



North Carolina/Bermuda AFG, Inc.

Minutes of Fall, 2022 Assembly

First Presbyterian Church Belmont

102 S. Central Ave., Belmont, NC

Hybrid (in person and on Zoom) meeting

November 5, 2022

Hosted by District 3

Area World Service Committee (AWSC) attendees

Delegate-Aileen Womark-Montes	DR 1-Melissa Horn (Zoom)
Alternate Delegate-Barbara Taylor	DR 3-Valerie Nelson
Area Chairperson-Anu Brookins	DR 4-Lisa Hubbard
Area Secretary-Donna Miller	DR 5-Vita Pastorini
Area Treasurer-Charlie Iachetta	DR 6-Lyria Boast
Area Alateen Coordinator-Pamela Young	DR 7-(Vacant)
Area Alateen Process Person-Pamela Young	DR 8-Connie Jones (Absent)
Archives-Anne Egger	DR 9-Paula Burleson (Zoom)
Convention Chair-Jon Groves	DR10-Katherin (Zoom)
Group Records-Margie Smith	Past Delegate 35-Joan Davis
Literature-Mike Bowles	Past Delegate 44-Paula Burleson (Zoom)
Public Outreach-(Vacant)	Past Delegate 47--Paula Mogle
Spanish Liaison-Carmen Monico	Past Delegate 56- Deb Henley
Website-Stephanie Holopainen	Past Delegate 59-Anu Brookins (Zoom)
Technology (Vacant)	

The Chairperson opened the Assembly business meeting with a welcome. District 3 (D3) led with a moment of silence, followed by *The Serenity Prayer*. Two D3 members read *The Concepts of Service* and *The Warranties*.

The Chairperson reminded the attendees that all documents, needed for today, are on the Area website on the members secure page.

The Secretary took the **role call** of the AWSC. The Chairperson asked the committee members to stand and be recognized for their service. The Group Representatives (GRs), in attendance, were asked to stand and be recognized for their service as well..

The Secretary confirmed, with the District Representatives (DRs), the number of voting members in attendance, both in person and virtually, on Zoom

There were 77 total voting members in attendance. Substantial Unanimity is 2/3rds of 77, or 51.

The Alternate Delegate (Alt. Delegate) read from some of the Area documents on the topics of how the Assembly operates, voting procedures, what are motions and how to make a motion. Assembly etiquette was also covered.

A Knowledge Based Decision Making (KBDM) presentation was given by the Chairperson.

The **Secretary** asked if there were any new corrections to the May, 2022 Spring Assembly **Minutes**. No further corrections were offered.

A motion to approve the 2022 Spring Assembly minutes, as presented, was made by Lauren Russell, D5 and seconded by Janet Dagenhajart, D5. The motion passed.

The Chairperson introduced the **proposed background checks for Area AI-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS)** to be discussed and possibly voted on.

The D5 District Representative (DR5) gave a summation of the AMIAS background check proposal, which began in the last panel 59, and was presented to the AWSC in 2021, but not yet discussed and voted on at an Area Assembly. The background check covers the previous seven years. The information is confidential.

The Chairperson screen shared the KBDM questions and invited members to use these in their decision making.

Some of the questions that were asked by attendees:

Q. What has changed since Spring Assembly? Were the questions that were asked at Spring Assembly answered?

Q. Did Alateens and parents ask for background checks, and how many were asked?

Q. What aspects of the program were used to make this proposal?

Q. What percentage of our total budget is the cost of background checks?

It was clarified by the Alateen Coordinator that the background checks are for the Area to perform due diligence. The background checks are only looking for felonies and sex offenders, to comply with what the requirements are to be an AMIAS, as established by World Service Conference (WSC).

Q. Would the background checks be done once, or on an annual basis?

One company (Sterling) has a \$39 fee for the initial certification and \$19 annually there after.

Q. Does the Sterling group cover Bermuda?. Would we rather have an FBI check and the county to check? A. Sterling checks a lot more than the FBI and covers Bermuda as well.

D1 & D5 use Sterling and D9 uses the FBI check.

International people are also checked if they moved here from another country.

Q. Where would people go to question the basic guideline from WSC? A. The Delegate.

Q. Why would we have to check annually?.

Cost clarification from The Treasurer: If this proposal passes, the cost would be \$3,042 for 78 Amias. Which is 8% of our proposed 2023 budget.

D5 Clarification: every 3 yrs., D5 does another check but the DR wants it done annually.

