

GENERAL MEETING

TUESDAY, MAY 25, 2021 (online meeting)

(These Minutes approved by Floor Members)

The meeting convened at 8:00 p.m. with a moment of silence followed by the Serenity Prayer. Graham D. (Markland Wood) read the Twelve Traditions.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

INTERGROUP REP/ALT: 12 Steps, Anniversary, A Place to Share, Aurora, Bayview, Beaches, Beverly Hills, Beyond Belief (Sub. W.), Birds of a Feather, Bloordale, Church Street, Credit Valley, Deer Park, Dry on the Danforth, Erin Mills, Fellowship, Fellowship of the Spirit, Fifth Tradition, First 164, Friendly, Gay Sober Men, Glenholme, Hadenuffyet, Half Century, High Park, Hill, KF, King City, Kipling, Leslie, Living Sober, Long Branch, Love & Tolerance, Markham Village, Markland Wood, Morning Discussion, Mississauga, Mount Royal-York, Newmarket, Noon Rap, North Toronto, One Paragraph at a Time, Open Hands, Pine Hills, Port Credit, Queensville, Responsibility, Restoration & Recovery, River Drive Park, Rox Glen Traditional, Saturday Morning Discussion, Scarborough, Silverbirch, Six Points, Spiritual Kindergarten, St. Clements, Stepping Stones, Steps To Serenity, Street Level Sobriety, Streetsville, Streetsville St. Andrews, The Dogs, Thorncliffe Park, Thornhill, Twelfth Tradition, Welcome, and Willowdale.

DISTRICT LIAISONS: Districts 06, 10, 12, and 18.

OPERATING COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Cam B. (Finance Chair), Dave H., Gord H., Gord T., Graham D., Kelli T. (OC Secretary), Marvyn W. (OC Vice-Chair), and Nina L. (OC Chair).

SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRS: Accessibility, Archives, Communications, Correctional Facilities, CPC, Finance, Grapevine, and Treatment.

HOUSEKEEPING: Nina L. (Sisters in Sobriety), Operating Committee Chairperson
She outlined the following: recording of the meeting.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES – APRIL 2021:

Errors and/or Omissions: No errors or omissions were forthcoming.

There was a **MOTION** to adopt Minutes as presented moved by Christa E. (Beaches) and seconded by Angela O. (Mount Royal-York). The Motion was carried.

CHAIRPERSON'S OPENING REMARKS/ANNOUNCEMENTS: Nina L. (Sisters in Sobriety), Operating Committee Chairperson
Nina welcomed everyone to tonight's meeting, and mentioned that there is a full Agenda this evening, including the two Motions under Unfinished Business. With this in mind, Nina requested that subcommittee reports (if possible) be limited to two minutes or less.

At this point in the meeting, Nina asked Operating Committee members to introduce themselves to Floor members.

COLLECTION OF THE 7TH TRADITION:

- As per our literature and the 7th Tradition, we are self-supporting through our own contributions.
- The 7th Tradition link is as follows: <https://www.aatoronto.org/about/7th-tradition/>

MOTION TO SUSPEND REGULAR BUSINESS – OC ELECTION

Motion to Suspend Regular Business to Facilitate OC Election moved by Carlos D. (Bayview) and seconded by Murray J. (Beyond Belief/Sub. W.). The Motion was carried.

The OC Committee is currently looking for two members. After outlining the sobriety requirement and service responsibilities for the position, Nina then called for nominations/volunteers from Floor members. **Carlos D.** (Bayview) **volunteered to serve as an OC member.**

There is still on more Operating Committee member needed. This item will be deferred until the June meeting. Information on this service position is posted to our website www.aatoronto.org.)

