

**Northern Illinois Area 20 - Service Structure Guidelines**  
**Proposed**  
**October 6, 2008**

The principal function of the Area is to be a forum for effective communication between the Groups and the General Service Conference through its Delegate. In addition to counseling its Delegate about the collective Group Conscience of the Fellowship in Northern Illinois, NIA will assist its Districts, Groups and members to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers in a broad variety of ways, including but not restricted to conducting workshops, sharing sessions and seminars in all fields of general service.

**I. The Area Assembly**

**A. Voting members:**

1. All current GSRs (or Alternate when GSR is absent)
2. All current DCMs (or Alternate when DCM is absent)
3. The Area Chairperson and Alternate Chairperson
4. The Area Delegate and Alternate Delegate
5. The Area Registrar
6. All Past Area Delegates
7. The Area Secretary *and Alternate Secretary*
8. All Area Standing Committee Chairpersons (or Alternate, when Chairperson is absent)
9. The Area Treasurer *and Alternate Treasurer*
10. *The Area Archivist*
11. *The Concepts Editor(or Co-Editor when editor is absent)*
12. *The Web Administrator*

**B. Voting Procedure:**

1. *Two-thirds majority for guideline changes*
2. *Simple majority for typical business*
3. *At the discretion of the Chairperson or request by any member, a sense of the Assembly may be taken for specific issues.*

**C. Scheduled Assembly Agenda Items:**

1. *April (Spring Assembly)*
  - a *Pre General Service Conference Workshop*
2. June (Summer Assembly)
  - a Every year, bids for the NIA Big Book Conference (that will be held the following year) will be heard and voted on.
3. September (Fall Assembly)
  - a Bids for the NIA Spring Conference, (that will be held approximately one and one-half years later) will be heard and voted on.
  - b Odd year is Area election Assembly
  - c Even years, approval of appointed, non-rotating Area positions
4. December (Winter Assembly)
  - a Approval of proposed Area Calendar and Area Budget
  - b Every third year, bids for the State Conference (that will be held approximately one and one-half years later) will be heard and voted on.

## **II. Assembly Voting Procedures for Area Elections**

Area officers, standing committee chairpersons, and all their alternates are elected to two-year terms of service that begin in even numbered years. Elections are held during the Fall Assembly of odd numbered years, immediately preceding the end of the current service rotation. The Chairperson shall read the portion of The AA Service Manual that is applicable to balloting before balloting begins. The rest of the election proceedings are to be facilitated by the most recent past Delegate. Election of officers, namely the Delegate, Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary, their Alternates, and the Registrar (with no Alternate), shall be in accordance with the Third Legacy procedure as described in The AA Service Manual. The order of elections shall be: Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Chairperson, Alternate Chairperson, Secretary, Alternate Secretary, Treasurer, Alternate Treasurer, and Registrar. Following officer elections, standing service committee Chairpersons and their Alternates are elected, either by the Third Legacy procedure or by any other means chosen by the Assembly during the election proceedings. Nominations from the floor shall be accepted. Those eligible to stand for Delegate are: Area Officers (except Delegate), Chairpersons of standing service committees, and DCMs. The elected Delegate shall have only one term of service and shall never again be a candidate for the position.

## **III. Area Standing Committees**

Communication and cooperation among groups in the Area, especially with respect to general service opportunities and practices, are critical to the strength of the Fellowship. To meet these obligations NIA has adapted the General Service Conference Committee structure to meet its needs. Strong standing committees provide a venue for sharing experience and information about general service opportunities as well as a place for free-flowing and thorough discussion of issues affecting other groups, NIA or AA as a whole.

Standing Committees do not set policy or decide issues, but they do make recommendations to the Assembly through written reports distributed at each Assembly and Area Committee meeting. Each standing committee serves the following purposes:

- Share experience relative to service-related topics.
- Review and clarify issues proposed for action by the Assembly.

As the Standing Committees mirror General Service Conference committees, Past Delegates are members of the committee(s) on which they served. A Past Delegate may also serve on other committees at the pleasure of the Area Chairperson.

The two types of standing committees are Service and Administrative as described below.

### **A. Service Committees**

Service Committees are comprised of the following members:

- Area Committee Chair and Alternate
- Corresponding District Committee Chair and Alternate
- GSRs who choose to serve on the committee (ideally at least one GSR from each district will serve on each service committee)

- AA members active in the respective field of service work
- Past Delegates who served on a corresponding committee at the General Service Conference

The NIA Service Committees are the following:

#### Answering Service

The NIA Answering Service Committee provides a forum for the sharing of experience among the District Answering Service Committees.

