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A.A.'s Legacy of Service

**by Bill W.*

Our Twelfth Step – carrying the message – is the basic service that the A.A. Fellowship gives; this is our principal aim and the main reason for our existence. Therefore, A.A. is more than a set of principles; it is a society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those that haven't been given the truth may die.

Hence, an A.A. service is anything whatever that helps us to reach a fellow sufferer – ranging all the way from the Twelfth Step to a ten-cent phone call and a cup of coffee, and to A.A.'s General Service Office for national and international action. The sum total of all these services is our Third Legacy of Service.

Services include meeting places, hospital cooperation, and intergroup offices; they mean pamphlets, books, and good publicity of almost every description. They call for committees, delegates, trustees, and conferences. And, not to be forgotten, they need voluntary money contributions from within the Fellowship.

** Bill wrote these words in 1951.*

Reprinted with permission from *The A.A. Service Manual*



I Am Responsible...

When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help,
I want the hand of A.A. always to be there.

And for that:
I am responsible.

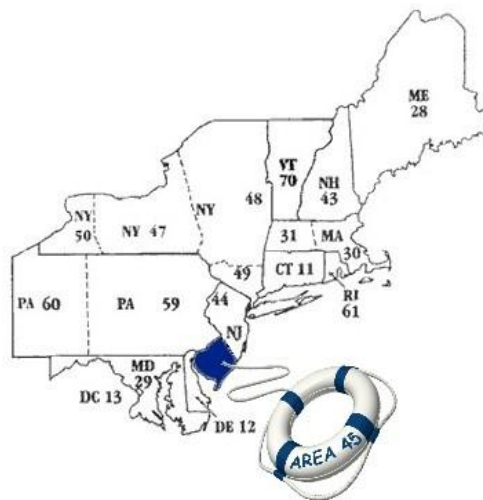
I. Welcome to Area 45

Welcome to Area 45 General Services. The Alcoholics Anonymous groups from Central Mercer County to Cape May County, and from the Delaware River to the Atlantic Ocean are represented within this Area.

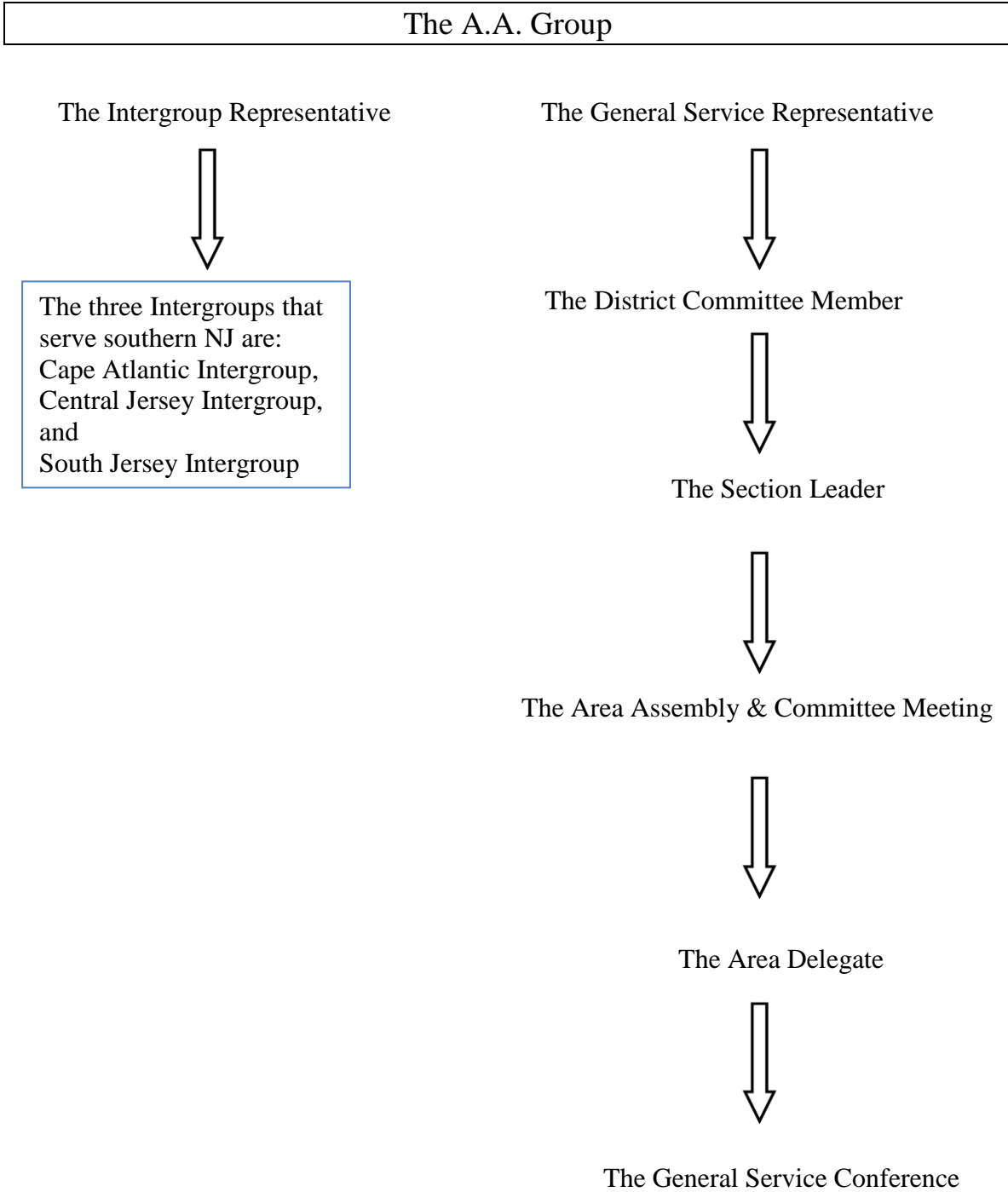
With our primary purpose foremost in our minds, this *Service Handbook* references what has worked for Area 45 in the past. This *Service Handbook* is to be used in conjunction with the *A.A Service Manual*. It is subject to change and it is hoped that any changes will enhance our primary purpose, to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic.

II. Area 45

Area 45, representing AA Groups in Southern New Jersey, is one of the 93 designated General Service Conference delegate areas of Alcoholics Anonymous within the United States and Canada.



III. Area 45 Service Structure Chart



IV. Description of Area 45 Service

A. The A.A. Group

The group is the basic unit of Alcoholics Anonymous. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. group provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation. Area 45 encourages every A.A. member to choose a *home group*. This is the group where you participate at the business meetings, accept service responsibilities, and cast your vote as part of the *informed group conscience*.

Area 45 encourages every group to send an elected General Service Representative to the Area Assembly.

B. The General Service Representative (G.S.R.)

The General Service Representative is the link between the A.A. group and A.A. as a whole. The G.S.R. represents the voice of the group conscience. They report the group's thoughts and concerns to the District Committee Member and to the Area Delegate, who in turn passes them on to the General Service Conference. Each Group is encouraged to elect a GSR and an Alternate GSR to act on the Group's behalf when the GSR is unable to attend Area Assemblies.

