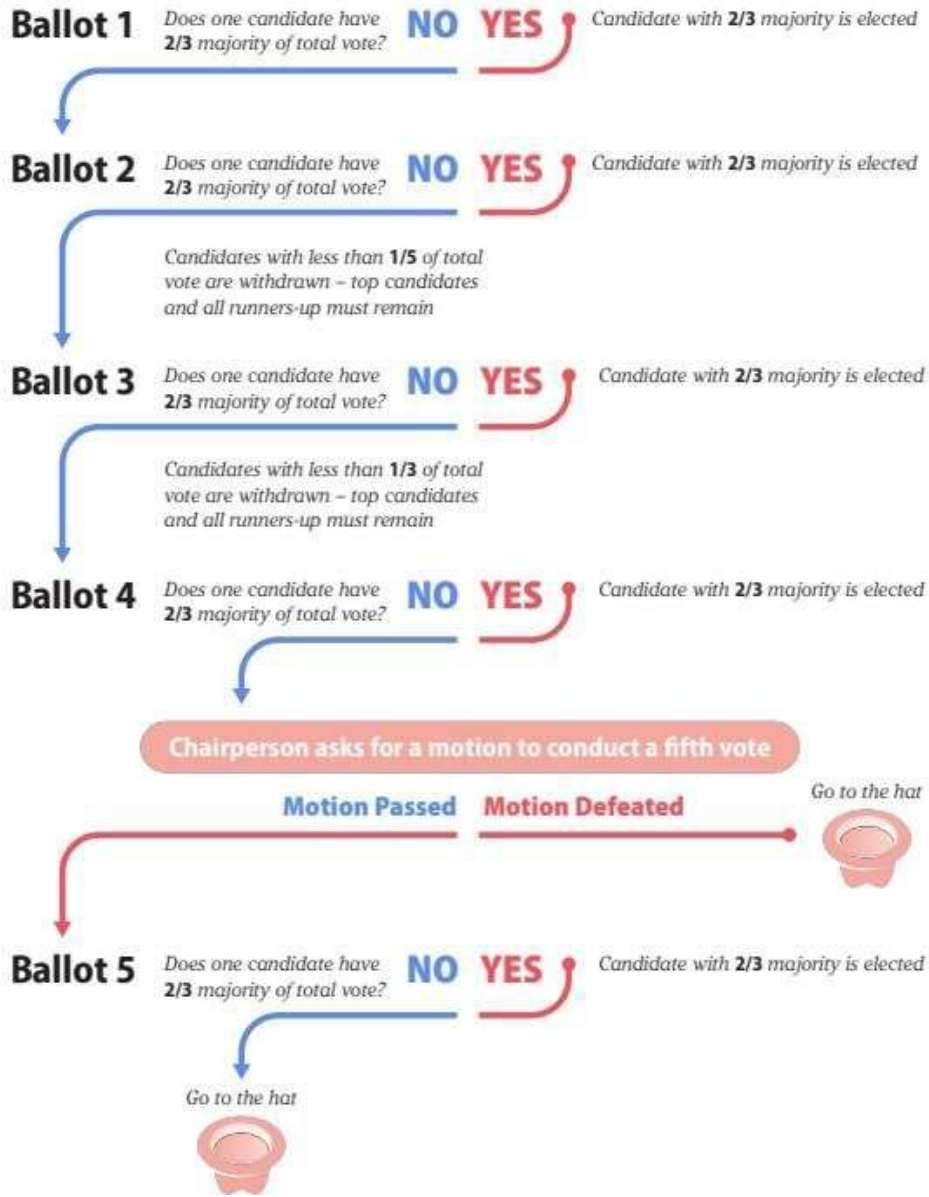
#### **PURPOSE**

A.A.'s Third Legacy Procedure is a special type of electoral procedure, used primarily for the election of delegates and regional and at-large trustees. It is considered to be unique to A.A., and at first glance, appears to introduce a strong element of chance into a matter that should depend solely on the judgment of the majority. In practice, however, it has proved highly successful in eliminating the influence of factions or parties that seem to thrive on most political scenes. The railroading of a candidate for election is made difficult, if not impossible, since voters have a wide selection of candidates to choose from. More importantly, a second-place candidate who may be extremely well qualified but without early popular support is encouraged to stay in the balloting rather than withdraw.