FINANCE REPORT – Cam B. (Deer Park), Finance Chairperson

	April 2021 (1 month)							April 2021 Year-to-Date (4 months)							
	Actual 2021	Budget 2021	Variance	%	Actual 2020	Variance	%	Actual 2021	Budget 2021	Variance	%	Actual 2021	Actual 2020	Variance	%
Contributions	8,954	9,715	(761)	(8%)	8,070	884	11%	41,554	37,960	3,594	9%	41,554	32,459	9,095	28%
Literature Sales	5,417	6,666	(1,249)	(19%)	555	4,862	876%	25,708	26,666	(958)	(4%)	25,708	33,914	(8,206)	(24%)
= Total Revenues	14,371	16,381	(2,010)	(12%)	8,625	5,746	67%	67,262	64,626	2,636	4%	67,262	66,373	889	1%
- Cost of Sales	2,659	4,333	(1,674)	(39%)	250	2,409	964%	14,693	17,333	(2,640)	(15%)	14,693	21,233	(6,540)	(31%)
- Expenses	9,832	14,704	(4,872)	(33%)	16,577	(6,745)	(41%)	49,971	58,749	(8,778)	(15%)	49,971	63,459	(13,488)	(21%)
= Surplus / (Deficiency)	1,880	(2,656)	4,536		(8,202)	10,082		2,598	(11,456)	14,054		2,598	(18,319)	20,917	
1. Prudent Reserve Market Value at April 30, 2021 = \$257 K. 2021 Prudent Reserve "Target" = \$266 K. 2. April 2021 Expenses include a credit of \$3,207 for Wage Subsidy periods 12 to 14.															

April 2021

- Contributions were 1 K or 8% below budget and literature sales were 1.2 K or 19% below budget
- Total revenues were 2 K or 12% below budget
- Expenses were 4.8 K below budget. Variances to budget were in 3.8 K in staff expenses due to the wage subsidy and lower bookkeeping expenses and 0.7 K in committee expenses.

April 2021 YTD

- Intergroup had a surplus of 2.6 K compared to a budgeted deficit of 11.5 K
- Contributions are 9% or 3.5 K above budget due to a positive variance in group contributions
- Literature sales are only 1 K or 4% below budget, note that the literature sales budget is 50% of the 2020 budget due to the pandemic
- Expenses are 8.8 K below budget for the following reasons: staff expenses: wage subsidy and bookkeeping (4.6 K), committee expenses (2.4 K) and a combination of these operating expenses: printing/copying, telephone, and computer (totaling 1.8 K).
- YTD to April 30th only \$441 in committee expenses

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

ACCESSIBILITY: Tom D. (Mount Royal-York), incoming Chairperson

Monthly GTA Districts Accessibility Meeting

Third Sunday of every month at 11a ET Information at: <https://www.aatoronto.org/event/accessibility/all/>

Area 83 Accessibilities Meeting

First Thursday of every month at 8p ET

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83327208725>

Meeting ID: 833 2720 8725

Passcode: 838383

Meetings-to-Go

- Working with Area 83 Accessibility Committee to make procedures and guidelines before presenting it to groups in GTA districts

Call for Sign Language Speaking Members

- We are looking for AA members who speak American Sign Language (ASL), or any other sign language who would be willing to work with newcomers

Cooperating with Down syndrome Association of Toronto

- Continuing to cooperate with the Down Syndrome Associate of Toronto, 12 Step Committee, CPC, and group members in District 10
- They are working on compiling information for families they work with
- We are providing information and literature about the AA program
- We are also listening and learning about the special needs of those with Down Syndrome regarding how we might accommodate and include alcoholics with Down Syndrome in the program

Seeking Experience of those who have sponsored those with learning disabilities

- While working with the DSAT, a member of a group in District 10 asked if there was any guidance from AA on working with alcoholics with Down syndrome or other learning disabilities.
- Jennifer, the Area 83 Accessibilities chair, is reaching out to AAWS
- The GTA Districts Accessibility Sub-committee is asking folks with experience sponsoring or working with alcoholics with Down's syndrome or other learning disabilities to share their experience with the committee. Please reach out to accessibility@aatoronto.org.

In service, Tom D, GTA Districts Accessibility Sub-committee Chair accessibility@aatoronto.org 647-657-7076

ARCHIVES: David T. (St. Clements), Chairperson

Highlights:

- 11 committee members in Attendance
- Archivist has received Kingsway Group binders and folders for 1981 – 1995
- 725 Cassettes received and Catalogued; ORC Programmes have been organized (2 binders and 4 bundles); Canadian Directories from 1950 to 2015 catalogued in Archives Database. Box 459 collection now includes from 2000 – 2019. Minutes scanned 2007 – 2011 Finance Committee Minutes, Operating Committee Minutes from 1995 – 1999. Archivist has attended a 35-Year Medallion, Bobcaygeon 50-Year Anniversary, Lansing Memorial to Gord McG. and Pine Hills 65th Anniversary.
- Assistant Archivist has attended CPC Workshop on speaking at NON-AA meetings as well as Info AA Day meetings and Info AA Day and Area 83 Video Sharing of General Service Conference Presentations.
- Our District Reps are scheduling Oral History Interview as well as transcribing 3 Oral Histories.

