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**Minutes from 11/22/25: amended again!**

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From Martina Nicholson <martina.nicholson@gmail.com>

Date Mon 11/24/2025 11:09 AM

To Angel B <manyvoices1journeyafg@gmail.com>; Kathleen Haskell <khaskell217@gmail.com>

Please confirm this is ok with what you have just told me— that Substantial Unanimity will be considered to be 67%.

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Kathleen Haskell <khaskell217@gmail.com>

**Subject: Re: Minutes from today, 11/22/25: amended**

**Date:** November 24, 2025 at 11:01:12 AM PST

**To:** Martina Nicholson <martina.nicholson@gmail.com>, "district53@serenitysys.com" <district53@serenitysys.com>

Hi Martina,

Thank you. The substantial unanimity was voted and approved for 67%.

Thank you,  
Kathleen H

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**Second amendment of the minutes:**

The District 53 meeting was conducted by our District leader, Angel B.

In attendance were:

Martina N. ( GR from 3 legacies ) : group Secretary

Kathleen Haskell (GR from A Serenity Place)

Regrets were accepted from Arlene (Utah)

and Audrey (Oregon)

and Steve R (treasurer)

The meeting was opened with the AL-Anon declaration and Serenity prayer  
October minutes were accepted

As District Rep, Angel B noted that the biggest challenge all over the world, in the GEA, is to get people to volunteer for service. Many positions have gone unfilled, and every district is hampered by an inability to get most of the GRs to attend meetings reliably.

The meeting of the AREA, GEA, last week was attended by Kathleen H., who gave a report:

important issues were the vote for what numerical value will constitute SUBSTANTIAL UNANIMITY.

KBDM (Knowledge-based-decision-making) process was accepted by vote

GEA WSC point 5 was legal language for duties of delegate officers' duties, which also was accepted by vote,

point 6 was How does the GEA move forward in appointing coordinators and creating committees?— this is ongoing.

GEA buget was accepted by vote, and seemed well done,

The new treasurer was voted on, and is Jerry

The PROCESS of the discussion and voting at the GEA was this:

a concept was presented to the room of 200 GRs. Then people went to break out rooms, to discuss it. Questions were asked and opinions shared.

The people were then brought back to the main room, for the next part. Each break-out group presented their discussion and consensus.

Then there was a vote by all the GRs.

Kathleen felt that this was a good method for trying to allow discussion and to find consensus, and to then vote. All votes were brought to the floor by GRs, not the officers.

Our officers are:

Burt P, delegate

Tom L, alternate delegate

and Brenda, Chair

They were all helpful, and Brenda especially. Nothing seemed forced or out of line.

The Treasurer's report was voted on and accepted. Kathleen said it was clear and reasonable, and well-presented.

The vote for Substantial Unamity was for 67%.

We had an internal discussion in our group today about this PROCESS. We understand that the GEA has to operate in cyberspace, and that it limits the way we can come to consensus. Kathleen felt that the structure was good.

I added that there is historical precedence about forming governmental processes and frameworks, and trying to come to consensus. In the beginning, it would take centuries to arrive at consensus, and often war and bloodshed.

In AL-Anon, since the publication of "Many Voices, One Journey", we have understood that the "getting to substantial unanimity" took about 10 years, in regard to purchasing the office in Virginia Beach. This was an amazing achievement! Al-Anon has always worked by consensus, and the desire for substantial unanimity. We have never put a priority on efficiency. But creating a world-wide organization built on servant leadership which is entirely voluntary has been hard.

We freely admit that for most of us, we came in to Al-Anon in terrible distress, and for most of us, it took several years until we were stable enough and strong enough to participate in anything beyond the group level. The geographical areas, and especially the Area Delegates, are the result of 50 or more years of hard work to create viable groups, districts and areas. Many of our best trusted servants have been in the organization for over 25 years. Now we are expanding rapidly by zoom into other languages and cultures; but the fundamental link is still that we love an alcoholic. We must take into account ongoing crises in our personal lives, as well as the vicissitudes of things like the pandemic, or travel restrictions, and language barriers.

Given this, it seems that the structure of the GEA meeting was a success.

Kathleen gave a valuable response of educated minority opinion from Steve R. ( our treasurer) who was not able to attend today. He sent a response to the

process, noting that it seemed more about efficiency, and curtailed some discussion. We acknowledge this, and see it as a necessary evil in trying to build a coherent GEA. Most likely, as the groups get stronger, and the feedback loops are enhanced, we will be more able to have the kinds of discussion which are possible in face-to-face meetings, among well-known participants. For now, we are grateful that the GEA is trying to meet the need for an International AL-Anon presence and structure, and so efficiency seems needed.

Treasurer's report is deferred, as Steve R was unable to attend. We would also like to suggest a quarterly report, rather than monthly, for our treasurer. (Voted on unanimously, today)

Group reports:

ASP— Kathleen, no changes

3 legs— Martina, no changes. Note that we will have a group inventory in December and will suggest that we begin to have a treasurer and group funds, in order to donate to our District.

General issues: nothing new to add.

CAL:

Martina read the section "Why me?" in the book "Opening Our Hearts, Transforming our Losses" pages 128-129. This is a good reading on counteracting the long-time feeling of being a victim.

We closed with the Serenity Prayer and the AL-Anon Declaration.

Gratefully submitted,

Martina N.

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