The G.S.R. attends District Committee Meetings and Area Assemblies. They are also encouraged to attend Area and Northeast Regional Events.

C. The District Committee Member (D.C.M.)

The District Committee Member is elected by G.S.R.s within the District. The D.C.M. holds regular meetings of all G.S.R.s in their District. The DCM is the only individual who can call or schedule a District meeting. They keep the G.S.R.s of each group informed and up to date concerning current A.A. activities, upcoming agenda items and local A.A. concerns. The D.C.M.:

- Schedules a District meeting to acquaint G.S.R.s with the District process
- Organizes workshops on service topics.
- Visits groups, on a regular basis, within their District.
- Works with the Area Registrar in keeping their District's group information up to date.
- Gives detailed reports of District activities, including district treasury balance at Area Committee Meetings.

In the event the DCM position becomes vacant, the Area will provide a holding account for the district's funds.

D. The Section Leader or DCM at Large

Area 45 is geographically divided into four Sections. Section Leaders are elected by the G.S.R.s and D.C.M.s of the Section. Section Leaders:

- Designate a DCM to act in their absence.
- Hold regular Section Meetings, encouraging each D.C.M. in the Section to attend.
- Visits District Meetings within their respective Section.
- Assists District if D.C.M. is unable to perform their duties by holding District meetings to keep the GSRs informed until the D.C M. can perform their duties or to elect a new D.C.M..
- Works closely with Area Chair in selecting an appropriate meeting place in which to hold a single Assembly/Committee Meeting each year. The Section Leader is, in effect, the host of this event.
- Handles re-Districting efforts in their Section if needed.

V. The Area Committee

The Area Committee is composed of all D.C.M.s, Section Leaders, Panel Members, and Chairpersons of Area service committees. The Area Committee:

- Meets quarterly.
- Sets the agenda for the Area Assembly, and hears new business.
- Hears reports from D.C.M.s, and Section Leaders.

VI. The Area Panel

The Area Panel consists of the Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary, and Registrar. This elected Panel of “trusted servants” provides **service leadership** to the Area. It is sometimes referred as the Panel Officers.

VII. The Area Assembly

An Area Assembly is a meeting of the Area General Service Representatives, District Committee Members and the Area Committee. Assembly meetings consider a variety of issues, from General Service Conference business to Area problems and solutions.

A newcomer to an Area 45 Assembly will meet and hear reports from the Area panel. They will be informed of what type of service work is being performed by our Area committees and bring this information to their Home Group.

GSR's have the responsibility to give their respective home-group's conscience on agenda items as they are discussed, debated, and eventually voted upon on the assembly floor. An Area 45 Assembly is a great place to perform A.A. service work.

A Typical Area Assembly & Committee Meeting Agenda

Area Assembly Agenda

8:30 AM: Registration for New GSR/ DCM Orientation Meeting
9-9:45 AM: GSR /DCM Orientation Meeting
9:30 AM: Registration for rest of Assembly
10:00 AM: Assembly begins
 Serenity Prayer
 Roll Call
 Welcome from Area Chair
 Introduction of new G.S.R.s & D.C.M.s
 A.A. Anniversaries recognized
10:10 AM: Area Chair's opening remarks
 Short talk on Twelve Concepts *for* World service
10:15 AM: Area Panel reports
10:45 AM: Area Committee reports
11:45 AM: Intergroup Chair reports
12:00 PM: Voting eligibility and procedures explained
 Agenda Items discussed, debated, and voted on!
12:30-12:45 PM: **Complimentary lunch provided by host Section**
12:45 – 1:30 Workshop

Area Committee Agenda

1:30 PM: Area Committee meeting begins
 Serenity Prayer
 Roll Call
 D.C.M. & Section Leader reports
3:00 PM: Voting eligibility and procedures explained
3:15 PM: Set new Agenda
Motion to close

These formats were created by the Area 45 Policy and Charter Committee.

VIII. Role of the Area Panel Member

A. The Area Delegate

In addition to being the *voice* of the Area 45 collective conscience to the General Service Conference, the Delegate represents Area 45 at the A.A. International

Convention and at all the Northeast regional events. The Assembly traditionally supports the attendance of the Delegate to the International Convention.

The Delegate is asked to be available to any group or district and be fully informed with regard to Area, district, and group activities. The Delegate is informed by the GSO of all newly registered A.A. groups in the Area. The delegate appoints the Chairperson of the Grapevine Committee as well as the Chairperson of the Jal-Con Committee who is the Area 45's liaison to the Statewide Jal-Con Convention which is the New Jersey Al-Anon Convention.

The Delegate chairs the panel workshop at the Area 45 Convention and chooses the Friday night speaker for that event with cooperation of the General Service Office or A.A. Grapevine Staff.

The Delegate is also concerned with anonymity breaks at the public level within the Area.

B. The Area Alternate Delegate

The Alternate Delegate serves as assistant to the Area Delegate. In the event the Delegate cannot fulfill his/her duties, the Alternate Delegate immediately assumes the Delegate's responsibilities. The Alternate Delegate serves as the Co-Chairperson of the assembly and Chairs Area Assemblies and Committee meetings in the absence of the Area Chairperson.

The Alternate Delegate is responsible for communication with the three (3) Intergroups in our Area. The Alternate Delegate visits each Intergroup as often as practical.

The Alternate Delegate coordinates the annual "Day of Sharing," co-sponsored by the Area and the Intergroups.

C. The Area Chairperson

The Area Chairperson presides at Area Committee and Assembly meetings. The Chair conducts all meetings in accordance with the established agenda, in a fair and impartial manner, assuring the maintenance of order and the rights and privileges accorded members as stated in the A.A. Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts. The Area Chair is also responsible for securing the physical location of the area Committee and Assembly meetings. Currently, this responsibility is delegated to one of our four (4) Section Leaders.

The Area Chair, in conjunction with the Area Treasurer, and the Budget and Finance Committee, is responsible for the fiscal condition of the Area. The Area Chair is a member of the Convention Finance Committee and has the added responsibility of signing the Hotel contracts on behalf of the Area.

This "trusted servant" works with the other Area panel members and committee chairs to ensure proper communication within the Area. The Chair, after wide consultation, sets and publishes the Area calendar. If any panel member is unable to perform their duties, the Chair is responsible to have that service responsibility carried out, pending action by

the Assembly. If necessary, the Chairperson is responsible for arrangements to transition from the Alternate Delegate to the Delegate.

The Area Chair appoints all Committee chairpersons except those whose appointments are reserved to the Delegate or Alternate Delegate as previously noted. Following the election assembly; held in November of odd numbered years, the Area Chairperson Elect will Co-Chair the Area Committee meeting in November. The outgoing Area Chair shall turn the portion of the Area Committee meeting over to the new Area Chair, in which the agenda is being set for the Area Assembly meeting held in February.

