

Area 21 December assembly 12/14/2025 summary.

My remarks regarding changing the prudent reserve (summarized from transcript with chat gpt).

I expressed concern about declining contributions to Area 21 since 2017 and reliance on unpredictable outside funds. I believe the area needs to be more responsible stewards of members' money, as many members don't understand what the area does or how spending supports the mission. A large portion of funds going to mileage reimbursements appears, to members as disconnected from carrying the message. I support keeping the prudent reserve at 50% of the proposed budget as a warning signal to reassess spending, emphasize transparency, and ensure funds are used prudently according to members' expectations. By demonstrating responsible, visible use of funds and making cost-saving efforts, they believe trust and contributions may increase.

(Keeping in mind the prudent reserve does not reset at the end of a year it represents approximately 6-month operating expenses if Area did not receive any further income.)

The Budget is approximately \$40,000

Before the assembly general fund balance of \$21,023.55

After the assembly, the general fund balance is \$19,432.94.

Additionally, there is a correction literature fund balance of \$3394.75

Area 21 Correction has literature funds available Mike could you please reach out to Ed H. And Jeff D. to get some literature for district 11

Contentious Line-item discussions: (summarized from transcript with chat gpt)

Laura The Public Information Chair requested **\$3,000**, a **\$1,500 reduction** from the previous year's budget. The funds would primarily support **area-wide online advertising**, a project to **place Big Books in libraries**, and **travel to area assemblies**.

Questions were raised about the **library project**, noting that many libraries already carry AA books. The PI Chair explained that libraries would be contacted in advance to avoid duplication and that Big Books are among the most stolen library items, making replacement support helpful.

Concerns were raised about **paid advertising**, given that **GSO provides free public service announcements** for radio and television. It was asked why paid advertising was necessary before exhausting free options. The PI Chair clarified that **online advertising is**

not provided by GSO, and paid placement is required to reach audiences beyond personal networks. Geographic targeting allows ads to reach underserved areas within the area.

Several members expressed concern that **the Area Facebook page and advertising were implemented without explicit Assembly approval**, raising questions about **traditions, anonymity, and group conscience**. Some felt they would have difficulty justifying these expenses to their districts and questioned whether following or liking the page could compromise anonymity.

The PI Chair responded that the Facebook page and advertising had been **reported at a prior assembly**, that she had **delegated authority** as an elected chair, and that she had consulted extensively with **area leadership, long-serving members, and GSO's Public Information desk**. Adjustments were made to limit public posting on the page, and following the page does not equate to identifying as an alcoholic. Online outreach was described as the **most effective current method** of public information, with all outreach methods involving costs.

Members asked for clarification on **where ads were targeted**, and the response was that advertising was conducted broadly across Area 21, primarily outside District 14, which already runs its own campaigns.

Others shared experience with **free radio PSAs**, noting long wait times and limited effectiveness, and acknowledged that some districts still pay for targeted advertising during high-risk periods, with prior approval.

Additional concerns emphasized the importance of **area-wide input**, suggesting that while consultation occurred, the **Assembly itself should have had a formal say**, particularly for new territory like social media.

The PI Chair confirmed that **free advertising avenues had been pursued**, but results were limited. The proposed budget breakdown was approximately **\$2,000 for advertising** and **\$1,000 for travel and other projects**.

Some members strongly supported the PI Chair, emphasizing that she was **requesting less funding than the previous year**, had not fully spent the prior budget, and had demonstrated prudence. They cautioned against discouraging service by over-scrutinizing trusted servants who are actively doing the work.

The discussion concluded with acknowledgment that **additional area input on social media use could be helpful going forward**, while also affirming **trust in the PI Chair's diligence, transparency, and consultation efforts**.

Proposed \$3,000 budget for PI was approved.

The Corrections Committee proposed maintaining its **\$7,500 budget**, the same as the previous year. The co-chair explained that recent **literature donations from District 19** and remaining funds from hosting the **2022 National Corrections Conference** have reduced immediate literature needs, though demand remains high across **24 of Area 21's 28 prisons**. Funds are also needed for **travel, workshops, and the National Corrections Conference**, which will be more costly next year.

Members questioned why the budget remains high given **unspent funds** and a separate **literature allocation** and asked about the role of **pink can contributions** and whether some prisons fund their own books. The committee responded that **many districts lack pink can funds**, literature costs are significant, and unspent funds partly reflect **unsubmitted travel expenses**.

Supporters emphasized that remaining funds are **still available for Corrections work**, including workshops and book distribution, and noted the need to plan for **future and unforeseen expenses**. The Assembly then proceeded to a vote on the proposed budget.

Proposed \$7,500 budget for Corrections was approved.