#### **PROCEDURE**

- 1.** The names of eligible candidates are posted on a board. All voting members (of the area or Conference body) cast written ballots, one choice to a ballot. The tally for each candidate is posted on the board.
  - The first candidate to receive two-thirds of the total vote is elected.
- 2.** Withdrawals start after the second ballot. If any candidate has less than one-fifth of the total vote, his or her name is automatically withdrawn—except that the top two candidates must remain. (In case of ties for second place, the top candidate and all tied runners-up remain as candidates.)
- 3.** After the third ballot, candidates with less than one-third of the total vote will be withdrawn automatically, except the two top candidates remain. (In case there are ties for second place, the top candidate and all tied runners-up remain as candidates.)
- 4.** After the fourth ballot, if no candidate has two-thirds of the total vote, the candidate with the smallest total is automatically withdrawn, except that the top two candidates remain. In case there are ties for second place, the top candidate and all tied second-place candidates remain.
  - At this point, the chairperson asks for a motion, second, and a simple majority of hands on conducting a fifth and final ballot.
  - If this motion is defeated, balloting is over and the choice is made by lot—“going to the hat”—immediately.
  - If the motion carries, a fifth and final ballot is conducted.
- 5.** If after the fifth ballot no election occurs, the chairperson announces that the choice will be made by lot (from the hat). At this point, the top two candidates remain. In case there are ties for first place, all tied first place candidates remain. In case there are no ties for first place, the top candidate and any tied second-place candidates remain.
- 6.** Lots are then drawn by the teller, and the first one “out of the hat” is the delegate (or trustee or other officer).

**THE THIRD LEGACY PROCEDURE**



## Section 8 **Suggestions for a General Service Representative (G.S.R.)**

- 1) Obtain an up to date copy of the District 13 Niagara South General Service Committee Structure and Operating Procedures from your outgoing G.S.R. If one is not available, get one from the District Committee Member (D.C.M.) or obtain a digital copy online at [aaniagara.org](http://aaniagara.org)
- 2) Attend all monthly District Committee meetings
- 3) It is suggested that you get a service sponsor and familiarize yourself with the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts. For further advice please read the pamphlet “G.S.R. your group’s link to A.A. as a whole” (P-19)
- 4) Take notes at the monthly District Committee meeting, in order to present your remarks to your home group business meeting in case the minutes arrive late. Experience shows that some groups have the entire copy of the minutes read, while other groups expect the G.S.R. to provide only the significant information
- 5) Ensure you have received your G.S.R. kit from the General Service Office (G.S.O.) and review all contents. If you have not received your kit, please contact the D.C.M.
- 6) Encourage your group to use the “50% to Intergroup - 30% to G.S.O. - 10% District - 10% to Area” donation amounts as suggested in the pamphlet “Self Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix” (F-3)
- 7) Our Subcommittees require a great deal of planning and action. By joining and helping out on any of these committees, you help enhance your recovery and emotional sobriety
- 8) Previous G.S.R.’s have found it important to understand our voting and motions procedures. This often requires some familiarity as a G.S.R., so ask lots of questions. It is often said “there are no stupid questions” and in the area of motions and voting procedures, this is very true. Experience confirms that working with your service sponsor will enhance your understanding on this point

## Section 9 **Procedural Guidelines: Motions and Notice of Motions**

(The dialogue on motions borrowed extensively from the Area 30 Handbook)

### **Introduction**

Procedural guidelines are essential guides along our path toward an informed group conscience. Agreed upon procedural guidelines ensure the practice of “placing principles before personalities” while district business is being conducted. A free-form discussion may appear to be the most open and easy way to conduct business, but it has the tendency to degenerate into arguments and personality conflicts. Procedural guidelines help keep discussion focused and allow business to proceed in a successful and spiritual manner