D. The Area Treasurer

The Area Treasurer is responsible for good record keeping, meeting the requirements of the Internal Revenue Service, and careful monitoring of the Area's finances including payables and receivables. The Treasurer facilitates the distribution of mail received at the Area 45 Post Office Box.

The Treasurer looks for the most economical means of accomplishing the travel necessary for the panel and monitors those costs against the budget. While traveling, the Treasurer keeps all funds and collects all receipts. For authorized expenses, which are incurred when the Treasurer is not present, a voucher containing receipts must be submitted before reimbursement can be achieved, if the expenditure is within the approved Area budget. Approval by the Treasurer and Chairperson or Delegate must be granted for expenses.

The Treasurer is responsible for the credit worthiness of the Area, and must monitor credit card usage carefully. The Treasurer is always on the alert for ways to improve Area efficiency. The Treasurer is a member of the Area Budget and Finance Committee as well as the Area Convention Finance Committee.

Treasurer Duties include the responsibility to:

1. Receive and record all contributions to Area. Acknowledge contributions
2. Pay Area bills in a timely fashion.
3. Disburse reimbursement payments to Area Panel and Committee members upon request with appropriate receipts.
4. Keep track of Panel and Committee spending and inform anyone who is in danger of exceeding their budget.
5. Collect and distribute Area mail.
6. Review Committee bank statements for CTF, Convention and Young People's. Provide copy of each, as well as a copy of Area bank statement to the Area chairperson. Send copy of each committee's statement to Committee chair.
7. Provide financial reports to Area chairperson monthly and to Assembly and Newsletter quarterly.
8. Make travel arrangements for Area Panel for NERAASA, NERD, Area 45 Convention, GSO Conference, Forum and NERC.
9. Make deposits for hall rentals for Assemblies and Events. Provide insurance information to facilities upon request.
10. File Area tax returns.

11. Be available to assist group and district treasurers.
12. Attend all Area events and sub-committee and district meetings as requested. (This is not particular to the treasurer position, but rather a general panel member duty.)

E. The Area Secretary

The Area Secretary attends all Area Committee and Assembly Meetings and asks those who give oral reports at these events to provide written or electronic reports as well. The Secretary then types them and subsequently forwards them to the Area Newsletter. The secretary is also a member of the Newsletter Committee.

During the Area Committee and Assembly meetings, the Area Secretary is charged with the responsibility of keeping track of all agenda motions made from the microphone and restates the entire motion for the Area Chairperson. The secretary also has the responsibility of performing roll call during the Area Assemblies and Area elections. The Area Secretary assists the Area Chair in recording all votes at the Area Committee and Assembly Meetings.

F. The Area Registrar

The Area Registrar has many responsibilities. Their first responsibility is to report the new Area panel, Area committee chairs, and D.C.M.s to the General Service Office in New York. The Registrar is, also, responsible to print and maintain the current area 45 contact sheet which is made available at each Area Assembly and Committee meeting.

The Area Registrar reconciles the Area database with the GSO database. The Registrar keeps up-to-date with Area 45 group changes to the Area database in relation to new G.S.R.s and D.C.M.s.

The area Registrar provides labels for all our Area publications and mailings. The Area Registrar is a member of the G.S.R./ D.C.M. Orientation Committee. This ensures the Registrar has the opportunity to meet our new G.S.R.s and D.C.M.s.

IX Role of the Area Committees

A. The Archives Committee

The Archives Committee is responsible for the preservation of all items relevant to Area 45 history. These items include, but are not limited to: Assembly and Committee minutes, Delegate reports, A.A. group histories, Convention displays, current and early edition A.A. literature, and all items related to Area 45 Convention history.

The committee is also responsible for acquiring and cataloging additional items directly related to Area 45 and Southern New Jersey A.A. history. Responsibilities of this committee include the preservation and protection of these items for future generations of A.A. members in Area 45. The Area Chairperson may reappoint the Archives Chairperson. The Archive Committee Chair can serve for six (6) years.

The Archives committee also displays items in its inventory on a rotating basis at Area 45 Assemblies, workshops, and our annual Convention. Regular contact with GSO for assistance and acquisition of Area 45 relevant data and materials is strongly encouraged.

B. Audio-Visual Committee

The Audio-Visual Committee is responsible for the sound system, recording devices, and visual presentation systems for Area 45. The primary responsibility is for the maintenance, setup and operation of the audio and recording equipment for the scheduled assembly meetings to record the reports, discussions, and votes for use by the Secretary and as archives of the meetings. The Committee also supports the Mini Conference and Annual Day of Sharing and Area 45 Annual Convention.

The Audio-Visual Committee, when requested and scheduling permits, supports Sections and District workshops or special events sponsored by the Area Committees.

The Committee is responsible for advising the Panel and Area Committees on audio-visual equipment needs and use.

C. The Budget and Finance Committee

The Budget and Finance Chair is the representative of the Budget and Finance Committee that will work to carefully construct a two-year budget for Area 45. This individual should form a committee of current and past panel members as well as interested GSR's. It is important to have representation of different interest within the Area be part of the committee. A budget that a diverse committee can agree upon will better serve the Area than a budget that only represents the interest of some.

The budget process takes about four months (Jan – April) to complete and several meeting should be schedule so that committee members can participate in the process. Duties of the chairperson include organizing and presenting the Budget to the Assembly and continue to advise the Area on financial issues as they arise.

We must always be mindful that there is a business aspect to our services. We have to pay 'rent' for the locations we have our meetings; insurance; telephone services; postage expenses; website; literature and many other goods and service we require to be able to fulfill our primary purpose. We are required to file a tax return with the Internal Revenue Service although we are a non-profit organization. All of this means we must be fiscally and financially responsible.

Financial Support to the GSR, DCM, and Section Leaders:

Current experience indicates that many groups provide financial support for their general service representatives to attend service functions. Many Districts provide financial support for their D.C.M.s to attend service functions. The Districts may support their Section Leader to attend service events. Invariably, this pays off in increased activity, interest and group participation.

Budget

The Area 45 Budget and Finance committee is responsible for the preparation of the Area budget. The committee includes the Area Chairperson and Treasurer. The budget is presented in May and voted on at the August meeting. The budget must enable the new Panel to operate from January to August. The committee chairperson receives input from all committee chairs prior to the preparation of the budget. The Chairperson of this committee is also a member of the Convention Finance committee and assists that sub-committee in the preparation of the Convention budget.

Finance

The Budget and Finance Chair has the responsibility of auditing the books of the Area at least three (3) times per year and reporting all findings at the Area committee meeting.

If at any time the Area treasury reaches a level of \$4,000 then all spending stops and the Budget committee meets to review the treasury. To assist in maintaining accountability of the Area's resources each Committee Chair will include in their quarterly report to Assembly the status of their budget expenditures and the balance.

Equipment Purchases

The assembly will vote on all Panel or committee Equipment purchases of \$300 or more. Incremental purchasing of equipment is not authorized for the Panel or Committees. [*“Incremental purchasing” is buying in segments rather than all at once to get around the Assembly vote threshold. For example, the ultimate goal is to have a sound system. So microphones are purchased at one time, speakers the next time, etc. until a whole sound system is purchased.*].