#### Archives

The NIA Archives Committee, consistent with AA's primary purpose, is to keep the record straight so that myth does not predominate over fact as to the history of the Fellowship in Northern Illinois.

#### Cooperation with the Professional Community

The NIA Cooperation with the Professional Community Committee provides a forum for the sharing of experience among the district service committees that provide information to professionals who have contact with alcoholics through their work. These professionals include health care workers, educators, clergy, judges, lawyers and members of law enforcement, social workers, union leaders and industrial managers, as well as those working in the field of alcoholism.

#### Corrections

The NIA Corrections Committee coordinates activities of individual AA members and groups, who are interested in carrying our message of recovery to alcoholics in correctional facilities. In addition it helps Groups and District Corrections Committees develop ways to "bridge the gap" between correctional facilities and the larger AA community.

#### Grapevine

The NIA Grapevine Committee provides a forum for the sharing of experience among the District Grapevine Committees with regard to making the Fellowship aware of the existence of the Grapevine, La Vina and related Grapevine materials and the role these items can play in the enhancement of sobriety.

#### Literature

The NIA Literature Committee assists corresponding District Literature Committees make the Fellowship aware of the existence of the AA Literature and materials and the role these items can play in the enhancement of sobriety.

#### Public Information

The NIA Public Information Committee provides a forum for the sharing of experience among the District Public Information Committees relative to activities that inform the public about the AA program of recovery. The Area's appointed Web Administrator is a member of this committee.

#### Special Needs

The NIA Special Needs Committee provides a forum for the sharing of experience among the District Special Needs Committees. It gathers information and shared experience from GSO, Areas, Districts and AA Groups on ways to carry the message of AA to the still suffering

alcoholic or current members with special needs and to communicate that information to the Groups and Districts within the NIA.

#### Treatment Facilities

The NIA Treatment Facilities Committee coordinates the work of Groups and individual AA members interested in carrying our message of recovery to alcoholics in treatment facilities.

### **B. Administrative Committees**

Administrative Committees are appointed by the NIA Chairperson and approved by the Assembly. Unless otherwise indicated, the term of service on an administrative committee is two years.

#### Operating Committee

The Operating Committee is responsible for conducting the day-to-day business matters related to the orderly functioning of the Area. The Committee is comprised of the Area Delegate, Area Chairperson, Area Secretary, and four DCMs. The DCMs will rotate on a yearly basis and will be appointed by the Area Chairperson prior to the Winter Committee Meeting of each year. No member of the Finance Committee may be a member of the Operating Committee.

#### Finance Committee

The Finance Committee facilitates the budget process and monitors and reports budget performance throughout the year. The Finance Committee is comprised of the Area Treasurer, Alternate Area Treasurer, and three DCMs appointed to one-year terms by the Area Chairperson prior to the Winter Committee Meeting of each year. No member of the Finance Committee may be a member of the Operating Committee and vice versa.

#### Report and Charter Committee

The Report and Charter Committee reviews and offers motions to revise NIA documents. The committee will be responsible for the documents entitled Website Policy and Guidelines, Duties and Responsibilities of Northern Illinois Area Trusted Servants, GSR Handbook, NIA Guidelines For Districts Hosting Area Assemblies, Procedures for Hosting Area Committee Meetings, NIA Big Book Conference Planning Guide, Service Structure Guidelines, Procedures for The NIA Pre-General Service Conference Workshop, and NIA Spring Conference Planning Guide.

The committee will review Assembly approved revisions to NIA documents to assess the impact on related documents and offer motions to make additional revisions as needed. There are a minimum of six members of the committee appointed by the Area Chairperson. They are DCMs, alternate DCM's or other members of the fellowship. In addition, past Delegates who have served on the GSC Report and Charter Committee may be members of the committee.

#### Electronic Equipment Committee

The Electronic Equipment Committee maintains a list for all electronic equipment owned by the Area for insurance and inventory purposes. It is comprised of three or four members who meet as needed to provide advice and recommendations to the Area and the Area's trusted servants on the purchase and maintenance of all electronic equipment.

