

Redistricting Sharing Sessions

Session I - Northland A.A. Group

10/15/16

Key: **Q** = Question **A** = Answer **C** = Comment

Q: Will the more lucrative districts help the other districts that make less?

A: There is no plan for districts cross sharing financially. They will be independent in their funding as districts.

C: Division into five districts is a great idea.

Q: Is all the information in the handouts?

A: Yes, in fact, even more. Also available on the Intergroup (and District) websites.

C: Not in favor of this. This solution seems to be more beneficial for south Austin. This is a shortage of people in north Austin willing to be of service.

Q: How will we get people to participate?

A: Do not expect improved participation because you're redistricting.

C: The combined districts have the right to disband the current way of meeting. The current voting mechanism does not allow for determining how we zone.

C: The districts' GSRs elected the ad hoc committee to bring forth a proposal for redistricting because this is what they want.

C: What we came up with is a thing that might help; what could possibly work? Whatever happens is what is supposed to happen. We created the opportunity for more people to be of service.

C: If we split into five ways will we have enough money?

C: Change is never easy. (I'm) trusting that our higher power will bring us to right action.

C: Each district can choose their service committees. They don't have to have certain positions.

Q: What is the district's role and purpose? How is the money spent? Reasons for and against redistricting?

A: Districts are meant to ease communication, to carry the message to alcoholics who still suffer.

C: Found that she could learn a lot at the district level and cultivated her voice.

Q: Will the districts share positions if some are not filled by one district? If one district does not have money, what happens? Why five (districts), why not three?

A: The committee was asked to create this proposal; they are not campaigning for one way or the other.

A: There can be committee sharing. Also, the districts are going to be autonomous so not all of the details were hammered out.

A: Why not three? It just ended up that way, (with five districts). There were originally proposals with 3, 4, and 5. The three district proposal became four before we voted. Ultimately the 5 district version prevailed.

C: One fear is that the time of chaos will be detrimental.

C: Very concerned that some districts will not have enough money.

C: If a district goes dark it will be okay.

C: There are so many options for people who want to be involved. Districts do not fund parties.

C: Want to be sure that we have an informed community. Communicate with your GSR.

Redistricting Sharing Sessions

Session II - East Austin Group

10/27/16

C: Has experienced driving distances for two-hour meeting where GSRs don't have time to share. Has seen map of Manhattan broken up to districts. It's more manageable and makes sense.

C: District meetings have been frustrating with no time to share.

C: Presentation helped to understand redistricting. Is concerned that redistricting will cause other positions to go unfilled.

C: This has been an ongoing issue. Wonders how to send DCMs to Area assemblies and other financial ramifications.

C: Thank you for answering Why? This makes sense. I don't know a lot about service structure. Sounds like a problem that GSRs need to have time to share.

C: All of my concerns – we can't let our fears stop us from moving forward. If you want a better plan, figure it out! This took a lot of research, and we have a strong structure in our Area.

C: A good point about dark districts. It was a concern in dividing it up. Made sure each had strong participation to avoid dark districts as much as possible.

C: I've been in three different districts across the US, and they are all run differently. God makes the way for it to happen. Maybe this makes more people get involved – either way maybe all service positions will get to work together. This is all about Tradition Nine.

C: Districts don't need a lot of money. Current districts have a lot so they support DCMs, Alternate DCMs, and service committee chairs at Area. Not all groups have money to send their GSRs. All a district needs is enough to send the DCM to Area Assemblies. If the GSRs can communicate with their DCMs, their voices will be heard at Area. Area chairs will go anywhere in the Area to conduct workshops and support service committees. Their travel is at no expense to the groups or districts hosting them.

C: When the districts were laid out the committee was surprised how equal it will all be at the start.

C: The process has been exciting. My initial concern was participation, but I found that when people can get to know you they want to participate. Let them know what's available and help them know how to be a part of.

Redistricting Sharing Sessions

Session III - Lake Travis Serenity Group

10/30/16

Q: Do you have any examples of redistricting disasters, where redistricting failed?

A: No specific examples of districts that failed as a result of redistricting. Districts sometimes go dark, redistrict, and combine with other districts to meet their current needs. Redistricting is a means of dealing with growth.

Q: Will each district have its own officers, Secretary, Treasurer, etc.?

A: Yes.

Q: What will happen if this does not pass?

A: The districts will stay the same.