‘Emergency purchases’ for repair or replacement of previously approved equipment that is broken and is needed for an event that will occur before the next Assembly meeting require the prior approval of the Delegate, Panel Chair, Treasurer, and Budget and Finance.

D. The Convention Committee

The Convention committee is established each year to organize and make all arrangements such as: program planning, registration, entertainment, public information, unity, and AI-Anon participation.

The overall nature of the Convention is always centered on “General Services” to broaden each participant’s A.A. knowledge. The Area 45 Convention is a weekend of A.A. fellowship, service oriented workshops, speaker meetings, marathon meetings, and a banquet.

The goal of this committee is to make the annual Convention a spiritual and uplifting experience, as well as a fun and entertaining weekend for everyone – from our old friends to our newest members.

A copy of the Convention Committee bank statements will be provided to the Area Treasurer as they become available.

E. The Cooperation with the Professional Community Committee

The C.P.C. Committee provides information about A.A. to those professionals who have contact with alcoholics. These groups include health care professionals, educators, members of the clergy, lawyers, social workers, union leaders, industrial managers, those associated with courts and those working in the field of alcoholism. The C.P.C. Committee endeavors to increase awareness of these professionals about A.A. We cooperate with these professionals and the organizations with which they are connected but we do not affiliate with them.

The Committee cooperates in its efforts with North Jersey Area 44 and the three Area 45 Intergroups' Public Information Committees to avoid duplication of effort.

F. The Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee

The primary purpose of this committee is to assist in carrying the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to the alcoholic who is confined in either correctional or treatment facilities in Southern New Jersey. In conjunction with our three Intergroups, this committee works with the various administrations of these institutions. The committee members bring meetings and literature into these institutions.

The Committee is responsible for facilitation of the "Bridging the Gap" contact service. It is the responsibility of the C.T.F. committee to provide and maintain a working P.O. Box and respond to calls received to assist the alcoholic in bridging the gap from facility to the Fellowship on the outside. A constant pool of volunteers in the Area is needed.

A copy of the Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee bank statements will be provided to the Area Treasurer as they become available.

G. The G.S.R. and D.C.M. Orientation Committee

This Area 45 committee meets at every Assembly meeting to explain the various responsibilities of the G.S.R. and D.C.M. service positions. G.S.R.s are encouraged to join one of the Area 45 committees at this meeting. G.S.R.s are provided with the name and phone number of their D.C.M. During the orientation meeting the Area Assembly

procedures are explained. Panel and Committee positions are reviewed and new DCMs and GSRs are registered.

H. The Grapevine and La Viña Committee

This committee displays the A.A. “Meeting in Print”, *The Grapevine* and *La Viña*, and related materials from *the Grapevine* at all Area Assembly and Committee Meetings. It encourages Groups to elect a *Grapevine* or *La Viña* representative. It encourages groups from Area 45 to support the *Grapevine* or *La Viña* magazine. The Committee cooperates and supports the Area Intergroups to improve the knowledge and benefits provided by the *Grapevine* and *La Viña*.

I. The Jal-Con Committee

This committee in cooperation with Area 44 (Northern New Jersey) serves on the Al-Anon State Convention committee. The Chair of this committee coordinates Area 45’s participation in this convention program. This service position requires attendance at the annual Jal-Con Convention which is held in Northern New Jersey. This committee fully understands the importance of cooperation as opposed to affiliation.

J. The Newsletter Committee

This Area 45 committee is responsible for producing a quarterly newsletter called: *The Fourth Dimension*. This periodical carries news about Area events and provides a format for exchange of information. It includes Area Assembly and Committee meeting minutes, agenda items for the next Assembly meeting, directions to the next meeting and a listing of Area events. It is the responsibility of the Chairperson of this committee to ensure *The Fourth Dimension* is mailed at least two weeks prior to each quarterly Assembly/Committee meeting. The Chairperson also submits a copy of the newsletter to the Website Committee for publication and provides a copy to the Archives Committee.

K. The Policy and Charter Committee

The Policy and Charter committee utilizes the Traditions and Concepts for Area functions and activities.

This committee updates and maintains the Area Handbook. It also discusses matter of “policy” and subsequently makes recommendations to the Assembly when changes may be required or requested.

The Chairperson of this committee also serves as “Area Parliamentarian,” standing ready to assist the Area Chairperson in matters concerning Area policy and proper rules of order, during Assembly and Committee meetings.

L. The Public Information Committee

This Area 45 committee carries the A.A. message while providing information about Alcoholics Anonymous to the public at large. The Chairperson of this committee helps to distribute A.A. Conference approved literature to public institutions such as libraries and police stations.

The Committee cooperates in its efforts with North Jersey Area 44, the three Area 45 Intergroups' Public Information Committees to avoid duplication of effort.

M. The Registration Committee

The primary responsibility of this committee is to make certain that everyone in attendance at Area Assembly and Committee meetings have signed in, been welcomed, and received a nametag. The Registration committee provides the Area Chair and the Policy & Charter Committee Chair the correct number of Panel Officers, Committee Chairs, G.S.R.s , D.C.M.s in attendance at the Assembly meeting in case of a vote.

This committee will attend and assist at other Area events such as the Mini Conference and the Day of Sharing.

N. The Special Needs Committee

The committee strives to make the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous meetings and service events accessible to all A.A. members. The Committee works to remove barriers and insure accommodation for those who are blind or visually impaired; deaf or hearing impaired; chronically ill or homebound; developmentally disabled; physically challenged or have other special needs. The Committee is also responsible for programs involving seniors and remote communities.

O. The Web-Site Committee

The Area 45 Web-Site committee is responsible for maintaining the Area's website. The purpose of this website is to provide general information about Alcoholics Anonymous in Southern New Jersey. The Area web-site provides:

- The Area 45 calendar, with locations and directions, to Area events.
- Electronic mail contact for the Area Panel, Committee chairs and DCMs.
- Links to the three Intergroups of Area 45.
- Links to other sites such as GSO and other Area web sites.

The site address is: www.snjaa.org

P. The Young People's Committee

The *South Jersey Committee of Young People in A.A* (SJCYPAA) provides an opportunity for the young people in Southern New Jersey to gather and enjoy the fellowship of other young people.

This committee encourages young people to get involved in every facet of A.A. service. Although the focus of the committee is on supporting the young people in our Area, all A.A. members are encouraged to participate.

A copy of the Young People's Committee bank statements will be provided to the Area Treasurer as they become available.

Q. The Workshop Committee

The Workshop Committee chair coordinates the workshop at the Assembly and provides the assembly Attendees an opportunity to participate and learn various aspects of service, from the home group to the Area level and beyond.

R. Ad Hoc Committees

When the need occurs a special study or research committee may be appointed by the Area Chairperson. These committee chairs are afforded the same responsibilities, rights and privileges as all other committee chairs within the Assembly while they are functioning.

These committees keep the Area fully informed, requesting support when needed. If the recommendations of the Committee would impact the structure of the Area Assembly, the Committee is asked to work with the Policy and Charter Committee.