**C. Appointed Service Committee Positions**

These service committee positions are appointed by the Area Chairperson and approved by the Assembly. These appointed service committee positions begin in odd-numbered years; the term of service is two years. Appointed committee members may serve in the same position for more than one term.

Archivist

The Archivist functions as curator of the Archives collection. He recommends the storage location, maintains the archived materials and presents the materials for general viewing by the Fellowship at conferences and workshops. The Archivist works closely with the Archives Committee to add to the collection and to determine the contents of the collection.

Concepts Editor and Co-Editor

The primary responsibility of the Concepts Editor is to edit and supervise the printing and distribution of Concepts, the quarterly NIA newsletter. The Editor determines the suitability of content within established guidelines and is responsible for updating the Area 20 GSR Handbook. The Editor may also be asked to advise on other printed material for the Area. The Editor will keep an updated calendar of events for NIA. The primary responsibility of the Concepts Co-Editor is to assist the Editor with any and all responsibilities as needed.

Web Administrator

The Web Administrator builds and maintains the Area web site. This person is responsible for payment of domain charges and for ensuring the integrity of the domain. The Web Administrator is responsible for posting information, flyers, district meeting schedules, and all Area Guidelines. Additionally, this person responds to or forwards any e-mail received at the web addresses.

**IV. The Area Committee**

**A.** The Area Committee is comprised of the following, all of whom have a vote at Committee Meetings:

1. All current DCMs and all current Alternate DCMs.
2. The Area Delegate and the Alternate.
3. The Area Chairperson and the Alternate.
4. The Area Treasurer and the Alternate.
5. The Area Secretary and the Alternate.
6. The Area Registrar.
7. All Area Standing Committee Chairpersons and their Alternates.
8. All Past Delegates.

**B.** The Area Committee is responsible for the health of the General Service Conference structure and NIA growth and harmony. The Area Committee should bring to the attention of the Assembly any subjects or items relating to the General Service Conference or of importance to the Fellowship as a whole. At its quarterly meetings, the Committee discusses items on the Agenda for the Area Assembly and hears reports from the Area Officers, Standing Committee Chairpersons, and DCMs.

**C.** Potential Agenda Items for the Area Assembly

1. The Area Chairperson will forward all potential agenda items to the appropriate Service or Administrative Committee for discussion and wording of the motion.
  2. The Service or Administrative committee may make a recommendation to the Assembly.
  3. In the event that the Service or Administrative committee makes a recommendation to the Assembly the item will appear on the new business agenda for the next Area Committee meeting.
  4. The Area Committee will have an opportunity to discuss and ask questions about the item
  5. The Area Committee will not be responsible for approving items for the Assembly new business Agenda but will discuss the items as to better inform the fellowship through the DCMs.
- D. Matters requiring Area Committee approval or acceptance will be decided by simple majority.
- E. The Area Committee Meetings will be held four times a year. The Committee will be responsible to recommend the places, dates, and times for Committee Meetings and Assemblies.
- F. Scheduled Committee Meeting Agenda Items:
1. October (Fall) Committee Meeting
    - a Prepare and approve the proposed Area Calendar and Area Budget
    - b Accept bids from Districts to host Area Assemblies and Committee Meetings
- G. Attendance: Any member of the Area Committee who is unable to attend an Area Committee Meeting or Area Assembly should contact either the Area Chairperson or the Area Secretary in advance.
- H. Any member of the Area Committee (except DCMs) who misses two (2) consecutive meetings without contacting the Area Chairperson or the Area Secretary should be replaced.
- I. At the Committee Meeting following the second absence, the Chairman, with the approval of the Committee, shall declare the position vacant and a replacement shall be elected at the next Assembly. At that Assembly, if the Alternate stands for and is elected to the vacant position, a new Alternate shall be immediately elected at the same Assembly.
- J. It is suggested that we forego our anonymity at Area Committee Meetings and Assemblies.

## **V. Orientation Workshops**

- A. The Area Committee will implement Service Orientation Workshops to educate GSRs, DCMs, and District Service Committee Chairpersons about their service positions. The Service Orientation Workshops will introduce incoming GSRs to NIA Service Committees and encourage them to join and participate in those committees.
- B. Any member of the Fellowship who may be interested in participating in service will be invited and encouraged to attend the Service Orientation Workshops.
- C. The Alternate Delegate is responsible for organizing and coordinating these workshops with the DCMs and the Area Committee Service Chairpersons.
- D. The Service Orientation Workshops should be held in four to six locations throughout the area each year. The workshops will be held twice yearly preferably in the Spring and Fall.
- E. Funding for these workshops will be provided by the Area.