D9 does the FBI checks every 3 yrs which includes fingerprinting.

Q. Don't we have autonomy as an Area? A. Every Area has to comply with WSC requirements for AMIAS eligibility.

Q. How is our Area complying now with the WSC requirements?

We do recertification annually, required by WSC, involving a signed application which is notarized, and a basic sexual offender database check.

Q. Have we had input on this question from Alateens? A. Yes

Q. Do other areas have a process for doing background checks?

A. The previous Alateen Coordinator spoke with many Areas who are using background checks. Our Area is in the minority by not doing them.

A member wanted clarification on which of her comments were perceived as questions versus opinions. What other avenues have been considered?

And she questioned the legitimacy of background checks.

Opinion : We need a background check that includes other minor offenses.

Sterling Co. does not report on misdemeanors.

The Chairperson asked, by consensus, if members were ready to vote and there was a majority who said yes. The Chairperson then asked for a motion.

A motion was made by Debbie D. D6, that the NC/Bermuda AFG institute annual background checks, for felony and sexual offender offenses, for applicants for AMIAS certification and recertification. The motion was seconded by Sue Gidditz.

Votes were counted. There were 66 in favor, 4 against, no abstentions The motion passed.

LUNCH BREAK

The Chairperson introduced **The South Eastern Regional Delegate Get Together (SERDGT)** topic to be discussed and possibly voted on.

Lyria B., D6, did the summation of this topic.

The SERDGT started in 1975 and was an annual event with rotating geographical venues.

The Area Delegate expenses to attend the SERDGT are budgeted and paid for by our Area.

The Area Alt. Delegate expenses to attend SERDGT, in the 3rd year of the panel, are in the Area's current budget also.

In past years, some of the Past Delegates paid for their own expenses to attend SERDGT.

During the 2021 Fall Assembly, one Past Delegate, who was also a voting GR at the time,

voted against a motion to increase, by \$600, the 2022 Area budget Delegate line item which

would pay for the Delegate to attend the 2022 SERDGT, to be held in Puerto Rico in 2022.. In

January, 2022, the minority voter authored a minority appeal, supplying background information

and stating that the SERDGT was not part of the AFG service structure and it would be a

misuse of Area funds to pay the expenses of Delegates and/or Alt. Delegates to attend it.

To begin discussion on this topic, the Chairperson went through the KBDM questions,

and invited questions, information exchange, and, later, opinions.

The Alt. Delegate made a point that the SERDGT is valuable, but outside our service structure, and thinks the SERDGT is an outside organization.

Some members who have attended the SERDGT said it prepared them to attend the WSC.

A Past Delegate informed us that the Trustees have asked Delegates not to discuss topics of the upcoming WSC ahead of time.

The Treasurer said it is within the Area Delegate responsibility, as stated in the Delegate Service Position Description, to attend the SERDGT.

Opinions given: The Alt Delegate doesn't have to attend the SERDGT to prepare to become the Delegate because the Alt. Delegate isn't always elected to become the Delegate.

Q, The Area has paid for SERDGT attendance since 1975, so why is this coming up now?

Opinion: if the Area pays for SERDGT attendance then that practice opens up payment to attend other events that are not in the service structure.

Q. Why is the SERDGT not part of the service structure?

Information: Regional Trustees were added when more and more regions were developed.

A Past Alt. Delegate from another Area said that she attended one of the regional get togethers and found it very beneficial.

Opinion: Those who are willing to serve should be allowed, regardless of their finances.

Information: Information is not brought back from the SERDGT as it is from attending the WSC.

The Chairperson called for a consensus about being ready to vote. 16 said no and 36 said yes.

A Motion was made by Betsy, D9, to no longer fund Delegate and Alternate Delegate attendance at the SERDGT. Seconded by Janice, D9.

The vote was taken, 40 approved, 27 did not approve and 8 abstained.

The motion did not pass as the substantial unanimity of 51 was not reached.

Treasurer's Report. The increases in the proposed 2023 budget were explained. New AMIAS background check expenses, increases for Group Records Coordinator based on travel distance, AAPP and Alateen Coordinator travel distance and literature expenses, increase for Past Delegates, increase for Delegate to visit Bermuda in 2023 and the Delegate expenses to visit 3 districts (3 district visits per year is in each annual budget)

Proposed 2023 budget is \$37,638.81. (includes AMIAS background checks,)

The Treasurer explained that in the details of the budget, the words "near" and "far" were used in Panel 59, to project individual travel expenses, but have never been discussed, and should be removed. Based on where an AWSC member lived, either "near" (under 75 miles) or "far" (over 75 miles), away from the quarterly AWSC meetings in Burlington, travel expenses could be projected for each individual.