COMMUNICATIONS: Carla T. (Welcome), Chairperson

Our committee has been discussing the website a lot. We came up with a protocol that basically involves the changes, additions, and subtractions to the website. Any other these changes need to go through the committee. What is happening now is these changes are going directly to the webmaster and alternate webmaster. It was decided that these changes should be considered by the Communications committee as a whole. The exceptions are medallion announcements and meeting [listing] changes for registered groups. We have also formed an *ad hoc* committee to come up with guidelines on what should be posted on the website; what should be removed, etc. This includes the meetings, the meeting list [directory] for registered groups and non-registered groups. We are still looking for an Editor for the Better Times. We also are looking for a new webmaster, and an Alternate Secretary (see 'Service Positions Available' under Unfinished Business). Three members of the committee made a presentation at the recent Information AA Day. David C. (webmaster) and David R. (layout) are making adjustments to the website as per the suggestions of the Operating Committee. These (cosmetic) changes will be presented at the June OC meeting.

INFORMATION AA DAY 2021: Chairperson not present, but submitted the following report:

I am an alcoholic, a member of Steps to Serenity, the District Committee Member for District 18, and my name is Christy. I had the honour of serving as your Information AA Day Committee Chair for 2021. This past May 15, was our 42nd annual event. Thank you to all who participated and joined us. You made this year's event spectacular.

This event is held annually so that our Area 83 Delegate can present their final report from participation in the General Service Conference (GSC) at the General Service Office (GSO), in New York. We also use this event to bring a speaker from the GSO to share their experience, strength and hope, have panels present on the many service activities and committees in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and workshops on issues relevant to us.

Other than being held virtually on Zoom – this year’s event unfolded as usual.

Kimberley M., our Area 83 Panel 71 Delegate, presented her report. This was more relevant to us than some years previous since so many members of our 24 Districts participated in Pre-Conference Sharing Sessions where we were able to offer group conscience on so many of the Advisory Actions and Motions under discussion at the GSC. And wow, Kimberley was a stellar trusted servant on all our behalf! I know I am even more excited to continue this movement toward greater communication and participation throughout all levels of my service triangle.

Craig W., The Groups Service Coordinator, from the General Service Office was our guest speaker. He rocked our socks off sharing his journey through service and recovery – That we live in grace and that the promises come true was evident from his experience. What a treat that he joined us. Two gift certificates to the AA Grapevine magazine were purchased and donated in his name as part of the Carry the Message project of the AA Grapevine. One of the subscriptions is for a Canadian AA and the other is for an American AA. Most of these gifts are given to those AAs in custody and or institutions.

We had service panel presentations and workshops hosted and facilitated by the GTA Intergroup, by the 8 Districts of the GTA, and a few visitors from neighboring Districts of Area 83. We were supported by a tech team keeping us safe and connected on Zoom. We were joined by three former Delegates and many of the Area 83 Officers – and most importantly, we numbered approximately 90 AAs in attendance as our Delegate began her report.

My gratitude and thanks go out to our entire Committee, including all the District Committee Members (DCMs) and Alternate District Committee Members (ADCM) of all 8 Districts, the Intergroup Operating Committee (O-C), Liaisons and Chairs, and in particular to our Vice-Chair, Marvyn W., Intergroup; Vice-Chair. Thank you to our other officers, our Treasure, Jill B. DCM District 06 and our Secretary Ann J. DCM District 10. Much gratitude and thanks Our service panels facilitator, George W. DCM District 22; our large contingent of Service Committee presenters, visiting AAs who gave workshops, our special guests, Craig W. and Kimberley M., and to Joe M., Alternate DCM District 10 with Patrick B., DCM District 02 for being our virtual greeters on the Zoom Tech Team lead by Bert J. Alternate DCM District 22.

We will begin planning for next year’s event close to the end of the year – all those interested in this exciting service opportunity are welcome and needed. It is not an exaggeration to describe this service opportunity as one of the most exciting service positions I have held thus far.

Thank you so much for letting me be of Service, Yours, Christy F., Information AA Day, 2021 Chair

IT SUBCOMMITTEE: No report.

Virtual ONTARIO REGIONAL CONFERENCE: No report.

TWELFTH STEP: Tom D. (Mount Royal-York), Accessibility Chairperson

Tom informed Floor members that the Twelfth Step Chair, Laura V., could not make the meeting this evening; Tom filled in for her. On behalf of Laura, Tom reminded Floor members that “**other-language-speaking**” members for the **12 Step Callers List**. We need many, many more English as a second language people available to answer questions from first-timer callers in pretty much any language you can think of, but especially the three East Indian languages, Tamil, Farsi, most of the Eastern European languages, and Russian.