These committees dissolve when the special project has been completed.

X. Voting Eligibility

A. Area Assembly

Those eligible to vote are: Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Treasurer, Secretary, Registrar, GSRs, DCMs, Section Leaders. At the discretion of the Assembly, voting privileges are extended to Past Delegates, Committee Chairpersons and current Intergroup Chairpersons on matters pertaining to area business. Alternate GSRs and Alternate DCMs are eligible to vote only when the GSR or DCM is not present. Panel Chairperson votes only to break ties.

B. Area Committee

Those eligible to vote are: Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Treasurer, Secretary, Registrar, Committee Chairpersons, DCMs, and Section Leaders. Panel Chairperson votes only to break ties.

C. Area Election

Those eligible to vote are: DCMs, GSRs, Area Officers and Section Leaders. Alternate GSRs are eligible to vote only when the GSR is not present.

D. Mini Conference

All who attend the Mini Conference are eligible to vote.

XII. Area 45 Activities

The following activities are service events held in Area 45. Each one offers all members an opportunity to participate in service outside their individual home group. Members in area 45 are encouraged to ask questions and participate in these events.

- A. An Area Assembly is a meeting of the Area General Service Representatives, District Committee Members and the Area Committee. Assembly meetings consider a variety of issues, from General Service Conference business to Area problems and solutions.
- B. The Area 45 General Service Convention: This weekend get-together is held each spring. This Convention is Recovery, Unity and Service in action in Southern New Jersey.
- C. The Day of Sharing: A one day event which brings together Area 45 and the three (3) Intergroups to ensure unity in carrying the AA message.
- D. The Area 45 Election Assembly: This Assembly is held at the November Assembly on odd numbered years to elect our Area Panel.
- E. Area 45 Inventory Day: This one day event is scheduled in even numbered years. In the spirit of Step Ten, Area 45 examines its inventory. Policy is not set during this event.

- F. The Area 45 Mini-Conference: The one day event connects the G.S.R., and his/her home group, to the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship. General Service Conference Agenda Items are discussed and voted on at this Conference.

XIII. Northeast Regional Events

A. NERAASA: The purpose of the Northeast Regional Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly is for the G.S.R.s, D.C.M.s, Area Committee members and Intergroup representatives of the Northeast Region, to discuss General Service Conference related issues and concerns affecting A.A. as a whole, as well as pertinent aspects of recovery, unity and service common to the Areas of the Northeast Region. Area 45 has hosted NERAASA in 1996 and 2008.

B. NERF: The Northeast Regional Forum is a weekend long sharing session designed to improve communication and participation among A.A. service workers in the Northeast region. This weekend affords the opportunity to meet and get to know our *trusted servants* who work for us, i.e., the GSO Staff, General Service Board members, AAWS Directors, Grapevine Staff and Trustees.

C. NERD: The Northeast Regional Delegates Convention is a gathering of current and past Delegates and Alternate Delegates residing in the Northeast Region. The main purpose of this weekend is to prepare the new Delegates for their first General Service Conference. The first NERD was held in 1973. Area 45 has hosted NERD in 1987 and 1993.

XIV. The International Convention of AA

The “International” as it is fondly called, is held every five years somewhere in the United States or Canada. Like all Conventions of the Fellowship, it makes the joy of living visible. The attendees come from all over the world, and this may be the most valuable aspect of the International. It is inspirational and awe inspiring seeing 75,000 members of our Fellowship fill a stadium.

The First International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous was held in 1950 in Cleveland, Ohio and was the scene of Dr. Bob’s last address to the fellowship. In 1955, the Fellowship was officially turned over to the General Service Conference for safekeeping at the International in St. Louis, Mo.

Area 45 supports the International in sending our current Delegate.

XV. Cooperation with Local Intergroups

Traditionally, General Service Areas and Intergroups have performed different functions. Intergroups provide local services; General Service Areas maintain the link between the A.A. groups and A.A. as a whole. These two separate but vital service structures coexist in many areas in mutual cooperation and harmony.

In Area 45, we strive to have a working relationship with all three Intergroups serving South Jersey.

XVI. Methods of Support

The Conference Approved A.A. Pamphlet: "Self-support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix", suggests that after a group pays its basic expenses such as meeting room rent, A.A. literature, refreshments, and retains a prudent reserve, the group divides the remaining funds on a regular basis toward essential A.A. services.

Here is where your group; working through a group conscience, may decide to send their surplus monies:

- A. Your local Intergroup**
- B. The General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous**
- C. Area 45 General Services**
- D. Your Local District**

Addresses to send A.A. Contributions

General Service Office
475 Riverside Drive
New York, NY 10115

Central Jersey Intergroup
P.O. Box 4096
Trenton, NJ 08610

Area 45 General Services
P.O. Box 3724
Cherry Hill, NJ 08034

South Jersey Intergroup
P.O. Box 2514
Cherry Hill, NJ 08034

Cape Atlantic Intergroup
32 E. Verona Ave
Pleasantville, NJ 08232

District _____

XVII. Glossary of frequently used Terms

A.A.W.S.: Alcoholics Anonymous World Services is an operating corporation of the A.A. General Service Board. It primarily services and publishes A.A. Conference Approved literature.

Box 459: This is a bulletin from GSO. You will start receiving it once New York receives your information as a registered GSR. Special sections cover: P.I., C.P.C., C.T.F., and other various entities within General Services.

Conference Advisory Actions: These actions represent recommendations of the Conference Committees, or floor actions that have been approved by the General Service Conference body as a whole, with substantial unanimity.

General Service Conference: This Conference is held annually in New York and is attended by the elected Delegates of the United States and Canada. The collective conscience of the entire Fellowship comes together during this spiritually charged week long Conference. The resulting Conference Advisory Actions will guide the groups of A.A. in the years to come. *The General Service Conference of A.A is the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole Fellowship in its world affairs.*

General Service Office: The “GSO” is located at 475 Riverside Drive in New York City. GSO serves all the A.A. groups in the United States and Canada. GSO also offers services to A.A. overseas, especially in Countries where there is no service structure. It serves as a clearinghouse and exchange point for the wealth of A.A. experience, accumulated over the years. Feel free to call GSO at (212) 870-3400 or if you prefer you can check out their Web-Site at www.aa.org

Intergroup: There are currently three Intergroups carrying the message of A.A. in Area 45. These Intergroup structures are well organized and provide local services such as: A.A. hotlines, creation and distribution of A.A. meeting lists, and selling of A.A. Conference Approved literature.

Minority Opinion: This is the right of appeal. Once a vote has been taken and a majority has been garnered, the minority side is granted the opportunity to have its ‘voice’ heard. By carefully defining the relationship between the ‘majority opinion’ as well as the ‘minority opinion’, as outlined in **Concept Five**, we shall never be subjected to the tyranny of either. *Area unity almost always prevails as we embrace this principle.*

Point of Order: This term is taken from *Robert's Rules of Order*. Area 45 Assembly and Committee meetings are loosely run by this set of meeting order guidelines. When a member in attendance feels as though an improper rule or motion has been granted or not followed, they may rise, and clearly say, "Point of order!" The Chairperson will then determine a ruling on the point, and further discussion may ensue.

