

## **ARTICLE 1 - NAME**

The Name of this committee shall be the "Passaic County Area Service Committee of Narcotics Anonymous" (**PSASC**).

## **ARTICLE 2 - SERVICE AREA**

The service area shall include, but not limited to, Passaic County of New Jersey. A member group of the PCASC is defined as: Any group willing to be represented by a GSR at all regularly scheduled meetings and special sessions of the PCASC. Additionally, a group must meet the requirements of the definition of an "N.A. Group," (as defined in "A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous") and have met as an N.A. Group at least once since the last PCASC meeting.

## **ARTICLE 3 - PURPOSE**

The purpose of this committee shall be to support the needs of its member groups, and to serve as a link between the groups and the Northern New Jersey Regional Service Committee of Narcotics Anonymous (NNJRSC).

## **ARTICLE 4 - PARTICIPANTS (Members of the Committee)**

### **Section 1.0 (Types):**

This committee shall have two (2) types of participants: voting and non-voting. Individuals can not represent more than one group for any reason.

### **Section 1.1 (Voting Participants):**

The voting participants of the PCASC shall be the Group Service Representatives (GSR) of member group or the Group Service Representative Alternate (GSRA).

### **Section 1.2 (Non-Voting Participants):**

The non-voting participants of this Committee shall be the Officers of this Committee, Sub-Committee Chairpersons, Ad-Hoc Chairperson(s), or a group member representing his or her group in absence of a GSR/ GSRA to maintain voting privileges.

## **ARTICLE 5 - OBSERVERS**

Narcotics Anonymous members, not addressed elsewhere in these policies, will be considered observers. Only Narcotics Anonymous members will have the right to request the floor. The Facilitator is responsible for managing such requests.

## **ARTICLE 6 - ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND SUB-COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON**

### **Section 1.0 (Eligibility):**

Any member of Narcotics Anonymous is eligible for election to any PCASC Officer position or Sub-Committee Chair. It is suggested that NA members with applicable service experience, and abstinence requirements, fill these positions.

### **Section 1.1 (Officers):**

PCASC Officers of the Committee are the following: Facilitator, Assistant Facilitator, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Regional Committee Member, and Regional Committee Member Alternate.

### **Section 2 (When Officers & Subcommittee Chairs Are Elected):**

PCASC Officers and Sub-Committee Chairs should be elected at regularly scheduled ASC meetings. Assistant Facilitator should announce any vacancies.

### **Section 3 (When Term Begins):**

PCASC Officers and Sub-Committee general elections occur in March. These trusted servants begin their term immediately following the end of the April session. If Officer or Sub-committee chair position is vacant, elections can be held at any regularly scheduled ASC. Newly elected member will begin term at the following ASC meeting.

### **Section 4 (Resignation of Group Position):**

Upon election to a PCASC officer position or Sub-Committee chair position, the NA member should resign from any GSR or GSRA position as soon as practical.

### **Section 5 (Nominations):**

Any member of the PCASC may nominate a qualified individual for PCASC Officer or Sub-Committee Chairperson position.

## **ARTICLE 7 - APPROVED ELECTION PROCEDURE**

### **Section 1 (Selection of Candidates):**

Although PCASC uses consensus-based decision making, for elections use the below process for decision making.

- A. The Policy Sub-Committee Chairperson will read the requirements and the responsibilities of the office or service position.
- B. The floor is then opened to volunteers meeting the requirements as stated.
- C. The floor is opened to nominations of individuals who meet the requirements.
- D. All candidates must qualify by verbally stating their respective qualifications for the office or position.
- E. Questions from the floor may be directed to the candidates at the discretion of the Facilitator.