## **VI. Area Budgets**

The Area Treasurer in cooperation with the Finance Committee is responsible for preparing the budget for the coming year and presenting it to the October (Fall) Area Committee Meeting

At the request of the Treasurer or Finance Committee all budgeted Area trusted servants should be prepared to provide financial projections for the new budget year.

The Prudent Reserve should be maintained at \$12,500.

## **VII. Spending Guidelines**

### **Cost Reimbursement Philosophy**

NIA is blessed with many groups who support the Area with their contributions. It is the responsibility of the Area's trusted servants to spend the money in the spirit in which it was contributed. The purpose of personal budgets is to provide sufficient funds to help finance service activities.

Please note the use of the phrase "sufficient funds to help finance." It is expected that we as individuals must participate financially in our service experience. Thus personal budgets should not be expected to cover all costs incurred during our involvement in service. Each of us individually must utilize the available funds in a prudent manner while seeking to fulfill our responsibilities to the best of our ability.

Realize also that from time to time it will be necessary for the Area to supplement some budgets in order to facilitate participation in service by those whose finances might otherwise preclude that participation. No one is interested in examining individual financial records to determine who can afford what and who cannot. Nor should we allow personalities to affect financial decisions. Rather, we as Area Servants must make an effort to assist each other in making informed spending decisions while at the same time being willing to provide additional financial support when needed.

NIA's money belongs to the Assembly and is only spent with Assembly approval. The Assembly's approval of the budget gives permission for trusted servants to spend the money assigned to their positions. This money should be spent according to the principles adopted by the Assembly.

### **Cost Reimbursement Policy**

Reimbursement will occur after presentation of the necessary documentation to the Treasurer. Any money given to a person in advance for expenses must have receipts turned in before further NIA money will be provided to that person. All expenses must be supported by receipts (telephone bills, hotel bills, canceled checks for registration etc.).

A reimbursement request must be signed by the trusted servant and provided to the Treasurer before money will be dispersed.

## Personal Expense Table

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|---|--|
| <b>1. Literature</b>                          | Conference approved literature, Grapevine literature and service pieces produced by G.S.O.   |
| <b>2. Mailing</b>                             | Supplies (envelopes, postage, etc.)  |
| <b>3. Printing/Copying</b>                    | For distribution at committee meetings, assemblies, workshops and service related activities. Concepts, minutes, etc.  |
| <b>4. Supplies</b>                            | Paper, labels, printer materials, etc.   |
| <b>5. Mileage</b>                             | \$0.28 per mile to Assemblies, Committee Meetings, conferences and service related activities  |
| <b>6. Recognized Conferences &amp; Forums</b> | NIA Spring Conference, NIA Big Book Conference, Illinois State Conference, East Central Regional Conference, East Central Regional Forum. Meals, mileage, registration and banquet. Note: Budgeted trusted servants are expected to attend conferences and lead meeting, panels and workshops. The Delegate, Alternate Delegate and Chairperson shall be reimbursed for such conferences necessary to fulfill their positions. The Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Chairperson and Past Delegates shall be reimbursed for attendance at the Delegates/Past Delegates Conference. |
| <b>7. Other</b>                               | Other items as detailed in the budget or approved by the Assembly.   |

## Service Area Flexibility

1. A Service Area are those servants having budget codes with the same first two digits (xx?).
2. The Chair, Alternate or budgeted associate may share their budgeted funds. By mutual agreement, budgeted servants in the same service area may transfer personal budget funds among themselves without further approval.
3. An area officer can stand in when the Chair, Alternate or budgeted associate position is vacant in 1) above. When a vacancy exists in his service area, a budgeted servant may then request a transfer of personal budget funds from any area officer (delegate, chairman, secretary or treasurer). The officer needs to be provided the accounts, amount and reason for the request. The officer then "stands in" for the vacant service position per 1) above.
4. The Chairman, Alternate or any budgeted associate may share their budgeted funds with their corresponding materials, literature, and etc. budget. Budgeted servants within the same service area may transfer personal budget funds into their materials & literature budget without further approval.
5. Upon agreement, the parties need only notify the treasurer providing the accounts and amounts. The treasurer will adjust the budgets accordingly and inform the area committee and assembly at their next meetings.