Service Sponsor: A service sponsor presents the various aspects of service: setting up a meeting; working on committees; participating in conferences, etc. The service sponsor begins by encouraging the member to become active in their home group – coffee, literature, attending business meetings, Intergroup meetings or Area Assemblies, etc. Eventually, the service sponsor encourages the individual member to read about the history and structure of Alcoholics Anonymous. The process of service sponsorship ensures the future of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Simple Majority: If there are one hundred (100) voting members, a simple majority would consist of fifty one (51) voting members.

Substantial Unanimity: This term means that at least two thirds of the voting members present agree with the motion or agenda item brought forward. This ideal is not always attainable, therefore, the *Right of Appeal* or minority opinion is heard which sometimes changes 'substantial unanimity' on one side of an issue to the complete opposite side.

Third Legacy Procedure: 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. Please refer to page S-20 in *The A.A. Service Manual* for more details.

Twelve Concepts for World Service: These sets of spiritual principles were written by Bill W. in 1962. They are the foundation of A.A.'s world service structure. These Concepts aim to record the why of our service structure in such a fashion that the highly valuable experience of the past, and the lessons we have drawn from that experience, can never be forgotten or lost. They can be found in their entirety in *The A.A. Service Manual*.

Warranties of A.A.: The 'warranties' contained in Concept Twelve are a series of solemn undertakings which guarantee that the Conference itself will conform to A.A.'s Twelve Traditions.

XVIII. AREA 45 GENERAL SERVICE ELECTION ASSEMBLY

(Amended by the August 2009 Assembly)

- 1) THE ELECTION ASSEMBLY will be held in a location chosen because it is easily accessible, large enough to accommodate the Assembly; and, after meeting the first two conditions, still be as close as possible to the geographic center of the Area.
- 2) THE ELECTION ASSEMBLY will have the sole purpose of electing Area officers: Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, and Registrar. The new Panel's term of office shall be for two years beginning January 1 immediately after the election. The officers-elect of the new panel will be assisted by the current officers at their respective positions from the time of election until fully impaneled at the beginning of the new year. This will provide the new panel of officers with the opportunity for first hand experience and on-the-job training
- 3) THE ELECTION ASSEMBLY IS HELD during the Fall Assembly every odd numbered year. Registration begins at 8:300 a.m., and first roll call begins promptly at 10:00 a.m. The full Assembly attends: General Service Representatives (GSRs), District Committee Members (DCMs), Section Leaders, and Area Officers. Area Committee Chairs. Intergroup Chairs and Past Delegates are encouraged to attend, but do not vote.
- 4) THE ELECTION ASSEMBLY REGISTRATION will be on sign-in sheets by District. The DCM and eligible GSRs from the District should sign on a single sheet for each District. Area Officers and Section Leaders should sign on separate sheets for each service position.
- 5) THE ELECTION ASSEMBLY IS CONDUCTED by the immediate Past Delegate with the assistance of the Area Delegate and a committee of non-voting members.
- 6) ROLL CALL: Area Secretary calls each DCM's name and district. In turn, the DCM gives the total number of district GSRs present to vote, including the DCM. Seating is designated by district numbers displayed in the aisles. Visitors and nonvoting members are seated behind the roped off area. If the DCM is not present at the call of the roll, his name and district will be called at the end of the roll call. If that DCM is still not present, the alternate DCM may assume the position and answer for that district. If, however, neither the DCM nor the alternate DCM answer at this time, a non-voting person will be appointed to act as DCM for this district. No one may join the voting procedure after completion of roll call.

7) VOTING MEMBERS of a District must sit together and the DCM is responsible for collecting the ballots from the voting members of the district. Past Delegates will serve as vote counters.

8) THE LAST NAMES of persons standing for office will be used.

9) ALL CURRENT AREA OFFICERS (except the Delegate), Committee Chairs and DCMs are eligible for candidacy and will be polled by the election secretary. After which nominations from the floor will be accepted.

10) EACH PERSON NOMINATED must be present will either decline or accept the position. If the nomination is accepted, the person will address the Assembly giving their sobriety date and service experience.

Those accepting nomination will become the Trusted Servants. They are trusted to be responsible in the tasks which they accept; serving as required and not as they may personally wish. They must place principles above personalities and perform in accordance with our Traditions and Concepts. Persons appointed/elected to fill out a term in any office may stand for the same office in the following election.

11) THOSE ELIGIBLE TO VOTE ARE the GSRs, DCMs, Area Officers, and Section Leaders. If a Group's GSR is not present, then the Group's registered Alternate GSR may vote. Each member of the assembly present has one vote. Absentee votes or proxies are not valid.

12) ONLY THOSE BALLOTS provided by the Election Committee will be counted. The ballots will be color coded and a different color will be used for each ballot for any office. Ballots will be retained until the First Assembly of the new Panel.

13) EACH OFFICE IS ELECTED separately, starting with the Delegate. The election is conducted in accordance with the A.A. Service Manual "Third Legacy Procedure II as below:

- A. A designated member of the Election Committee calls each member of the Area eligible to stand for election to that particular office. Each responds with "accept" or "decline". Floor nominations are requested at the discretion of the Election Committee. This discretion is based on the number of candidates accepting from the eligible list.
- B. The names of those accepting are listed on the blackboard.
- C. Each candidate accepting rises to give his sobriety date and service experience.
- D. Written ballots are cast, collected and given to the DCMs who present them to the Election Committee to count.

- E. Total number of votes for each candidate is written on the blackboard.
- F. The first candidate to receive two-thirds vote is elected.
- G. After the second ballot (assuming no candidate receives the necessary two-thirds on the first ballot), any candidate having less than one-fifth of the total vote will be withdrawn automatically, except that the two top candidates must remain. (For ties in second place, the top and tied second place candidates remain.) Any candidate may withdraw at any time.
- H. After the third ballot, candidates with less than one-third of the total vote will be withdrawn automatically, except that the two top candidates must remain. (For ties in second place, the top and tied second place candidates remain.)
- I. A fourth ballot is conducted.
- J. After the fourth ballot, if no candidate has two-thirds of the total vote, the Election Chairperson asks for a motion, second, and majority of hands on taking the decision to the "hat." (If this motion carries, balloting is over and we go to the "hat" immediately. In case there are ties for second place, the top candidate and tied second place candidates remain. If not, the candidate with the smallest total is dropped. If the motion is defeated, a fifth and final ballot is conducted.)
- K. If no election occurs by this time, the Election Chairperson announces that choice will be made by lot (from the hat). The candidates remaining will have their names written on two lots to be placed in the hat.
- L. Lots are then drawn by the designee of the Election Committee chairperson, and first one "out of the hat" becomes delegate.
- M. The procedure is repeated for the balance of the panel offices.