F. Clean Time requirements can be waived at the discretion of the PCASC.

## **Section 2 (Election Voting Procedure):**

PCASC Officers and Sub-Committee Chairpersons will be elected as follows:

- A. All candidates shall leave the assembly during discussion and vote.
- B. Discussion of candidate's qualifications takes place at the discretion of the Facilitator.
- C. The Facilitator will ask for any opposition.
  - 1. If there is opposition then discussion continues, per consensus procedure.
  - 2. If there is no opposition, then the candidate is elected.
  - 3. In the event of multiple qualified candidates, the Facilitator will request a vote by show of hands. If there is no majority vote, discussion will continue until either; one candidate receives majority vote, or Facilitator can provide deciding vote.

## **ARTICLE 8 – QUALIFICATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PCASC OFFICERS**

### **Section 1 (General):**

It is recommended that all PCASC Officers have a working knowledge of the Twelve (12) Steps and the Twelve (12) Traditions and Twelve (12) Concepts of Narcotics Anonymous. It is suggested that officers have familiarity with Robert's Rules of Order, Consensus Based Decision Making, or any other form of conducting business meetings. Committee officers should be elected by PCASC members. An officer should not serve more than two consecutive terms in each commitment. An officer may continue to fill that commitment after two terms, if vacant, until a successor is found.

### **Facilitator:**

#### **A. Qualifications:**

- 1. Minimum of (2) years continuous abstinence from drugs.
- 2. Term of the commitment is (1) Year or until the next election.

#### **B. Responsibilities:**

- 1. Presides over the monthly meetings of the PCASC.
- 2. Sets and follows the order of business for each ASC.
- 3. Conducts the meeting in a fair and impartial manner.
- 4. Recognizes members and facilitates efficient discussion.
- 5. Reads ideas and presents for discussion unless idea is out of order.
- 6. Limits executive body and sub-committee reports to 15 minutes, including discussion.
- 7. Decides if an idea is "out of order." (Subject to appeal by committee)

8. Reviews, distributes, and responds to correspondence for the PCASC. (i.e., Liability Insurance)
9. To be a co-signer of the Committee's bank account.
10. Accompanies the treasurer to the bank to make the night deposit after each ASC, if Assistant Facilitator is unavailable.
11. Signs all documents requiring the signature of an area trusted servant.
12. Appoints all Ad-Hoc committee chairpersons.
13. Casts the deciding vote in the event of a tie.
14. Serves as RCM/RCMA if both positions are vacant.

## **Assistant Facilitator:**

### **A. Qualifications:**

1. Minimum of (2) years continuous abstinence from drugs.
2. Term of the commitment is (1) Year or until the next election.

### **B. Responsibilities:**

1. Presides over the monthly meetings of the PCASC, in absence of Facilitator.
2. Attends all sub-committee meetings as a non-voting member.
3. Acts as Chairperson of any sub-committee in the event of vacancy.
4. Collects written sub-committee and group reports.
5. Prioritizes and reads new business ideas.
6. Announces all vacancies or upcoming elections of PCASC Officer positions and sub-committee Chairperson positions.
7. Accompanies the treasurer to the bank to make the night deposit after each ASC.
8. To be first alternate for: signatory on PCASC bank account, PO Box key, Literature cabinet combination code, and Bank deposit box key.
9. In the absence of any executive position or the alternate, assume the responsibilities of that position for that ASC.

## **Secretary:**

### **A. Qualifications:**

1. Minimum of (2) years continuous abstinence from drugs.
2. Term of the commitment is (1) Year or until the next election.

### **B. Responsibilities:**

1. Keeps the minutes of each PCASC meeting.

- a. Keeps a detailed electronic record of PCASC business meetings.
  - b. Minutes and records will be made available to NA members upon request.
2. Maintains official membership list of all PCASC member groups.
  - a. Retains all phone numbers and email addresses of subcommittee chairpersons and executive body members.
3. Communicates all PCASC correspondence to the committee in a timely manner. (suggested 1 Week prior to Area Business Meeting)
4. Retains all PCASC reports and minutes in committee's archives.
5. Presides over the meeting, in the absence of the Facilitator, Assistant Facilitator, and RCM.
6. Provides Officers, Committees, and Delegates with any documents required for performance of their duties.
7. Notifies the necessary participants, by email, of any upcoming special session or JAC meeting of the PCASC.
8. To be a co-signer of the Committee bank accounts.
9. Takes roll call of all executive committee officers, subcommittee chairpersons, and member groups of the PCASC, establishing whether quorum has been met.
10. Takes on responsibilities of Treasurer, in the event of Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer's absence.
11. To have the key to the 24-hour P.O. Box and check regularly.

