

P61 Area Meetings Task Force Report  
Interim Report  
July 25, 2022

**Task Force Topic:** Determine if making all future area meetings Hybrid (face to face with zoom option) is a viable option for Area 9 business meetings in Panel 64 and beyond.

**Task Force Members:** Chair: Katy M. (DR1), Bob C. (Technology Coordinator), Gretchen S. (Alt Delegate), Pat E. (DR6), Carmen (DR8)

**Background/Historical Info:** Use experience, current realities, and historical work as background. See Thought Force report for the historical background.

It was recommended from the thought force final report to assign a task force to the question and see more avenues to have Business meetings, than conventional hotel face to face meetings.

**Task Force Activities:** The Task Force has met several times via Zoom. We have discussed the following:

- 1) What our current contracts with the Hilton Altamonte Springs would allow in connection with hybrid Zoom meetings. Carmen talked to Linda K., the Area 9 hotel contract negotiator, to get her insight. Linda said that the way our contracts are right now, which cover area meetings in 2023 & 2024, we are required to book a certain number of rooms. If we don't have enough rooms booked for an event, the Area must pay penalties to the hotel. If we want to have hybrid Zoom meetings at the hotel, we will need to negotiate a new contract with a different structure to accommodate fewer booked rooms. It is possible to rent the meeting rooms instead of getting them free based on the number of rooms booked. It is also possible that equipment might be rented.
- 2) How the recent Southeast Regional Delegate Get Together (SERDGT) made use of the hybrid format. Gretchen was part of this event as a Zoom participant. She asked Lisa P. and Evelyn T., who both attended the event in person and were on the Task Force to make the hybrid meeting work. To do this they had to invent the process from scratch as this format had never been used at the SERDGT before. They discovered that the cost to rent equipment from the hotel in Puerto Rico was \$10,000. They decided to use and carry personal equipment to this event.

As a Zoom participant, Gretchen had a wonderful experience. She didn't feel as connected to the other attendees as she might have had she been there in person. However, she was not able to travel to Puerto Rico to attend in person.

Lisa's experience was frustrating and challenging. Her personal equipment, that she carried onto the plane when she travelled, weighed 50 pounds. There was no security in the meeting

room, so each time the meeting adjourned she would need to take the equipment to her hotel room. She said she would not do that again.

Evelyn's experience was very positive. She loves technology and believes this is the future of Al-Anon meetings. She couldn't participate like normal, but she still loved it.

**Things to do differently:**

- Equipment should be owned by the Area or rented. It is best not to use member's personal equipment.
- Wifi needs to be available and reliable.
- Roles of Zoom helpers could be better defined

**Equipment Needed:**

- A good computer
- A good camera
- USB cords of ample length
- Speakers
- Microphones
- HDMI cords
- Screen

- 3) What would it cost for a third party to facilitate hybrid Zoom meetings. We received a bid from American Audio Visual. Carmen reached out to the hotel and discovered that the Hilton Altamonte Springs can accommodate hybrid zoom meetings with their equipment. They have a minimum daily charge. They also have a daily charge if we use an outside vendor. All these details need to be compared and evaluated based on the Area's needs.

Topics we still need to consider are as follows:

- 1) What other technology is available to use for hybrid electronic meetings.
- 2) What is the best approach for Area 9 based on the cost, ease of use, and the Area's needs.

Our next Task Force meeting will be in September, after AWSC and Convention, when we will continue work on this subject.

Respectfully submitted by,  
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