XIX. Southern NJ General Service Area 45 Bylaws

Preamble:

Southern New Jersey General Service Area 45 of Alcoholics Anonymous shall be a service body which serves the collective conscience of the AA groups in Southern New Jersey whose General Service Representatives attend the Area Assembly of Area 45.

The Assembly is specifically charged with the election of a Delegate to the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous and the provision of that delegate with the support necessary to carry out his/her duties.

The Area shall be guided by the principles' embodied in the Twelve Concepts for World Service, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous. The Area shall respect and protect the anonymity of individual members and the autonomy of members and groups.

Article I:

The Area General Service Representatives and District Committee Members shall meet in General Assembly every other year: to elect a Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Registrar.

The duties, requirements and method of election for each of these offices are described in the AREA 45 HANDBOOK.

Article II:

The Area shall designate standing and select committees that it deems necessary and wise. These committees shall include but are not limited to those described in the AREA 45 HANDBOOK.

Article III:

The Area Committee shall consist of all Area Officers, Committee Chairs, and District Committee Members.

The General Assembly shall consist of all District Committee Members and General Service Representatives.

Article IV:

The Area Committee and Assembly meet on a combined quarterly schedule each year. Meetings will be held in February, May, August and November.

The Area Committee shall set the agenda for the assembly immediately following. The Area Committee will vote on submitted agenda items. A simple majority will place any item directly on the next assembly agenda. Any submitted agenda item failing to garner a simple majority will be referred to the appropriate committee for study and recommendation. The positive recommendation of any committee for any item thus referred will be sufficient for its placement on the Assembly agenda following the Area Committee meeting to which the positive recommendation was made. Voting at assemblies will be by substantial unanimity: a two-thirds affirmative vote being necessary for any action to be passed.

Article V:

Area 45 shall maintain a prudent reserve of approximately six (but not to exceed twelve) month's projected expenses.

Article VI:

In the event of the dissolution of Area 45, all funds in excess of those needed to satisfy the area's obligations will be donated to the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Article VII:

Where these By-Laws are not specific, the AREA 45 HANDBOOK and then THE A.A. SERVICE MANUAL are deemed authoritative.

Adopted by Southern New Jersey Area 45 General Service Assembly on August 16, 1998.

Modifications approved August 12, 2001.

Modifications approved August 9, 2009

XX. Actions of the Area Assembly

Highlights 1999 -2011

Date	Motion Result	Action
2/14/99	Passed	To budget \$1550.00 to send entire panel to Forum in June. (only 3 opposed)
5/23/99	Passed	A letter to be sent to GSO requesting that they start compiling information anonymity and web sites. Note: Panel 48 Delegate sent letter to GSO on 7/9/99 asking that "Guidelines concerning AA's relation to the Internet" be formatted! (To include websites)
7/11/99	Passed	Panel 48 Delegate to form a committee to investigate the possibility of creating an Area 45 web site.
8/15/99	Passed	That Area 45 investigate the possibility of a state wide Round-Up (Substantial Unanimity)
8/15/99	Passed	Increase budget to \$575.00 to revise Area 45 Service Manual
8/15/99	Passed	Increase budget to \$200.00 for Area election
11/14/99	Passed	The Area 45 Web Site approved by Area groups. 71 – 9
11/14/99	Defeated	Nutritious snacks instead of just coffee and donuts should be served at Committee Meetings (defeated 39 – 33; however subsequent Committee Meetings always seemed to supply nutritious snacks!)
11/14/99	Passed	That "Seniors Helping Seniors" Committee be renamed "Special Needs" Committee and include carrying the message to Remote Communities.
11/14/99	Passed	That the Assembly pays the cost of the Delegate to attend International Convention. Cost not to exceed \$1700.00 (Substantial Unanimity)
2/13/00	Passed	Funding for Area web Site passed (\$250.00) (Substantial Unanimity)
5/21/00	Passed	Permit distribution of surplus monies to the following committees: CTF -\$4000, PI - \$1000, CPC = \$1000, Special Needs - \$1000. (Unanimous)
8/20/00	Passed	Accepted proposed budget of \$500.00 for Ad Hoc Area History Committee
8/20/00	Passed	To allow GSRs in the voting for their Section Leader. (Previously only DCMS of each section voted)
2/4/01	Passed	Increase the contribution for the Delegate to attend the GSC from \$800.00 to \$1000.00. (Substantial Unanimity)
2/4/01	Passed	Assembly agreed to keep the Mini-Conference as it has been (the last 2 years) that is – to follow pattern of the GSC!
5/20/01	Passed	The Delegate shall appoint the Jal-Con Chair
5/20/01	Passed	To continue Area Inventory during non-election years
5/20/01	Passed	O.K. for Web Site to link to other Web Sites, as long as they maintain proper GSO guidelines)
5/20/01	Defeated	The \$8000.00 refund received from the Hilton Hotel from the previous Area Convention be refunded to each convention attendee (\$5.50 per attendee) NO – 22 YES – 14
8/12/01	Defeated	Increase Area donation made to New York for Delegate expenses to GSC from \$1000.00 to \$3000.00 (Substantial Unanimity Against)

8/12/01	Passed	Non-budgeted items of \$500.00 or less can be voted on by a consensus of voting attendees at Committee Meeting
11/18/01	Passes	Jal-Con is now a standing committee
11/18/01	Defeated	Area asked to financially support Section Leader expenses. Referred to P&C Committee
2/17/02	Passed	Area approved a new PA system (\$1200.00)
2/17/02	Defeated	All items to go on Agenda to be submitted to P&C Committee first, the appropriate Area Committee (Defeated Soundly)
8/11/02	Defeated	Motion to go back to separate Committee and Assembly Meetings. Defeated 74 – 20
11/10/02	Passed	Increase the Convention seed money from \$3000.00 to \$4000.00 (Unanimous)
11/10/02	Defeated	Area adopt "Suggested Area 45 Procedures" 2/3 Not Achieved
5/18/03	Passed	That \$1000.00 that SJCYPAA gave to the Area be given to CTF to buy literature to be distributed to juvenile facilities throughout Area 45. (Substantial Unanimity)
5//04	Passed	Establish an Audio/Visual Committee
11/14/04	Passed	Delegate or in absence the Alternate as much time as required To provide a quality report to the Assembly
8/7/05	Defeated	To form an Area 45 Literature Committee
8/7/05	Defeated	To combine Newsletter and Secretary as Panel Positions and titled Correspondence Secretary. Referred to Policy & Charter.
8/13/06	Defeated	Due to unsubstantiated need, move to discontinue funding for the Immediate Past Delegate to attend the Northeast Regional Delegates Conference.
8/13/06	Passed	Assembly to vote on all equipment purchases of \$300.00 or more. Incremental spending prohibited.
8/13/06	Passed	Assembly approved \$2000.00 for Young Peoples Committee to fund a Young People's Conference.
11/12/06	Passed	Area Convention seed money increased by \$1000.00
2/18/ 07	Passed	That the privilege of voting Area business at Assemblies be extended to our Intergroup Liaisons.
2/18/07	defeated	That \$175 each be budgeted to fund the monthly travel of our Intergroup Liaisons to their respective Intergroups."
2/17/08	Passed	Eliminate position of Intergroup Liaison
8/10/ 08	Passed	Budget vote – 60 yes, 1 no
11/09/08		Robbie W. to be candidate for Trustee at Large from Area 45
5/17/09	Defeated	Assembly voted to change Assembly
8/09/09	Passed	Election changed to November Assembly
11/15/09	Passed	Motion to increase the threshold from \$2,000.00 to \$4,000.00 for the operating account.
11/15/09	Passed	To increase the prudent reserve from the present level of \$18,000.00 to \$26,000.00 which represents an increase of \$8,000.00.
2/21/2010	Passed	Accept revisions of the handbook with the approved change. Passed with substantial unanimity
8/21/11	Passed	Dedicate \$1000.00 donated by the International Committee of Young People (ICYPAA) to the South Jersey Committee of Young People (SJCYPAA) – Passed with substantial unanimity on the second vote following the Minority Opinion