### **D.C.M. Role in Procedural Guidelines**

The D.C.M. ensures that all persons have an equal opportunity to be heard and that all speakers are listened to politely and respectfully. The D.C.M. acts as a moderator, calling on speakers in order, and occasionally re-stating the motion or a pertinent piece of information. The D.C.M. should not speak in favour or against any motions and should not express personal opinions regarding the discussion

### **The G.S.R.’s Role in Procedural Guidelines**

In the interest of “placing principles before personalities” while effectively addressing the business of the district, it is suggested that discussion from G.S.R.’s be directed to the merits of the pending motion. Speakers should address their remarks to the D.C.M., maintain a courteous tone, especially in reference to differences of opinion where they should avoid interjecting personal notes into the discussion. Everyone is entitled to, and should express, his or her group’s concerns. A thorough discussion that includes all pros and cons often leads to a fully informed group conscience. Address only one motion at a time. Fully discuss and make certain all G.S.R.’s understand the nature of the motion

### **Making a Motion and Notice of Motion**

Items of business to be voted on by the District Committee will be brought to the meeting in the form of a motion by a voting member or group. A **motion** is made in the form of: “I move that...” or “I make a motion that...” Seconding of a motion is required, if not, the motion is dropped (see page 24).

A **notice of motion** presented by a group, gives notice, that at some point in the future (generally at the next District Committee meeting) a group will make a motion that will be voted on. The Group Representative making the notice of motion is given the opportunity to speak, possibly to clear up any misunderstandings. Questions for the

purpose of clarifying the notice of motion may be allowed at this time. This allows group representatives the opportunity to attain their group's conscience for voting purposes. No Secunder is required to make a Notice of Motion, but a Secunder will be required the following month to make the actual motion

The District encourages the use of the "Notice of Motion" form found in these Structure and Operating Procedures (see pages 25 and 26)

When a notice of motion is made:

- The group representative is expected to make the motion at the following District Committee meeting (unless otherwise stated in the notice of motion)
- If a Group Representative is unable to show up to make the motion at the following District Committee meeting (or at the meeting stated in the notice of motion) the notice of motion will be put forward to the following month (no vote to table the motion is required as no motion has yet been made, the Secretary will continue to include the notice of motion in the minutes for use at next month's meeting)
- If a representative for the group making the notice of motion does not show up to make the motion for the next three (3) months the notice of motion will be dropped. The issue/notice of motion can then be reintroduced at a later date by any group (Passed by the District Committee October 13, 2014)

### **Suggestion for Discussion on Motions**

- 1) Immediately after the D.C.M. has stated the motion, the person making the motion is given the opportunity to speak first, possibly to clear up any misunderstanding
- 2) The D.C.M. recognizes those who wish to speak on the motion. An attempt will be made to recognize speakers in the order in which they raised their hands
- 3) It is suggested in most cases, each representative's comments be not more than two (2) minutes
- 4) No one may speak for a second time on a topic until all that wish to speak has spoken for the first time
- 5) When every person wishing to speak has been called upon twice, it is appropriate for the D.C.M. to end discussion and put the motion to a vote

## Some Additional Procedural Guidelines

**Motion to Table** – Tabling a motion delays or postpones a discussion to a later time, usually used to lay the pending question aside when something else of immediate urgency arises, or to go back to the groups for input. Tabling a motion requires a motion and a second; it is not debatable. It needs only a simple majority to pass and does not include a minority voice after the vote. The tabled motion, if passed, is usually placed under old business at the next meeting

**Substantial Unanimity** – All matters of policy require substantial unanimity, that is a  $\frac{2}{3}$ rd. majority vote. Any action, particularly to amendments to the District 13

Structure and Operating Procedures, requires a  $\frac{2}{3}$ rd majority vote. The phrase  $\frac{2}{3}$ rd majority vote is taken to mean two-thirds of the votes cast, which is very different from  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the voting members present (since some may abstain, which is every voting members right). The minority will always be given the opportunity to speak to their opposition

**Minority Opinion** – After a motion has been voted on the D.C.M. will ask if those that voted in the minority wish to speak to their opposition.