WINTER SEASON ALKATHON: No report.

DISTRICT REPORTS

CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES: Gale R. (Saturday Morning Discussion), Dist.22 CF Chairperson

AA meetings continue to be on hold due to COVID at Toronto East Detention. Gale has been in contact with the volunteer coordinator/chaplain at Toronto East with a proposal to hold Zoom meetings for the clients; they are still waiting for approval from their supervisor. The Area 83 Correctional Facilities Chair, Marty M., held a meeting on April 6. Two topics discussed were Bridging the Gap and the Corrections Correspondence program. The Area Chair confirmed that it is not necessary for our volunteer applicants in Canada to mail the applications to GSO New York. You can choose either to send it or not. Our coordinator at Toronto East has asked if we could provide a flyer (size 11” x 17”) detailing Bridging the Gap and the Corrections Correspondence program. Gale contacted the Intergroup Office about providing a

P.O. Box; Intergroup is in agreement that Corrections is to use the GTA Intergroup address/mailbox for Corrections Correspondence. The address would be as follows: Correctional Facilities Committee c/o Toronto Intergroup. When Intergroup receives these letters, they will be placed in the Corrections mailbox for distribution to an appropriate AA volunteer to correspond back to the client. In this time of COVID and lockdown, this is an excellent opportunity for AAs who wish to correspond with inmates, and guide them through the Twelve Steps of recovery...one AA helping another. As well, a Bridging the Gap program is crucial to our clients to have access to AA upon their release. The AA member does not discuss client discharge, but shares their AA experience, strength, and hope with them but helping them access AA Zoom meetings (dial-in, if necessary), provide AA literature, and encourage them to join a Home Group and get a sponsor. Please announce at your business meetings that we are in need of volunteers for both Bridging the Gap and Corrections Correspondence programs. It's recommended to have two years of sobriety, and have worked the Twelve Steps of recovery. If interested, please contact corrections@aatoronto.org. There will be an inter-district Correctional Facilities virtual meeting held each month on the first Wednesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. (see monthly Committee meetings calendar on aatoronto.org). The next meeting will be held on June 2. Donations of old Grapevine magazines are always welcome. South Detention Centre remains closed to outside volunteers. AA Literature is being distributed, however to chaplains and social workers. There is a Bridging the Gap program for both Toronto East or Toronto South Detention centres.

COOPERATION with the PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY (CPC): Joe A. (One Paragraph at a Time), Chairperson

Our next CPC Meeting is Monday June 14, 2021. 7pm - 8pm EST

Zoom ID: 854 7547 0291 PW: 002060

At our monthly meeting in May 2021, the Committee discussed what was learned at a recent informal CPC/PI presentation by the respective Area 83 Chairs. We continue attempting to make connections with local professionals, including personal family physicians. CPC Toronto in conjunction with Accessibility and the 12 Step Committee are part of an ad-hoc committee learning how to bring information about AA to the Down Syndrome Community. There is a new need as noticeable "problem" drinking has been brought to the attention of the GTAI. CPC Chair Joe A gave a four minute presentation at Toronto Info AA Day on May 15, 2021. He highlighted some points from the CPC Workbook, including what AA Does and Doesn't Do. At the event, a member working in a union environment reached out to provide possible contact info for the CPC Committee.

Thank you, Joe A., CPC GTAI Chair

GRAPEVINE: Scott M. (Bloordale), Chairperson

Greetings friends! I'm alcoholic; a member of the Bloordale Group & my name is Scott. Hi! I have the honour & privilege to serve the fellowship as your GTAI Grapevine Committee chair. At our last GTA Committee meeting, last Tuesday, we had attendance from 4 Districts & our Area Grapevine chair. The Committee is still looking for a Secretary so our interim Secretary, John M., with District 18, can move on with his other District duties.

If you missed our recent Information AA Day, you missed the announcement of the new literature catalogue with book cover photos on the aatoronto.org website. Following the AAWS books are the Grapevine books. Please take a peak. With all of you here tonight, I'm going to rely on you to share the "Good News" of Grapevine. Starting tomorrow (May 26th) until June 10th, as part of the celebration of AA turning 86, access to Grapevine will be FREE! Please let everyone know at every meeting you attend that You'll all be able to read stories from current and past issues, access our sobriety calculator, read the daily quote, learn how you can contribute your story, and find ways to serve others using Grapevine and La Viña magazines. The audio to Grapevine's and La Viña's stories will be available as well, so people can listen to the stories... if they like. Remember it's free, so please pass this along. If we create more interest in Grapevine, it will be around for a long time helping others. The stories are just like those in the back of the Big Book, but current. Please check the aagrapevine.org or aalavina.org websites for more info.