Q. Is the reserve fund balance the same as the reserve fund? A. Yes.

Q. Is it right to increase the Past Delegate budget because the D9 DR is also a Past Delegate? (the district and the Area split the payment)

Q. What happens if our now projected expenses are over the budgeted contributions?

A. We put forth what we need and wait for contributions.

The Treasurer explained that the budget's prudent reserve is currently half of our budget (it's also interest bearing) and represents \$14,331, equal to 6 months worth of projected expenses.

A motion to accept the 2023 budget, as verbally presented, was made by Barbara Whitmore, D6 and seconded by John Kind, D5. The motion passed.

The Treasurer presented the 3rd Quarter Treasurer's report He asked the GRs to let group treasurers know where to send contributions to the Area.

Checks should be made out to *NC/ Bermuda AFG Inc.* and include the group name and city.

A Motion to accept the 2022 3rd quarter Treasurer's report, as presented, was made by Sue Gidditz, D6 and seconded by Carol Lyons, D4. The motion passed.

Delegate Report. All present were invited to remember that love brought us to the Program. The **Electronic Thought Force** was introduced. The presentation began with the recitation of the *Serenity Prayer* in three languages, English, French and Spanish.

Lyria B. D6, is chairperson of the Electronic Thought Force.

The charge of this thought force, which was comprised of GRs, DRs, Past Delegates, Coordinators and the Delegate, was to prepare a presentation for this Assembly. The members of this Thought Force described their working together as a beautiful experience, meeting frequently, and using the KBDM question process.

Vita P., D5 presented the summation of the history of electronic-only groups. Previously all electronic-only groups were not recognized as AFG groups. In 2020, the Covid Pandemic forced groups to cease meeting in person, temporarily, and to meet on electronic platforms.

The WSC then recognized the electronic-only groups as AFGs. An additional Delegate position was created for the electronic-only groups. When a group registers with WSO as electronic-only, that group is no longer part of their previous District or Area, unless and until they request and are accommodated to remain part of their District or Area. Each Area has been asked to decide if they want to work on a process to accept electronic-only groups.

Some background information was given as follows:

Which types of groups would be impacted if the electronic-only meetings are accepted into the Area?

For in-person or hybrid groups, there will be no impact.

If all members of a group decide to be registered electronic-only there are two options to do so: request to remain in the current Area, or join the electronic-only Area.

Break out groups were given 20 minutes to discuss what the risks are, and how to minimize the risks, of including electronic-only groups into the Area, if we are ready to vote and what the next steps should be.

One rep. from each breakout group reported the one or two items that were most important from the table discussion as follows:

How would these new groups get signed into our Area?

We would need to ask how they are eligible. How do we know we will not get overrun with electronic groups that would be asking to be part of the Area?

General consensus was there is no need to rush.

How do we insure groups have just one vote, especially if groups have one in-person meeting and another all-electronic meeting?

There is a risk that we have to determine electronic-only group donations and if they are or are not being supported like in-person groups are.

Could group officers be from out of state?

Would electronic groups have more in common with other electronics groups?

Anonymity is in question.

A benefit would be increasing member attendance. Groups would have more voice.

Elderly who have no computers would have challenges participating in electronic-only meetings.

If hybrid, would the group be one meeting or separate meetings?

No one felt ready to move on with a vote.

How would we accommodate hybrid meetings?

Is there a limit to how many meetings can have the same name and group id number?

There is a lot of uncertainty about how the structure would be. We need more time and discussions.

If a meeting did move to an electronic Area, it will reduce the pool of people who could do service in the area.

Are electronic-only groups able to be self supporting?

Spanish speaking group recognized benefits, but most don't want to return to in-person only meetings.

To report any further questions or feedback, to the Thought Force, please contact
The Electronic Thought Force Chairperson, Lyria B.'s email district6dr@ncbermudaafg.org

The Chairpersons asked if on-line town hall meetings should happen on this subject.
Consensus said yes.

Assembly feedback.

If on line, scan the QR code, and it will open up the survey.

A motion to adjourn was made by Lauren Russell. Dave Conlin seconded it.

The motion passed.

The meeting closed with the AI-Anon Declaration.

Respectfully submitted 11/26/22

Donna Miller, Area Secretary Panel 62

