

Virginia, Area 57

Town Hall: Transforming Electronic Meetings to AFGS

Nov. 7, 2021 2:00 to 4:00 pm, via WebEx

Agenda

Taskforcequestions@vaalanon.org

Task Force Members:

Terry Woodside, VA Area Delegate, Panel 59
Stacy Lewis, VA Area Delegate, Panel 62
Tom Spillman, VA Area Chairperson, Panel 59
Debbie Polston, VA Area Chairperson, Panel 62
Chris Batchelder, VA Area Group Records Coordinator, Panel 59
Cheryl Lee, VA Area Group Records Coordinator, Panel 62

Task Force Status Report

1. Oct. 17, 2021, the VA Area Assembly approved the motion to create a Task Force to develop a Policy for the VA Area to accommodate the transformation of Electronic Meetings to AFGs, beginning sometime in 2022, in accordance with World Service Conference guidance.
2. The Task Force has set up an email account for questions, comments, and feedback from VA Area members to the Task Force (see above).
3. The Task Force met via WebEx, Thursday, Oct. 28, 2021. All members were present.
4. The Task Force members agreed on the following guidelines for writing the new Policy:
 - a. Keep the Policy as broad as possible.
 - i. Avoid making it a governing document.
 - ii. Make sure it is compliant with our Three Legacies.
 - b. Respect the autonomy of our Districts and the Area as much as possible.
 - c. Recognize that the Policy may need to be adjusted as implementation proceeds.
5. The Task Force members agreed to review the following areas as the policy is developed to remain in compliance with:
 - a. VA Area Bylaws
 - b. Alateen Behavioral and Safety Guidelines
 - c. Group Records, Web Page, and Communication Coordinator procedures
 - d. Anonymity protection
 - e. Voting guidelines – how to address groups' and districts' concerns about voting members residing outside the state of VA, including:

- i. Hotel contract obligations
 - ii. VA Area Assembly budget for GR/DR scholarships
 - iii. District and Group budgets for sending voting members to VAWSC and Assembly B
- f. WSC and WSO requirements and their implementation timelines

Task Force Questions for the VA Area members:

Background: Electronic Meetings and AFGs:

Electronic Meetings, as defined by the 2018-2021 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, v.2, p. 88-89.

Electronic Meetings	AFGs
Do not have GRs	Is entitled to elect a GR
Are not part of the World Service Conference Structure, Chart p. 171	Are included in the World Service Conference Structure, Chart p. 171
Do have a meeting contact addressee (CMA)	Must have a CMA to register
Registers directly with the WSO only	Registers with the WSO via the DR and the VA Area Group Records Coordinator
Meeting information is posted on the WSO Website only, under 'Members' menu	Meeting information is posted on websites of the WSO, the VA Area, and a Service Center, if applicable

In April 2021, the World Service Conference (WSC) passed 2 motions.

1. The first motion changed the status of Electronic Meetings to AFGs.
 - a. This was achieved by amending the Service Manual to eliminate any reference to defining an Area by geography.
 - b. So, now an Area is not defined as a specific geographic area.
2. The second motion allows for all Electronic Meetings to form a new Electronic Area.
 - a. All Electronic Meetings that are now **new** AFGs automatically become members of the new Electronic Area.
 - b. At the April 2022 WSC, the new Electronic Area may petition the WSC to join as the 68th Area.
3. After the new Electronic Area is a member of the WSC, any now **new** AFG may petition any of the other 67 geographic Areas to join their Area, if the **new** AFG chooses.
 - a. The VA Area needs a policy to manage any changes in the VA Area that this process brings.

Question 1:**Does the VA Area want to allow Electronic Meetings (newly made AFGs) to join our Area?**

The Town Hall vote is a consensus vote only. That means it is not a binding vote; a binding vote can only take place at the VA Area Assembly where GRs vote. A consensus vote is to help us understand what Area members are thinking and feeling about the matter at hand. Keep in mind that we are early in this process and many questions will need to be discussed.

Question 2:**How do VA Area members feel about the right to representation vs the cost of sending out-of-state GR/DRs to VAWSC meetings and Assemblies if those business meetings are face-to-face?**

Should each group and/or district exercise their autonomy to allow or not allow members of meetings be represented by someone who lives outside the geography of Virginia? The cost to travel to Assembly for a member attending from a distance from Virginia can quickly exceed a group's treasury.

The VA Area Assembly treasury is not unlimited. It does allow for scholarships to help GRs or DRs from groups or districts with limited funds to attend Assembly. It has never funded more than 4 groups at any one Assembly. Many times there are no requests for scholarships.

The option to only have virtual Assemblies has to contend with the existence of a contract between the VA Area Assembly and the hotel. That contract runs through 2023 and the cost of breaking the contract is substantial.

Questions and Comments from VA Area members:**Next Town Hall: Sunday Dec. 5, 2021, 2:00 to 4:00 pm**

Use the same WebEx link as for today's meeting.

See more information, as well as the link, on the VA Area website: www.vaalanon.org

Questions, comments? Send them to: taskforcequestions@vaalanon.org