Q: Why wait until January 2018 to implement the new districts?

A: The current two-year panel runs through 2017. This would keep our districts in synch with the other districts, plus give the new districts time during 2017 to hold elections, and get set up.

Q: What will be the fate of the existing 501(c)(3)?

A: That will have to be decided either by this panel, or by the new districts. Each district will have to decide if it wants or needs to have this type of tax exempt status.

C: Service committees – each district does not have to have all the committees. Some officer duties can be combined, e.g., Secretary/Registrar. It's also possible that a committee such as Archives could be shared by all districts.

C: Service opportunities will be filled somehow.

C: The purpose of the ad hoc committee was to look into redistricting.

Q: Is there a quorum for this vote?

A: No.

C: Groups can choose to participate in another district.

Q: Is there a power trip or personality behind redistricting?

A: No. (See presentation for reasons.)

Q: What if districts can't afford to send their reps to conferences?

A: People (God) will make it work. Area committee chairs and officers are eager to come to districts and groups for workshops. They receive Area support to come when invited.

Redistricting Sharing Sessions

Session IV – Keep First Things First

11/13/16

Q: Can we fill the officer positions for five districts?

A: People step up when asked in AA. We do not need a full standing committee for all five districts. It's up to the districts to decide what districts they need. Trusting God and build rapport with the groups.

C: The idea of smaller districts being more efficient. San Antonio has 93 groups. Service committee work is not in all districts.

Q: Has DCM ever complained about being able to get to all groups?

A: (Past DCM) I have found it overwhelming, running out of time, especially if I'm working my program. Service committee work as we have it now is stretched even more.

C: Each group, district, and area is autonomous. What will be done with our current archives? We need to ask ourselves what can we do to better be of service.

C: There can be 120 groups per district. Concerned about dark districts.

C: This is not about vote for this or that, rather what is best for A.A. in Austin. Getting people involved is my responsibility.

Q: Is redistricting the only thing we are voting on?

A: Yes.

C: The districts are autonomous and have their own rules or guidelines.

Q: What is the current district balance?

A: Approximately \$2,500.

Q: What is a dark district/group?

A: The term "Dark" refers to a lack of representation. In the case of a district there is no DCM, or no GSR for a group.

Q: Is it 2/3 of the groups that return ballots, in order to pass?

A: Yes.

Q: Where does minority opinion come in?

A: The sharing sessions, group and district meetings are for all opinions to be expressed during this process. The voting procedure we are using comes from the Service Manual.

C: The word "if" bites us in the butt time and time again. 3B & 3C are too big. This proposal is not set in concrete.

Q: Is there a quorum?

A: No.

Q: Have you addressed other possible solutions?

A: Yes, past panels have made changes to district meeting format to make more time for GSRs. Considered changing meeting duration, eliminated some elements of the meetings, and restricted sharing time to 3 minutes in an effort to get business done.

Q: How long have the vacant positions been open?

A: One month.

Q: What if there is not enough money to send people to Area assemblies?

A: There are many options to overcome financial limitations. Many districts and groups share expenses, rides and accommodations. Area officers and committees are supported to come to districts to conduct workshops throughout Area 68.

Redistricting Sharing Sessions

Session V – Bridge to Shore

11/20/16

Q: How is it done at other districts?

A: The committee asked for sharing from other Area delegates. There were many ways that districts and cities address their problems. All had difficulties regardless of what methods were used. Two things were apparent; districts, like groups are autonomous, and in large cities, communication between districts is vital. Some cities' district service committees cooperate directly (San Antonio, Ft. Worth); others act independently, (Denver, Albuquerque, Dallas). It's up to the districts

C: The committee suggested that the DCMs be the point of communication at first, and that they meet regularly. It was also suggested that there should be some form of annual Unity Day to foster citywide cooperation.

C: Heard rumblings that this (redistricting) was driven by personalities wanting to have more positions.

C: Concerned that more districts is the best solution.

Q: Does making districts smaller improve communication?

A: Not necessarily. It does make it easier.

Q: Regarding other options, can one district just break away?

A: Yes.

Q: Do the DCMs support this proposal?

A: One is opposed, one undecided.

Q: Have we looked at other solutions?

A: We have tried other solutions in past years. However, this ad hoc committee was asked to only look at redistricting.

Q: How many groups attend district meetings?

A: We averaged 24 (out of 84) groups per meeting during the four-year period we researched.