Purposely Left Blank

8/21/11	Passed	To allow Area Chairperson to set the Assembly Meeting dates for the following year. The purpose of this motion is to be able to rent meeting space ahead of time. It has become increasingly difficult to get reasonably priced meeting places on short notice
10/30/11	Passes	<p>Motion for three changes to Area 45's Hand book (Note – this is ONE motion) (by Mike R., Policy and Charter Chair):</p> <p>1. In order to reduce the potential for confusion: Page 12: Split Section titled Equipment Purchases in 2 paragraphs (without changing the wording) to read as:</p> <p><i>The assembly will vote on all Panel or Committee equipment purchases of \$300 or more. Incremental Purchasing of equipment is not authorized for the Panel or Committees. ("Incremental purchasing" is buying in segments rather than all at once to get around the Assembly vote threshold. For example, the ultimate goal is to have a sound system. So microphones are purchased at one time, speakers the next time, etc. until a whole sound system is purchased.)</i></p> <p><i>"Emergency Purchases" for repairs or replacement of previously approved equipment that is broken and is needed for an event that will occur before the next Assembly Meeting require the prior approval of the Delegate, Panel Chair, Treasurer, and Budget and Finance .</i></p> <p>2. In order to give the CTF Committee more flexibility in choosing to have either workshops or an annual conference, or both, the following deletions are being made: Page 13- Delete 3rd Paragraph under Section F the Correction and Treatment Facilities Committee. Pertaining to Inter Area Conference which currently reads: <i>"This committee hosts an annual Inter-Area Conference sharing their experience with others involved in service to the correction and treatment facilities"</i></p> <p>3. As a result of the second change, the following change must also be made: Page 17- Delete sections C and D of Chapter XII title Area 45 Actives and rearrange letters accordingly. The current wording which would be deleted is as follows: <i>"C. The Area 45 Correctional and Treatment Facilities"</i> <i>"D. Inter-Area Conference: This one-day event is held each fall. It is an exchange of information and experience in carrying the message into Institutions and Treatment Centers in Southern New Jersey."</i></p> <p><i>Consequently, Paragraph E. would become paragraph C. and the other three paragraphs would follow in the same manner.</i></p>

XXI. Area 45's Delegates to the General Service Conference

Delegate	Panel	Years Served
Darryl C.	02	52 - 53
Edward H.	04	54 - 55
Gleason P.	06	56 - 57
Michael L.	10	60 - 61
Harry K.	12	62 - 63
Ruth D.	14	64 - 65
Paul H.	16	66 - 67
Aaron K.	18	68 - 69
John M.	20	70 - 71
Thomas W.	22	72
Noel L. (Alt. Del)	22	73
Noel L.	24	74 - 75
Margaret B.	26	76 - 77
Jane S.	28	78 - 79
Nancy McC.	30	80 - 81
Madge M.	32	82 - 83
Ruth N.	34	84 - 85
Harry F.	36	86 - 87
Bonnie A.	38	88 - 89
Ruthann C.	40	90 - 91
Jack L.	42	92 - 93
Sally L. (Alt. Del.)	44	94
Ike T.	44	95
John K.	46	96 - 97
Robbie W.	48	98 - 99
Stella J.	50	00 - 01
Joe O'N.	52	02 - 03
Laurie E.	54	04 - 05
Jimmy S.	56	06 - 07
Fred E.	58	08 - 09
Elaine McA.	60	10 - 11
Janet S-C	62	12 -

XXII. Trustees from Area 45

John K. North East Regional Trustee 2007 – 2011

XXIII. Suggested Reading

1. The A.A. Service Manual Combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service.
2. Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers (B-8). The life story of the Fellowship's co-founder, interwoven with recollections of early A.A. in the Midwest.
3. Pass It On (B-9). The Story of Bill W. and How the A.A. Message Reached the World.
4. A.A. Comes of Age (B-3). Bill W. tells how A.A. started, how the Steps and Traditions evolved, and how the A.A. Fellowship grew and spread overseas.
5. The AA Grapevine Digital Archives. The AA Grapevine is the international journal of Alcoholics Anonymous. Here, for a nominal fee, you can find and read every article, letter, editorial, special feature, joke, and cartoon published in the Grapevine magazine starting from the first issue in June 1944

Dr. Bob's Farewell Talk

“My good friends in AA and of AA. I feel I would be very remiss if I didn't take this opportunity to welcome you here to Cleveland not only to this meeting but those that have already transpired. I hope very much that the presence of so many people and the words that you have heard will prove an inspiration to you - not only to you, but may you be able to impart that inspiration to the boys and girls back home who were not fortunate enough to be able to come. In other words, we hope that your visit here has been both enjoyable and profitable.

I get a big thrill out of looking over a vast sea of faces like this with a feeling that possibly some small thing that I did a number of years ago, played an infinitely small part in making this meeting possible. I also get quite a thrill when I think that we all had the same problem. We all did the same things. We all get the same results in proportion to our zeal and enthusiasm and stick-to-itiveness. If you will pardon the injection of a personal note at this time, let me say that I have been in bed five of the last seven months and my strength hasn't returned as I would like, so my remarks of necessity will be very brief.

But there are two or three things that flashed into my mind on which it would be fitting to lay a little emphasis; one is the simplicity of our Program. Let's not louse it all up with Freudian complexes and things that are interesting to the scientific mind, but have very little to do with our actual AA work. ***Our 12 Steps, when simmered down to the last, resolve themselves into the words love and service.*** (Emphasis added) We understand what love is and we understand what service is. So let's bear those two things in mind.

Let us also remember to guard that erring member - the tongue, and if we must use it, let's use it with kindness and consideration and tolerance. And one more thing; none of us would be here today if somebody hadn't taken time to explain things to us, to give us a little pat on the back, to take us to a meeting or two, to have done numerous little kind and thoughtful acts in our behalf. So let us never get the degree of smug complacency so that we're not willing to extend or attempt to, that help which has been so beneficial to us, to our less fortunate brothers. Thank you very much.”

Delivered at the first International Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous at Cleveland, Ohio on July 3, 1950.

