

November 17, 2007

To: Lake Agassiz Area Service Committee  
From: Ad Hoc Policy Subcommittee

If you receive the Minutes by regular mail a copy of the Proposed Guidelines is included. If you receive by email go to the Regional Website at <http://www.umrna.com/>, click on Events/Info and go to Lake Agassiz Area Service Committee and open the "Proposed Revision of LAASC Guidelines for Review and Approval – November 2007". A copy of "Area Service Guidelines – October 2005" is also included here or on the website for you to compare and contrast.

So many folks have asked me how they should go about studying, proposing changes, and preparing to vote on the revisions.

My offer to the body, and to our Chairperson, is that we take some time during each of the next two ASC's to go through them as a Body. I would be prepared to go through them, section by section, and explain the process described. In the meantime I hope that you will find the time to go through them as best you can individually and/or with other members of your Groups and/or Subcommittees.

**Please note that the Section on Voting has been revised by request of numerous members after the November Monthly Meeting. The revised version is included here and the previous version is not. If you have already received a copy of the Proposed Guidelines, use this update please. TURN THIS PAGE OVER TO SEE IT!**

The document is quite long, I believe, for the same reason our Basic Text and the Guide to Local Services are large documents. We are an experienced local fellowship and these guidelines give our present Trusted Servants the pleasure of not having to reinvent the wheel each day as we provide services on behalf of NA as a whole. At any given time about 98% of what is in these guidelines is not needed. Over a period of a year situations will occur that will use 98% of these guidelines.

I want to thank John E., George, Mike D., Kris O., Molly, Neil, Jeremy T. and anyone else who has given input at various times. In excess of one hundred hours has been spent reviewing past guidelines, studying monthly minutes since the last revision, studying NA literature, meeting regularly as a Subcommittee and as needed in other visits and in discussing matters by phone and over the internet.

The result is a document that we believe includes a summary of the Experience, Strength, and Hope of the LAASC. I have personally been involved with policy development in this area, formally and informally, since about 1990. Each paragraph in this document has evolved because of specific situations we seem to find ourselves in over and over.

Already a couple of excellent improvements have been offered and they will be written up and brought to the next ASC.

"We find that our services are stabilized when we conscientiously apply these concepts, much as our steps have stabilized our lives and our traditions have stabilized and unified our groups. The Twelve Concepts guide our services and help ensure that the message of Narcotics Anonymous is available to all addicts who have a desire to stop using and begin practicing our way of life."

This process has taken so long because, as Chairperson, I believed that it is better that we allow each person to give their best to the project. That meant that we moved very slowly and sometimes we moved so slowly that I feared the whole process might fail. "Group Conscience always exists, but we are not always willing or able to hear it or allow its expression." (It Works How and Why, Page 138)

I believe this set of guidelines is so excellent that it will be at least 5 years before a major revision will be needed.

"It is our sometimes hard-won experience that quality service, just like quality recovery, can only be accomplished in an atmosphere of mutual respect, mutual support, and mutual trust. Together, we recover, and together, we serve—this is the spiritual core of our program, the foundation of our fellowship." (Guide, Page 19)

NA ROCKS AND THIS NA COMMUNITY ROCKS. THANKS FOR ALLOWING ME TO HAVE SO MUCH FUN!

Frank, Chairperson

## VOTING

- A. Only Group Service Representatives vote.
- B. Any NA Member who feels that a motion has been voted on without adequate group conscience development can submit a "Motion to Reconsider" the motion at a future Monthly Meeting. A second is required. The motion is then placed in the Sharing Session. If the "Motion to Reconsider" is approved during the Voting following the Sharing Session, the motion being reconsidered is immediately voted on as well.

Our Ninth Tradition states: **"All elements of our service structure have the responsibility to carefully consider all viewpoints in their decision-making processes."**

**"An effective group conscience is a fully informed group conscience. The Ninth Concept is one tool we use to help ensure that our group conscience is as well informed as it can possibly be. In any discussion, it is tempting to ignore dissenting members, especially if the vast majority of members think alike. Yet is often the lone voice, offering new information or a unique perspective on things that saves us from hasty or misinformed decisions. In Narcotics Anonymous, we are encouraged to respect that lone voice, to protect it, even to seek it out, for without it our service decisions would undoubtedly suffer."**

- C. **"Group conscience always exists, but we are not always willing or able to hear it or allow its expression."** ("It Works How and Why", page 138)
- D. Six GSR's must be present for Voting to begin and for Voting to continue. The number of GSR's voting in favor, voting against, and those abstaining are recorded in the Minutes only to have an accurate record of the level of group conscience reached.
- F. Votes in favor of a motion are counted to determine if a motion passes or fails.
- D. Votes against a motion are counted to determine if a motion passes or fails.
- E. Abstentions are not used to determine if a motion passes, or fails. A GSR can abstain for any reason. Each GSR will be asked why they abstained and those reasons will be listed in the Minutes.
- F. If all GSRs present vote in favor of a motion, with no abstentions, the motion passes unanimously. The number of GSR's voting is recorded.
- G. If 2/3 of all GSRs present vote in favor of a motion, the motion passes. The number of GSRs voting in favor, against and abstaining is recorded.
- H. If less than 2/3 of all GSR's present vote in favor of a motion, the motion fails. A "Motion to Reconsider" at the next meeting can reopen discussion on any motion (second required).
- I. 2/3 of 6 GSRs present is 4, of 7 is 5, 8 is 6, 9 is 6, 10 is 7, 11 is 8, 12 is 8, 13 is 9, 14 is 10, 15 is 10 and so forth.