## **Treasurer:**

### **A. Qualifications:**

1. Minimum of (2) years continuous abstinence from drugs.
2. Must have a legal source of income.
3. Term of the commitment is (1) Year or until the next election.

### **B. Responsibilities:**

1. Maintains all PCASC funds.
  - a. Must deposit funds into the PCASC bank account within 48 hours of area service unless Monday is a holiday.
2. To be the primary signatory on PCASC bank account.
3. Provides a report of all receipts, disbursements, and checks cashed from the previous (2) months at every area Business Meeting.
  - a. Must provide a digital copy of the PCASC bank statement (with sensitive information blacked out) to executive committee, available to members at request.

4. Disburses funds in accordance with committee decisions and retains all receipts for funds expended.
5. Keeps all current and past financial records of the PCASC.
6. Holds night deposit key at our bank on Route 23 between Butler and Wayne.

## **Regional Committee Member (RCM):**

### **A. Qualifications:**

1. Minimum of (2) years continuous abstinence from drugs.
2. Term of the commitment is (1) Year or until the next election.
3. **Recommended:** Service experience at the regional level of Narcotics Anonymous.

### **B. Responsibilities:**

1. Attends all Northern New Jersey Regional Service Committee (NNJRSC) meetings and Learning Days (Including MARLCNA).
2. Represents the PCASC in the decision-making process at NNJRSC.
  - a. Uses their judgement when voting on matters the PCASC has not expressed its group conscience on prior to NNJRSC meeting.
3. Presides over the area service meeting in the absence of the Facilitator or Assistant Facilitator.
4. Makes an oral and written report at each PCASC and NNJRSC meetings.
5. Keeps PCASC in touch with neighboring areas of NA and NNJRSC.
6. Provides receipts for all expenses, pre-approved in budget by PCASC, for re-imbursement of expenses needed to fulfill duties.
7. To be second alternate signatory on PCASC bank account.
8. Attends all PCASC regular sessions, Special sessions, and JAC meetings.
9. Assists PCASC members with understating motions and agendas of the Conference Agenda Report (CAR).
10. Collects the votes from the groups on CAR motions and vote's according to the area's conscience at NNJRSC.
11. Corrects and updates the New Jersey Website and NAWs website making sure they are updated prior to next printing. (In the absence of a website sub-committee chairperson)

## **Regional Committee Member Alternate (RCMA):**

### **A. Qualifications:**

1. Minimum of (1) year continuous abstinence from drugs.
2. Term of the commitment is (1) Year or until the next election.

3. **Recommended:** RCMA train to move into the RCM position after the RCM has completed their term.

**B. Responsibilities:**

1. Serves as the RCM in the absence of the RCM.
2. Attends each NNJRSC meeting.
3. Attends each PCASC meeting.

**Assistant Treasurer:**

**A. Qualifications:**

1. Minimum of (2) year continuous abstinence from drugs.
2. Must have a legal source of income.
3. Term of the commitment is (1) Year or until the next election.

**B. Responsibilities:**

1. Serves as the treasurer in the absence of the treasurer.
2. Attends each PCASC meeting.
3. Is the alternate signatory on the bank account, in absence of a treasurer.

**Assistant Secretary:**

**A. Qualifications:**

1. Minimum of (1) year continuous abstinence from drugs.
2. Term of the commitment is (1) Year or until the next election.

**B. Responsibilities:**

1. Serves as the secretary in the absence of the secretary.
2. Attends each PCASC meeting.
3. Knowledge of area archives and files.
4. Knowledge of area official membership list.