As well, Grapevine is looking for a new Editor and if interested feel free to contact them through the website. The deadline to submit resumes is June 16th. The minimum sobriety requirement is 10 years.

The upcoming June issue will have a special section on Dating & Relationships.

Please contact me through the email: grapevine@aatoronto.org for any of the sales above or further inquiries.

Yours, in love & service, Scott M. Grapevine Committee Chair

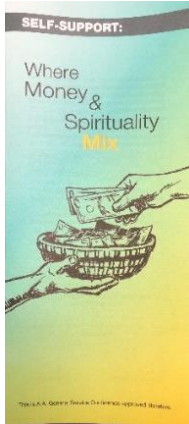
PUBLIC INFORMATION: No report.

SELF SUPPORT: Gord H. (Bloordale), Operating Committee Liaison, and David T. (Welcome), Acting Chairperson

- Meeting was opened at 7:00 PM with a Moment of Silence and the Serenity Prayer. 12 Traditions were read by Gord H Intergroup Liaison.
- Attendance: Marrey P D06, John L D12, Christy F DCM D18, Ann S D22, Bert J D22, Gord H Intergroup Liaison, Bev H Area 83 Self-Support Chair, David T D10 Facilitator
- David mentioned the following general items:
 - a. David gave a brief update on Intergroup Finances – Keeping Head above water, Literature purchases are down so still need group contributions to continue being sent

Committee Members - Discussion

- Gord H said it was important during Covid to keep contributions coming in, restated about using suggestions in F-3 Self Support Pamphlet when deciding on split of excess funds
- Bev H mentioned she is having a monthly Self-Support Meeting for all District Chairs on the 1st Thursday of each month. She will send out invites to all the District Chairs she has on the mailing list for Area 83
- Marrey P suggested inviting Alternate DCMs to attend this meeting in place of missing chairs. District has no Chair yet but she is including information in her ADCM report to the district pushing for GSRs to join committees to find out what they do.
- Christy F D18 No chair yet, sending info to GSRs on Self-Support; District dedicating time to District Committees to explain their function
- John L D12 Trying to impress groups on importance of Self-Support; has advised Groups that GTA Intergroup does not/cannot send donations to GSO.
- Bert J D22 Ann is now our Alternate Self-Support Chair and looking forward to talking on Self-Support
- David T D10 briefly reported on District 10 and encouraging GSRs to join committees as volunteers to help out the committees.



Question on Prudent Reserve: Districts are unsure of how much should be in the prudent reserve. One district helps GSRs who do not have the funds to attend the assemblies. David emphasized the Finance Guideline gives information as well as self-support pamphlet. Guideline suggests 1 month to 1 year expenses for Intergroups. Most groups use the 1 – 3 month guideline.

Intergroup Sub-Committee Chair – The Operating Committee appoints the Sub-Committee Chair usually on the recommendation of the Sub-Committee. The procedures does not specifically state that the chair must be a District Chair as well! **The next meeting will be the 27th of May 2021.**

TREATMENT: Sean L. (Steps to Serenity), Chairperson

We held our March meeting on Thursday May 20, 2021 at 730pm via Zoom. We had four Districts attend and a fifth district submit written updates.

We received a BTG request which was forwarded to Marrey in District 6. CAMH's CAITS program is interested in doing a weekday daytime meeting via Zoom, so we have connected the District 12 rep with the Centre. District 6 is adding a daytime Withdrawal Management Services meeting in June on Fridays in the early afternoon. Also, the Maxwell Meighen Centre is adding a Zoom meeting Thursdays from 7-8pm.

Districts 18 and 22 are currently working on action plans for reaching out to treatment facilities in their districts.

Lastly, the Committee is looking for a new Secretary. So please, if you would like to do some Service with a capital S, please come on out.

RECEPTION: Marvyn W. (Mississauga), Operating Committee Vice-Chair

Marvyn reported that there were 51 Reps, 4 Alternates, 8 OC Members, 9 Subcommittee Chairs, 4 District Liaisons, and 3 Visitors for a total attendance of 80 members.

