The Maryland General Service Area Committee met virtually on October 17, 2020. The virtual doors opened at 8:45 a.m. for fellowship. Chairperson Lori M. opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. with the Serenity Prayer.

**SESSION ONE**

**Area Chair Opening Remarks:** Lori M. welcomed everyone to the virtual Area 29 Biennial Inventory Assembly meeting, reviewed the agenda, and the voting procedures for participation in the virtual meeting. Following no objections, the audio only of this meeting was being recording for the Archives and to ensure accuracy of the minutes. Jeanine W. is the new Area 29 Registrar. 49 members were attending the meeting at 9:00 a.m.

**Delegate’s Remarks:**  Cynthia T. stated that an email was provided to the Assembly on October 16, 2020, which included the following four documents for the review; Octobers Delegate Report, Services Provided By G.S.O/A.A.W.S (SM F-176), a letter from Greg T., General Manager explaining that the General Service Board has authorized a drawdown of $1.5 million from the Reserve Fund by A.A. World Services, Inc. to cover cash flow requirements in the 4th quarter of 2020, and a Questions and Answers document that was compelled after the August 15th “Financial Update”. Cynthia T. also stated that NERF, which was to be in June 2020 is rescheduled to be an Eastern United States and Canada virtual event for December 5, 2020 and NERAASA is going to be virtual in the end of February 2021. The NERAASA Committee is looking for help, contact Cynthia T. if interested.

**Secretary’s Report**: Craig T. provided a summary of the August 15, 2020 Area Assembly Minutes, which were transmitted to the Assembly by email on October 3, 2020.

***Motion to accept the Minutes was made by Charles L. and seconded by Trish L. The motion was carried unanimously.***

**Treasurer’s Report:** Terry P. reported as of September 30, 2020 Account balances are: Operating Account: $26,107.94. Special Savings for International Convention: $3,532.02. Savings Account: $9,998.18. We have additional assets of: Literature: $5,728.73 & Grapevine: $4,024.29

Revenue:

Group Contributions as of September 30 are $20,522.25. Other income (i.e. 7th Traditions basket, lunch donations, etc.) total $5475.21. Total Revenue $26,001.58 which is 45% of our budgeted revenue for 2020. At this time last year MGS had received 75% of the 2019 budgeted revenue.

Expenses:

Through September 29, we have paid out a total of $26,773.42 which is 36% of our budgeted expenses this year. At this time last year MGS had spent 75% of the 2019 budgeted expenses.

Maryland General Service has continued to work with our accounting company to complete our required registration with the state of Maryland as a charitable organization. This work has been completed, and along with the completion of our 2019 tax returns which includes accounting for the state convention, literature sales in addition to MGS contributions, our accounting costs are more than we budgeted for. For 2019 the accounting costs come to $4180.00. This has been invoiced and paid in full.

***Following Discussion, a Motion to accept the Treasurers Report was made by Birk S. and seconded by Charles L. The Motion was carried unanimously.***

**Election of Area 29 Candidate for Class B Trustee-at-Large:** A Third Legacy Procedure Election as described in the A.A. Service Manual (page S21-22) was facilitated by Bob C., Area 29, Panel 62 Past Delegate to elect an Area 29 Candidate for Class B Trustee-at-Large. Nancy B. reviewed the qualifications and responsibilities of a Class B Trustee-at-Large U.S. Two Area 29 Past Delegates made themselves available for the position: Morgan J., Panel 50 and Don B., Panel 68. The voting was conducted virtually by electronic polling, which is cast anonymously. Nancy B., Linda J., Lori M., and Jeanine W. assisted Bob C. in this process. There were 46 members eligible to vote. Don B. was elected as the Area 29 Candidate for Class B Trustee-at-Large U.S. with 69% of the votes on the first ballot.