**ARTICLE 9 – REMOVAL OF OFFICERS AND SUB-COMMITTEE  
CHAIRPERSONS**

**Section 1. (Non-Compliance):**

Service member may be removed from their position for non-compliance. Non-compliance includes, but is not limited to:

- A. Loss of abstinence.
- B. Non-fulfillment of duties of their position.

- C. If an elected member of PCASC misses two consecutive area meetings without contacting a member of the executive body, it will result in automatic removal from their position.
- D. If an elected member misses four or more area meetings during his or her tenure, PCASC will review for removal via an idea.

### **Section 2. (Resignation from PCASC):**

Any Officer or Sub-Committee Chairperson of this Committee may resign by providing written notice to the PCASC Facilitator at least two (2) weeks in advance of the upcoming regularly scheduled meeting of the Committee.

### **Section 3. (Ideas for Removal):**

Any member of NA may present an idea for the removal of any Officer or Sub-Committee Chairperson of the PCASC. Removal follows the format of election procedure. (Article 7, Section 2.)

### **Section 4. (Audit Before New Treasurer Takes Office):**

The Treasurer's books will be audited each time there is a new Treasurer elected before he/she starts their term. The outgoing Treasurer must attend the audit.

## **ARTICLE 10 - MEETINGS**

### **Section 1. Regular Sessions:**

Regular sessions of the PCASC business are held on the second Sunday of every other month. (Except when the second Sunday is a Holiday recognized by the facility) Area begins promptly at 1:30pm beginning with the Serenity Prayer, 12 Traditions, 12 Concepts, then First Quorum, unless otherwise ordered by the Committee. Non-business months will be a workshop while still including literature distribution, donations, flyers, and communication of events. PCASC meets in March for elections only. During CAR years we meet in January for CAR business only. All cell phones are to be turned off or placed on vibrate during area service. Time of adjournment is 4:00PM. Facilitator is responsible for managing time. A consensus-based vote will be taken to extend the meeting, if needed.

### **Section 2. Special Sessions:**

The Facilitator for a specific need or purpose may call for a special session of the PCASC. The purpose of the meeting shall be stated clearly. Additionally, any member of the Committee may request a special session of the PCASC through the Facilitator. Special session is to be called only in an emergency to deal with a critical issue, which cannot wait until a regularly scheduled session of the PCASC. Proper notification to all participants (members) of the Committee is required and an agenda must be present and recorded with the secretary. A special session will follow the format of a regular session and no business other than that which has been stated previously should be conducted. At least seven (7) days' notice shall be given to all members of the Committee.

### **Section 3. Quorum:**

Quorum means that 51% of "Regularly Attending members" of the PCASC are present to conduct Area business. Area business is described as; any decisions or acts of the Committee, which affect the PCASC. Eligible voting participation is contingent upon not missing four consecutive quorums (2 consecutive Area Business meetings) by a group. Quorum and voting eligibility are not the same.

### **Section 4. Joint Administrative Committee Meeting (JAC):**



Sessions of the JAC must be announced 2 weeks in advance. Assistant Facilitator of PCASC will facilitate this meeting. All JAC meetings will have 50% of currently occupied executive body and subcommittee chair positions to conduct business.

JAC should meet between September and October to review YTD budget and consider amendments.

JAC budget and audit will take place in April.

### **Section 5. Open Forum:**

Open forum has two points of agenda; group ideas and area Committee ideas. Open forum will be Twenty (20) minutes, after second quorum. If no one has anything further to say during open forum, an idea can be made to move to second quorum.

## **ARTICLE 11 - STANDING SUB-COMMITTEES**

### **Section 1. (Established and Formed):**

The PCASC may establish Sub-Committees as necessary to perform certain duties. The Standing Sub-Committee shall be formed upon approval by the voting participants of the PCASC. Standing Sub-Committees may include Public Relations, Hospitals and Institutions, Literature, Activities, Policy, Mentorship, Website. The Sub-Committee Members will elect Other Officers of each Standing Sub-Committee.