AREA 83 REPORT: James O. (GSM), Alternate Delegate

- On May 29, there will be three GSO Video Presentations. Please visit: <https://area83aa.org/events>
- Sat. June 5 is the Area Committee Meeting; visitors welcome! Visit area83aa.org for more info

- Delegate's Report from the General Service Conference: if you missed the recent Information AA Day, you can catch the Delegate's Report at the Ottawa Information Day (June 12) and also on June 19 at another Area event.
<https://area83aa.org/events>
- **Area 83 Website:** There has been discussion/planning on featuring our four Area Intergroup offices (Oshawa/Lakeshore, Peterborough, GTAI, and Ottawa) on the site. Please contact James with any ideas:
alt.delegate@area83aa.org

After this report, Nina thanked James "for being a part of the mission of Unity and working together. This makes me very happy!"

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The following two (2) Notice of Motions were brought to the Floor under 'New Business' at the April General Meeting, and presented as Motions this evening, with subsequent discussions and a vote.

Introduction: For purposes of clarity (and acknowledging the fact that some members were not present last month, and also the fact that Nina received many email queries from members on the Motions), Nina read out the two Motions to Floor members.

She continued (regarding the second Motion): "It was mentioned last month that 'Stage 3' is no longer referred to as 'Stage 3'. Since it was brought to our attention, we were going to update this; however, given that there is a motion on the Floor, we left it as is. If the [second] motion gets declined this evening, we will be removing the "As AA meetings transition back to in-person format as permitted in Stage 3 of Ontario's reopening plan" part."

Nina screen-shared the aatoronto.org Home Page, outlining where the two Motions refer to.

Nina shared that "I just want everyone to understand that this motion is not about an opinion; whether we agree that there should be in-person meetings or Zoom meetings only. This is really an operational task. However, there has been a motion brought to the Floor. I just want to point out a few things that the Intergroup is responsible for, and it is the Operating Committee's duty to make sure that such things are followed. We are information providers; we are just here to inform accordingly, as we are told [by the membership] or as we know best."

She then shared the following information:

GTA Intergroup's Function and Responsibility

- *Intergroup exists to serve the AA members and groups of the GTA.*
- *Intergroup has a responsibility to help with providing information to our members that would help them make an informed decision.*
- *The Intergroup website (aatoronto.org) is run on behalf of the GTA groups. Groups provide the meeting information and its content is the group's responsibility. On the GTA Intergroup website meeting listings reads as follows:*

Important Information About This Directory

As embodied in the 4th Tradition, the information and operation of an AA Group resides with the group conscience of its members. While hopefully every AA Group adheres to the guiding principles of the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions, **the GTA Intergroup neither monitors nor oversees the activities or practice of any AA Group** [emphasis added]. Groups and meetings listed in this directory appear at their own request. A directory listing does not constitute or imply approval or endorsement of any approach to, or practice of, the AA program. If you do not feel comfortable at a particular meeting you are completely free to explore until you feel that you belong.

Nina continued: "it was brought to our attention that the government does not consider Alcoholics Anonymous as an essential service." She also screen-shared the Ontario essential service guidelines that are in place:

Ontario



Stay at home except for essential travel and follow the **restrictions and public health measures**.

COVID-19 public health measures and advice

Find out about the latest public health measures, advice and restrictions in your area as we continue to respond to COVID-19. Stay home, stay safe, save lives.

Related

[Full list of public health measures, restrictions and essential businesses](#)



COVID-19: enhanced public health and workplace safety measures

Learn about the declaration of emergency and province-wide Stay-at-Home order to interrupt transmission of COVID-19.

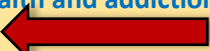
Organized public events and social gatherings

Events and gatherings

Meeting or event spaces

Only permitted to open for:

- child care centres and authorized recreational and skill building programs (as described in the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*)
- court services
- government services
- **mental health and addictions support services (for example, Alcoholics Anonymous), permitted to a maximum of 10 people**
- social services
- collective bargaining, so long as more than ten people are permitted to occupy the rented space



Contact information recording required, with the exception of court services.

Motion: To remove the following information from the GTA Intergroup Website Homepage www.aatoronto.org under the heading 'Update on COVID-19 (Coronavirus)' – "NOTE: AA is considered an essential service under Government of Ontario essential services guidelines." For provincial regulations [click here](#)

Notice of Motion moved by Andy C. (Thornhill) and seconded by Don H. (Living Sober).

Nina invited Andy C. (Thornhill), the Rep who moved the Motion, to address Floor members.