**Break at 10:30 a.m. Meeting reconvened at 10:40 a.m. with 51 members on the meeting.**

***SESSION TWO***

**Old Business:**

**Maryland State Convention 2021:** Lori M., Area 29 Chair requested that David R., State Convention Chair provide an update concerning the 2021 State Convention to get a sense of the Area Assembly as to where they are with moving forward with an in-person State Convention to have an informed group conscience. David R. stated the following details concerning the 2021 State Convention. The 2021 State Convention Committee has negotiated and received a revised contract from the Clarion Inn Event Center on October 16th. The deadline to reserve the room block by signing the contract is November 7th. The deadline to cancel the convention without penalty is December 24th. The hotel’s Covid-19 clause allows us to cancel any time without penalty if governmental restrictions prevent us from using the facility at 100% capacity. The room block commitment is 170 rooms, and the Food and Beverage minimum commitment is $18,000.

Area 29 sponsors the convention. In the fiscal sense this means that any convention shortfall is underwritten by the Area. The Committee budgets to break even and return all seed money. The budget assumes that 600 people will register, and they will purchase 190 Saturday Banquet tickets and a total of 245 other meals Friday and Saturday. The primary financial commitment to the Clarion is a Food and Beverage guarantee of $18,000.  Meeting room costs are waived if all hotel room nights in the block are booked.  If 80%-99% are booked the meeting room cost will be $1,500. There is a sliding scale thereafter down to a point where if less than 40% of rooms are booked the cost would be $10,000. Expected other expenses totaling about $9,000 prior to the actual date. These are items such as flyer printing, Speaker travel, banners, etc. If only 80% of the budgeted registrations and meal purchases occur the loss would be $8,400. If only 60%, the loss would be $25,000.00 and much more disastrous after that.

The Area Assembly has authorized the State Convention Committee to plan and present the convention on June 25-27, 2021.  The Committee will proceed accordingly until such time as the Assembly acts to change that.  The operative principle is that of the First Tradition: “Our common welfare should come first.”  Covid-19 could present significant challenges to the well-being of our members and the financial success of the convention. Since it is impossible to know by December 24th that there will be no such challenges the State Convention Committee is asking for a “sense of the Area” at this sharing session.

Lori M. opened the session for questions and discussion based on the information that David R. provided, members past experiences with attending the MD State Convention, the GSO positions on not hosting large events prior to July 1, 2021, feedback from our Districts and Home Groups, and our personal thoughts and willingness to commit to attending the MD State Convention. Following a lengthy and informative discussion, Lori M. ask the following electronic poll question to get a sense of the room; “If you had to decide today, would you attend the Maryland State Convention in June 2021?” Results: 13% would attend, 69% would not attend, and 19% not sure.

***Terry P. made a motion, seconded by Kathleen W. to suspend regular business to conduct the Area 29 Biennial Inventory. The motion carried unanimously at 11:18 a.m. There were 41 members in the meeting.***

**Area 29 Biennial Inventory***:* Lori M., Area 29 Chair facilitated the virtual Area 29 Biennial Inventory, which took place the remainder of the day. The Assembly broke into three different virtual groups to discuss each of the three overarching inventory questions and their related sub questions which were designed as conversation starters. The Inventory questions where provided by email to the Assembly on October 15, 2020. Each breakout session ran for 25-30 minutes and the groups had a convener and a recording secretary, who reported their findings and recommendations to the Assembly. Followed their reports, the virtual meeting floor was opened for additional discussion before moving to the next question. The only meeting break was following the completion of the first question at 12:14 p.m. for lunch and the Assembly reconvened at 12:45 p.m. with 38 members in the meeting. Members were asked to consider what do we have as an Area and what might we do with that and what would we need to make improvement. Looking for both an aspirational and impactful discussion.

Craig T., Area 29 Secretary, will provide a summary of the findings and recommendations for each inventory questions.

***A motion to adjourn was made by Cynthia T. and seconded Beverly M. The Motion to close carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m. with 28 members attending.***

Respectfully submitted,

Craig T.

Area 29, Panel 70 Secretary