- After all minority opinion (ONLY) has been heard, the D.C.M. will ask if anyone in the majority would like to change their vote
- If so, the D.C.M. will accept a motion to reconsider
- The D.C.M. will ask for a show of hands for a revote. (There will be no discussion regarding this revote)
- If there is a simple majority in favor of reconsidering the motion, discussion will resume, followed by a revote
- If there is not a simple majority for a revote, the agenda item stands as originally voted on
- Once the vote has been reconsidered the result is final

**Reconsider** - Is a motion to reconsider the vote, made by a member who voted with the successful side, but can be seconded by anyone. (Simple majority of 50% + 1 to pass - if successful, debate resumes on the original motion)

**Amend** – A motion to amend is used to modify (within certain limits) the wording of a main motion, it is not used to change the intent of a motion. An amendment can only be made with the approval of the original Motioner and the Secunder

**Point of Information** – Any A.A. member attending the District Committee meeting can raise a point of information. This is made when a member desires clarification of

details, or has procedural information not considered by the meeting

**Point of Order** – A speaker should not be interrupted while speaking, except in certain special situations. The most common of these is for a point of order. This may be called by any member of the district when a breach of procedure in the meeting is noticed, such as:

- discussion beginning on a motion that has not been seconded, when one is needed
- if comments are made about an issue not previously presented before the district for consideration
- if there are personal comments or attacks upon another member

After a point of order has been raised, the D.C.M. calls upon the member to explain the point. The D.C.M. then comments whether the point “is well taken” or “is not well taken” and suggests the original speaker re-direct their remarks, or simply allow the speaker to continue. The D.C.M. does not need to call a point of order if they believe that the discussion is moving away from the topic. The D.C.M. politely informs the speaker and requests that the speaker confines their remarks to the question at hand

**Calling the Question** – When a member of the District Committee believes that the discussion on a motion has been exhausted and no new or substantive points are being made, they may call the question. Calling the question brings discussion to a halt while members decide whether to proceed directly to vote (the question) or go on with the discussion. A motion to call the question is:

- Made in the same manner as other motions “I move to call the question”
- Requires a seconder
- Is not debatable
- Requires a simple Majority (50% + 1) to pass
- The one calling the question can only call the question without making any other comments on the main motion
- Does not include a minority voice after the vote

If calling the question is passed, discussion ceases and the members proceed immediately to vote on the main motion before them. If calling the question is not passed, then discussion on the main motion resumes

Calling the question should not be used by District Committee members to limit debate and/or manipulate the District Committee meeting to suit their own ends

# ∞ Motion ∞

District 13 Niagara South General Service

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Group Name: \_\_\_\_\_

GSR Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## MOTION

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# ∞ Motion ∞

District 13 Niagara South General Service

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Group Name: \_\_\_\_\_

GSR Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## MOTION

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# Notice of Motion

## District 13 Niagara South General Service

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Group Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Outline of problem/condition:

Suggested solution of problem/condition:

Notice of Motion (Be as specific as possible):

Signature of G.S.R. : \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of group Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_

# ❧ Sample Notice of Motion ❧

District 13 Niagara South General Service

Date: June 10<sup>th</sup>,2008 Group Name: The Staying Sober Group

Outline of problem/condition:

*The district guidelines are outdated. We need better Job descriptions – Better voting & election procedures – updated BTG chairperson guidelines and some suggestions for G.S.R. Reps*

Suggested solution of problem/condition:

*That an Ad Hoc committee be formed to update the guidelines ASAP*

Notice of Motion (Be as specific as possible):

*The Staying Sober Group makes a motion: That District 13 (Niagara South General Service) form an Ad Hoc Committee to review and update the District 13 Guidelines and Operating Procedure and that the expenses to carry out this review be covered by the District 13 Body*

Signature of G.S.R. : Bernard Smith

Signature of group Secretary: Ebby T. Thatcher