Andy shared: "My issue with the notification on the aatoronto.org Home Page is not whether or not it's fact; it's not really if AA is considered an essential service. Nor is it whether groups have the power to do whatever they want under the 4th Tradition. There are many facts about COVID-19 that have not surfaced on the aatoronto.org site. This is one of many facts that has been 'cherry-picked' and surfaced to the top. As an example, the lockdown status in various parts of

the GTA regions that are intended to caution people is not a fact that surfaced at the aatoronto.org level. The cautions of our public health officials and medical experts about poorly-ventilated spaces like churches (even with masks, screening, and social distancing) constitutes super-starter events which leads to infection, hospitalization, and death.”

“The fact that aatoronto.org has chosen this one fact – that calls out in-person AA meetings as an essential service (and placed it very boldly on the Home Page) – in my opinion and in the opinion of the Thornhill Group send out the message that it’s okay to go to in-person meetings...and it is not. In fact, it is dangerous. I have anecdotal evidence of people in our group who have chosen in-person meetings at the height of the second wave. They attended directly because of the [aatoronto.org](#) Home Page, which said that it was an essential service. I don’t have any science behind this, but it’s entirely likely that those members that had attended those meetings contributed to the spread of the virus, as our public health officials said that they would.”

“My question is: why don’t we follow the lead of World Services, who on their [aa.org](#) site simply invite people to download the [meeting] app without posing any prejudicial messages about attending in-person meetings, or where things are considered to be essential? I don’t think it’s about whether we should meet in person; I think it’s a question about the messaging under our Twelfth Tradition, which says ‘practice these principles in all our affairs’, and under one of our Legacies, which is around recovery and unity. I think we have a greater responsibility as citizens at large than we do as members of AA to protect the well-being of our citizens.”

A lengthy discussion ensued among Floor members. After the discussion, a voting poll was launched.

Voting Results: 25.9% for the Motion; 68.5% against the Motion; and 5.6% abstaining. **Motion Fails.**

Motion: To remove the following information from the GTA Intergroup Website Homepage [www.aatoronto.org](#) (paragraph located under blue meeting icon) – “As AA meetings transition back to in-person format as permitted in Stage 3 of Ontario’s Reopening Plan” from the following paragraph ‘As AA meetings transition back to in-person format as permitted in Stage 3 of Ontario’s Reopening Plan, every AA Group should be familiar with and follow all government guidelines related to COVID-19. These guidelines can be found here <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/>’.

Notice of Motion moved by Andy C. (Thornhill) and seconded by Gary P. (Leslie).

Nina invited Andy C. (Thornhill), the Rep who moved the Motion, to address Floor members.

Andy shared: “There’s all kinds of things wrong with this statement; the first of which is that AA doesn’t transition back to in-person formats monolithically. It does it one group at a time. That very first clause doesn’t make any sense at all. The information – both in terms of Stage 3 and in terms of where we are at in stages – is outdated. It’s also not monolithic, because that’s going to change depending on which region we live in. GTA Intergroup represent groups that span multiple regions. From the remark in the last Intergroup meeting, GTA Intergroup doesn’t have the wherewithal to stay on top of every change that’s being announced in terms of stages. To put any information at all in terms of what stage we are in, what stage we are road-mapped for, or what will be expected to happen in the near future doesn’t make any sense. I would suggest that this entire paragraph be removed. I’d also like to say that – pursuant to one of the remarks during the previous motion – I’m not here to represent my own opinion. I’m here to represent the voice of the Thornhill Group.”

A lengthy discussion ensued among Floor members.

Sharon C. (St. Clements): “In discussing these Motions with my home group, a suggestion was made to give alternative wording to this [second] motion. It’s very, very simple. Rather than the words ‘In Stage 3’ (as it is outdated) my group has suggested that the motion be re-worded to ‘As AA meetings transition back to in-person format, as permitted by the applicable phase of Ontario’s Reopening Plan’.”

Nina: “I’m going to repeat this one more time: if it wasn’t for this motion being on the Floor, we would have already removed the words ‘Stage 3’. Everything else would stay the same.”

After the discussion, a voting poll was launched.

Voting Results: 38% for the Motion; 46% against the Motion; and 16% abstaining. **Motion Fails.**

The Communications Committee/webmaster updated the wording on this paragraph on the website Home Page, as was originally intended (previous to the Motion brought to the Floor). On the Home Page, it now reads as follows:



Every AA Group should become familiar with and follow all government guidelines related to COVID-19. These guidelines can be found here <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/>

Service Positions Available – Volunteers Needed!

- **Finance Committee Member needed**

The sobriety requirement for the Finance Committee member position: 5 years of continuous sobriety, and some business/accounting background preferred. Please send service resumes to admin@aatoronto.org

- **One (1) Operating Committee Member needed**

Members of the OC must have a minimum of two years of sobriety.