### **Section 2. (Guidelines):**

All Standing Sub-Committees of the PCASC shall create and adopt guidelines, which are consistent with the "A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous," the Twelve Traditions of N.A., and the best information available in handbooks, and guidelines. Please refer to area archives for the latest subcommittee guidelines and read during area election requirements. The guidelines of each Standing Sub-Committee shall be subject to review and approval by the PCASC.

### **Section 3. (Written Reports):**

Each Sub-Committee Chairperson is required to submit a written report containing financial information and committee activities, to be submitted to the Assistant Facilitator of PCASC after they are given orally. Written reports will be submitted electronically to the Web Servant.

### **Section 4. (Clean Time Requirements):**

The clean time requirements for all Standing Sub-Committee Chairpersons are two (2) years of total abstinence from all drugs. A working knowledge of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous.

### **Section 5. (Donations Collected):**

Any Sub-committee that collects donations shall follow this protocol:

- A. Immediately following event, donations collected are counted by at least the sub-committee chair and one other committee member.
- B. Sub-committee chair will provide all donations collected and receipts of expenses to area treasurer at the next area committee meeting.
- C. Provide a written report of all donations and expenses.

## **ARTICLE 12 - AD-HOC COMMITTEES**

### **Section 1. (How Ad-Hoc Committees are Formed):**

The PCASC may form Ad-Hoc Committees by majority vote to fulfill special functions. The purpose, membership, and duration of existence of any such Ad-Hoc Committee will be decided by a majority vote of the PCASC voting participants. The name of the Ad-Hoc committee will be designated in an idea.

### **Section 2. (Appointment of Ad-Hoc Committee Chairperson):**

It is the responsibility of the PCASC Chairperson to appoint the Ad-Hoc Committee Chairperson. Any Ad-Hoc Chairperson is considered a non-voting participant on subject of their subcommittee report.

## **ARTICLE 13 - STANDING RULES OF ORDER**

### **Section 1. (PCASC Financial):**

#### NO SINGLE PERSON SHALL HAVE ACCESS TO PCASC FUNDS

- A. All funds distributed to and from the PCASC are to be managed by the PCASC Treasurer unless otherwise provided for by PCASC Policy.
- B. All PCASC bank accounts shall require at least two (2) signatures.
- C. All PCASC funds distributed by the PCASC are to be accounted for by receipt and must be approved by the voting members of the PCASC.
- D. The PCASC will audit the Treasury every year.
- E. The PCASC will schedule JAC meeting for budget of PCASC in April. The workshop for May will be JAC discussion.
- F. The PCASC shall hold in prudent reserve the amount of One Thousand Five Hundred. Dollars (\$1,500.00) which is equal to approximately one (1) month's operating expenditures for the PCASC.
- G. All PCASC Treasurer reports are to be kept on file for two (2) years.

### **Section 2: (New Group Starter Kits):**

Each new group accepted into the PCASC shall be given a group starter kit. See the Literature Chair for description of the current starter kit.

### **Section 3: (PCASC Meeting Set-up and Cleanup):**

- A. **Refreshment coordinator:** Ninety (90) days clean time, length of commitment to be six (6) months. Arrives at 12:30PM to set up refreshments. Must clean up the kitchen, meeting space, and cigarette butts outside. Purchase refreshments totaling no more than what we collect in the donation bag the month prior. To submit receipts of purchases to treasurer for reimbursement. To be accountable for the refreshments bin.
- B. **Serenity Keeper** - Open the door and keep a welcoming atmosphere outside.

### **Section 4: (Written Reports):**

Any group member may submit a group report, for the group they represent.

### **Section 5: (Literature Order):**

All literature order forms must be given to the Literature Committee before 2pm to be filled. GSRs are not to take literature orders until committee has fulfilled all orders (not before first break). Area to vote on World Board approved Literature that comes out.

