

Sacramento Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous

Welcome and Background Statement

Background

The American River Area Service Committee (ARASC) has discussed at various times over the past decade the idea of creating smaller Area Service Committees in order to better serve the groups in Sacramento and surrounding communities. The challenge has been that though footwork is done to look into alternative service structures, geographical boundaries and financial consequences of dividing the Area, moving from doing the footwork to taking action has not occurred.

It's easy to see why moving from footwork to action has not occurred previously. The American River Area is comprised of approximately 125 – 140 groups. On any given month, anywhere between 15 – 25 Group Service Representatives (GSRs) attend their first Area Service Committee meeting. With so many groups, and the constant turnover, it's difficult to make significant changes. New GSRs need to be brought up to speed on what's happened previously, slowing down the process. With such a large group, getting a consensus on what direction to take is time consuming. And some people may not want to divide the Area. With other Area business pressing, the energy necessary to divide the Area gets lost and the Area moves on, doing business as it always had.

ARASC meetings easily take up the five hours available to meet and review subcommittee reports, hold elections and act on motions brought before the Committee. Group support – the primary concern of any ASC, often gets slighted when requests for help with issues like childcare, court cards, relations with facilities and theft are met with impatience.

Area Guide to Service

The Guide to Local Services provides some guidance in this matter. Under Participation, it says, "If your ASC is trying to serve too many groups and committee meetings are so crowded they don't allow most GSRs an opportunity to participate, it may be time to consider dividing the area." Under Dividing Area Service Committees, it says "An especially large committee, on the other hand, may have plenty of money and manpower for direct service administration but be too large to accommodate the kind of sharing that its groups need to support one another." And finally, we must remember that as it says in this section, "Before getting into the mechanics of division, there's one more thing we must emphasize: Your groups aren't getting a divorce! It's the service apparatus you're dividing, not the fellowship. Even as you plan to divide your area, we encourage you to also take steps to maintain the unity of the NA fellowship in

your community. By scheduling regular joint speaker meetings, social events and workshops for all the groups formally served by the original ASC, you can substantially ease the trauma of an area division.”

Footwork

In the fall of 2006, members of meetings served by the ARASC started discussing what would be necessary to create a new Area. Materials previously created were reviewed. Members researched Area Guidelines available from NA Areas in Northern California as well as those available through NAWS to develop a framework of what decisions had to be made in order to create Guidelines that would serve as the foundation for the new Area.

Word of the efforts of these NA members spread through group business meetings and open forum at the ARASC. Guidelines were drafted and discussed at steering committee meetings held to discuss the forming of the new Area. Action Items were created to assign additional footwork to interested members.

- Where would the new Area hold their ASC meetings?
- We need a PO Box
- We need a bank account
- What are we going to do about literature?
- What meetings currently served by the ARASC want to join the new Area?

Though the initial desire was to start the new Area in January, at the December meeting it was obvious that more information was necessary, and that aiming for February made more sense. More input was sought. Representatives from the Northern California Regional Service Committee were invited to attend a business meeting about the new Area.

It was decided that starting in February was feasible, and made decisions through group consensus on when and where to hold the first ASC meeting for the new Area.

Working with the American River Area Service Committee

Motions were drafted at the working meetings for GSRs to take to the ARASC asking for start-up funds and literature for the new Area. We figured out what our expected expenses would be over the first few months and asked ourselves what would be a reasonable amount to ask for from the ARASC to help the new Area. Previously when the Sierra Foothills Area was split from the American River Area, they received \$1,800 in start-up funds from the ARASC.

A Motion was presented at the ARASC meeting February 2nd asking for \$1,500 in start-up funds and a motion requesting \$1,500 in literature. After much

discussion, the motion for start-up funds passed overwhelmingly. The second motion for literature was modified so that the ARASC would provide \$750 in literature from their inventory and \$750 in funds. This motion also passed overwhelmingly. During the meeting the question was asked about how many meetings were intending to join the new Area. Approximately 20 GSRs stood up signifying that their meeting intends to join the new Area.

We feel honored and humbled to be a part of the energy driving the creation of this new Area. We feel that this will help both the new Area and the American River Area better serve the groups associated with the Areas. We look forward to the growing pains that will inevitably arise as the new Area starts to function independent and jointly with the American River Area.

Our first ASC will be on Wednesday February 21st. We will be electing administrative committee members, including Regional Committee Members who will be attending the Northern California Regional Committee meeting in March.