Monthly Responsibilities as an OC Member:

- Attends the monthly Operating Committee Meeting (held on the Wednesday *before* the monthly General Meeting)
- Attends at least one monthly (or bi-monthly) subcommittee meeting, as part of OC Liaison duties
- Attends the monthly General Meeting

Any member interested in this service position can email the Operating Committee Chair at oc.chair@aatoronto.org

- **Better Times Editor needed**

Requirements for this service position: 2 years of continuous sobriety, editing/writing experience is appreciated, graphic design experience is helpful (but a creative interest can be developed), and be familiar and comfortable with a suitable desktop publishing program (i.e. Adobe Illustrator or Spark, Microsoft Publisher, Photoshop, etc.). For more information or to volunteer, please email bettertimes@aatoronto.org

- **GTAI Webmaster needed (Communications Committee)** Please email cc.chair@aatoronto.org for more information

- **Communications Committee Alternate Secretary needed**

Requirements for this service position: 1 year of sobriety, good writing skills, knowledge on the use of computers for word processing/email for written correspondence, and knowledge of the Better Times newsletter and GTAI website. Further assets: knowledge of the use of computers for copy editing, internet browsing for research and for graphics design. Monthly time commitment: 12 hours (including meetings). For more information or to volunteer, please email cc.chair@aatoronto.org

- **Treatment Committee Secretary needed** Please email treatment@aatoronto.org for more information

- **Self-Support Committee Chairperson needed**

Two years of continuous sobriety, and some service experience preferred. Email self-support.liaison@aatoronto.org for more information.

- **IT Volunteers needed**

Volunteers are needed to an IT Subcommittee, whose mandate encompasses researching and recommending cost-effective IT solutions for the Intergroup Office. Qualifications for this subcommittee include: IT Professionals(s) with degrees in computer science, college diplomas in computer science, and/or various highly technical certifications or equivalent (such as A+, CCNP, CCIE, MCSE, CISSP, AWS, Linux).

The committee should be primarily composed of IT Professionals with a minimum 4 to 5 years of work experience in one of the following: field systems administration, AWS, VOIP, Linux, Apache, PHP, Database (MySQL MSSQL), network

administration, desktop computer technician, web application development, information security, IT project management. For further information, please contact Michael W. (IT Subcommittee Chair) it.chair@aatoronto.org

- **Winter Season Virtual Alkathon 2021 –Chairperson needed**

A Chairperson is needed to form a committee for the 2021 Event, to be held on December 24-25 and December 31 – January 1st. Qualifications for the position of Chairperson include: 2 years of sobriety; be available Dec.24, 25, 31 and Jan.1; and enjoy working on a collaborative team environment. Serving as a Past Member of the Winter Season Open House/Alkathon Event would be an asset. Send Resumes to: oc.chair@aatoronto.org **Deadline** for resumes: July 31.

NEW BUSINESS

Angela O. (Mount Royal-York): “My group had a discussion as a result of these two motions that we just considered. The general consensus was that there should be a mechanism that allows us to update the website as/when needed, without having the Intergroup Floor pass motions on what needed to be changed. So, the members of my home group voted in favour of the following motion:”

Motion made by Angela O. (Mount Royal-York) to have someone responsible [webmaster] for keeping the website up to date during COVID.

Nina shared the following information: “This is an operational task, absolutely. It is the webmaster who keeps things updated on our website. It’s the Communications Committee, and the Operating Committee when necessary, that work hand-in-hand to keep the website as up to date as possible with current information. Keep in mind that we are all volunteers. This concern was brought to our attention through the website. We said that we would not take it down. Eight or nine emails were made back and forth [about this concern]. The matter was brought to the Operating Committee as a courtesy. It was also declined at the Operating Committee level. If a member of a group chooses to bring a motion forward, we cannot deny a motion. It was subsequently brought to the Floor for a vote.”

After a brief discussion from a few Floor members, **Angela retracted the above motion** as she accepted Nina’s explanation.

CHAIRPERSON’S CLOSING REMARKS

Nina thanked everyone for their participation and patience this evening.

A Motion to adjourn was moved by Mike F. (Open Hands) and seconded by Christa E. (Beaches). The Motion was carried. The meeting adjourned with the Responsibility Declaration.

NEXT GENERAL MEETING: An online meeting via Zoom will be held on **Tuesday, June 29, 2021** at 8 p.m.