### **Section 6: (Activities Seed Money):**

On non-area business months, Activities chairperson can request funds to facilitate upcoming events.

### **Section 7: (Flyers):**

All PCASC member flyers must include the NA trademarked logo, and <https://www.passaicarea.org>

### **Section 8: (Statewide Meeting Lists):**

The Literature Subcommittee offers current NJ Statewide Meeting Lists.

### **Section 9: (Email/Internet Communication):**

Any communication submitted to (<https://www.passaicarea.org>) will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and anonymity in mind. The PCASC does not guarantee anonymity in all circumstances. All communications are official NA business and require some level of identification for the purposes of responding to these communications. All efforts will be made to pass on communications in a timely manner to the responsible trusted servant. Under no circumstances will any member of the PCASC forward e-mail of a personal nature to any NA member in the Passaic County Area, however communications regarding PCASC business may be forwarded by ASC trusted servants only. This is an official web site for the Passaic County Area of Narcotics Anonymous and the PCASC does not acknowledge anyone's membership in Narcotics Anonymous. In addition, there will be no BCC (blind carbon copy) of emails at any time by any member of the PCASC.

### **Section 10. (Decision-Making Process):**

PCASC uses its own version of Consensus Based Decision Making. See Appendix A for the full description of the rules of order.

## **APPENDIX A – PCASC CONSENSUS BASED DECISION MAKING (CBDM)**

### **Section 1 (Purpose/History):**

Passaic County Area had utilized Robert's Rules of Order since its inception in May of 1988 up until the year 2011 when it was used in trial form for several months. It was officially adopted as its policy bound rules of order in January 2012 Session.

For many years we relied on Roberts Rules of Order as the quickest way to get the most amount of business done in the shortest period. Governmental organizations use Roberts Rules of Order. The problem lies in the fact we are not government. We are a fellowship and area service committee that relies on spiritual principles to survive.

The idea stems from NA's 6th concept.

*The development of a group conscience is an indispensable way of the decision-making process in NA.*

*Just as we seek the strongest possible spiritual unity in Narcotics Anonymous, so in our decision-making process we seek unanimity, not merely a majority vote. The more care we take in our considerations, the more likely we are to arrive at unanimity, and no vote will be needed to help us translate out group conscience into a collective decision.*

---

## Section 2 (Presenting Ideas):

- A. Only a voting or non-voting participant (see Article 4 Section 1.1 and 1.2 for definition of these participants) may introduce ideas. Any NA member may participate in debate and discussion (at the discretion of the Facilitator).
- B. Any member of Narcotics Anonymous may introduce an idea through the GSR that represents their group.
- C. All ideas should be in writing on the forms provided by the Secretary of the PCASC.
  - 1. Financial Ideas must be on the financial idea form.
  - 2. Any policy subcommittee changes are to be submitted in the sub-committee report during the ASC. Each policy change must be attached to this report and read to the body. In the event of an opposition to any policy changes those ideas are to be crossed out of the report and discussed in open forum. When the sub-committee report is accepted all policy changes will also be accepted.
- D. All ideas must be submitted no later than 10 minutes after the close of open forum.
- E. All discussions, questions and oppositions will be limited to 60 seconds per person.

## Section 3 (Processing Ideas):

- A. The Vice-Chair will prioritize in the following order:
  - 1. Policy Issues
  - 2. PCASC Financial
  - 3. Group Literature
  - 4. Other Sub-Committee (Financial)
  - 5. Other (Financial)
  - 6. Regional Financial
  - 7. Other Business
- B. When reading ideas, each one will be labelled with a number.
- C. Par level is currently set at 85%

## Section 4 (Discussing Ideas):

- A. Idea is read aloud by the Assistant Facilitator.
- B. Facilitator asks if there is any opposition to the idea.
  - 1. 100% approval (no opposition) – Idea Passes
  - 2. 100% opposition – Idea Fails
  - 3. In every other scenario go to Item C.
- C. The idea maker then presents their full intent and what they hope will be accomplished by the idea.
- D. Facilitator asks if there is any opposition to the idea.
  - 1. 100% approval (no opposition) – Idea Passes
  - 2. 100% opposition – Idea Fails
  - 3. In every other scenario go to Item E.
- E. Each opposing person may state their concerns and may offer an idea modification to the maker. Each opposing person may only state their point one team for each round. Discussion is limited to 60 seconds per person.
- F. If the idea maker accepts the modification, then the written idea must be changed. The idea is then re-read by the Assistant Facilitator. Facilitator asks if there is any opposition to the idea.
  - 1. 100% approval (no opposition) – Idea Passes
  - 2. Not 100% or the idea maker does not accept the modification, go to Item G.

- G. Idea maker asks compromise maker to ask what it take to reach a compromise. If a compromise is reached, then Facilitator asks if there is any opposition.
  - 1. 100% approval (no opposition) – Idea Passes
  - 2. If a compromise cannot be reached or there is not 100% approval, go to Item I.
- H. If only two or less members are opposed, the chair will ask if they are willing to step aside to allow the decision to move forward. If the opposition stands aside then the idea passes. If the opposition does not stand aside or more than two members are still opposed, go to Item I.
- I. The chairperson will take a straw poll of GSRs/GSR-As with voting privileges. The chairperson will tally the votes. If item receives establish Par or more of the vote it passes. If less, it fails. Oppositions will each have one more opportunity to verbally state their opposition.

## Section 5 (Spiritual Guidance)

Consensus refers to the consent of the group or in other words, the willingness to move forward with a decision on the part of all members of a group, rather than a majority or a select group of representatives. Rather than a strict consensus process, which typically allows a lone dissenter to block a proposal, PCASC uses a form of consensus-based decision making (CBDM), which is based on a respect for all persons involved in the decision being considered but does not necessarily mean the final decision is unanimous. (The word “consensus” derives from the Latin *cum* meaning “with” or “together with,” and *sentire* meaning to “think” or “feel.” The root of “consensus,” therefore, means to think or feel together.) Consensus is based on the belief that each person has some part of the truth and no one person has all of it (no matter how tempting it is to believe that we ourselves *really* know best!). The consensus process is what a group goes through to reach an agreement. It is how we manifest the idea “together we can do what we cannot do alone” in a service setting.

This foundation is the very essence of what the PCASC is about. For PCASC to make decisions that serve a worldwide fellowship, it is critical that all points of view are heard, even if they are not all what we might individually prefer. Our Ninth Concept reminds us that *All elements of our service structure have the responsibility to carefully consider all viewpoints in their decision-making processes.* Our commitment to a consensus-based process before a formal decision often means the PCASC comes to a higher-quality decision. What is more, participants are more likely to implement decisions they accept, and consensus makes acceptance more likely. The history of the PCASC reflects that only decisions that serve the area are embraced, accepted, and used by the area.

While consensus-building requires hearing and respecting all points of view, it does not necessarily mean that the discussion phase of decision-making becomes a kind of “sharing session” where all participants speak about how they feel. It is about finding the common ground that every participant can support, even when that common ground is not exactly as every participant may desire. Adequate discussion takes time and may occur in the PCASC meeting, in panels, or in small groups. Regardless of how these discussions occur, they require commitment from each participant to focus on the issues at hand as well as skilled facilitation to encourage that focus and lead the group toward consensus.

The benefits or results of this process are a greater understanding of the ideas, agreement among participants to move forward, and if needed, the modification of the proposals to reflect the will of the body which has been clarified from the discussions. As the group moves into a decision, a facilitator can ask if there are any objections. If there are, the group can discuss those objections by topic and then move to a decision. Only after adequate discussion and consensus-building has occurred, does the PCASC enter a business session to formalize its decisions. Ideally, a decision is reached by asking if there are any objections. If there are objections, a more formal process is used to determine the PCASC decision.