



Meeting Minutes of District 106

District Executive Council Meeting November 12, 2022

Call to Order:

District Director Gopu Shrestha, called the meeting to order at 9:01 AM, CDT.

Reading of the District Mission:

The mission was read by Administration Manager Dave Degenhardt.

Credentials Report (Administration Manager, Dave Degenhardt):

Roll was called of the DEC members, with the following members present: Ed Aylward, John Barrett, Dave Degenhardt, Bob Dummer, Sue Haverberg, Ralph Hayne, George Kane, Mervat Lotfalla, Linda Murphy, Brian Perry, Kathy Schakel-Carlson, Gopu Shrestha, Denise Sundquist, Ashok Sunkavalli, and Dana Vigoren.

District 106 currently has 9 elected, and 26 appointed members of the District Executive Committee with 35 votes possible. 1/2 or 18 votes are required for a quorum. We have 15 votes. The District does not have a quorum.

(Katy Hursh, Brian Rice, and Helen Grothe joined the Zoom call after the roll had been called and did not count toward the quorum)

Since there is not a quorum, the procedure is as follows. Bylaws of Toastmasters International, Article X, Section C of District Administrative Bylaws states: "In the event that any business is transacted at any District Council meeting at which a quorum is not present, the action shall be deemed as valid as if a quorum were present if it thereafter is expressly approved in writing, personally, by mail, fax, e-mail, electronic transmission or other reasonable means, by the affirmative vote of a majority of the Member Clubs in the District on the basis of two (2) votes per club."

Therefore, the business of this council will be conducted as if a quorum were present. After this meeting, the Executive Council Committee members will be sent an email asking for approval of any business transacted at this meeting. Members will be asked to submit their response by November 17. The District will collect responses until the actions are approved or disapproved of by a majority of the members.

Adoption of the Agenda (District Director Gopu Shrestha):

The agenda was adopted without any objections, additions, or deletions.

Approval of Minutes (District Director Gopu Shrestha):

The minutes from our first District Executive Council meeting held on August 6, 2022 are posted on the D106 website. The minutes were adopted without any corrections.

Meeting Appointments (District Director Gopu Shrestha):

Kathy Schakel-Carlson was appointed as Timer.

Division Director Reports (2-3 minutes):

Denise Sundquist - Division A:

With officer training, and club, Area and Division speech contests behind us, Division A is looking forward to a reset, rewind, refresh as we close 2022. I have encouraged my Area Directors to wrap up their club visits and then refocus on their own clubs and personal goals while asking, "Are my clubs thriving, maintaining or struggling?" We have definitely noticed a shift in club attendance; some clubs that had momentum during the pandemic are now struggling and may benefit from a Club Coach. We're not sure why this is happening and look forward to any insights our other Area and Division Directors may have that could help us. To conclude, Division A is going back to basics for the next six weeks and working on quality club meetings and re-energizing our members.

Daniel DeJoode - Division B (presented by Area 12 Director Dana Vigoren):

Sixty percent of club visits are completed or are in progress. Area 13 Director Chengtao Wang has completed 100% of club visit reports. Areas 12 and 14 are close to completion. Seven clubs have achieved their base membership for the year. Elk River Area Toastmasters have achieved 6 goals toward DCP, while Anoka Toastmasters have achieved 5. Table Topics contest was won by Mark Skipper of TicTalkers Toastmasters, and Tall Tales contest was won by Diane Windingland of Readership Toastmasters.

Bob Dummer - Division C:

Division C has been focused on hosting some successful Fall Contests – with all Areas submitting contestants for the Division C contest. Currently, we are focusing on completing our Club visits and reports – about 45-50% of the clubs have been visited but the reports have not been submitted yet. We will continue to work on this and hope we will be at 100% before the end of the month. We are trying to identify low-member clubs that are willing to be helped and will try to set up some open houses. On the plus side we are seeing some new members joining our clubs and hope to continue this encouraging trend going into the new year.

George Kane - Division E:

Division E has established a strong basis for success moving into the second half of this Toastmasters year. That basis is the teamwork and mutual support of the Area Directors – Mervat Lotfalla in Area 41, Sue Haverberg in Area 42, Kathy Carlson in Area 43, Nagraj Nimmakayala in Area 44 and Linda Murphy in Area 45. We have had a team meeting each month beginning in June, twice in-person for a meal and the others online. They were lively, and when one brings up any problems they are always characterized by supportive suggestions for action.

The Area contests were illustrative of this teamwork, with all ADs taking roles in the contests of others. I was very impressed by how smoothly the contests ran and how well-organized they were. I especially appreciated this when I organized the Division contest. I thought that I had the staffing complete a week before the event, but it seemed there would be no end to problems with holes arising in the roster. They continued into the pre-contest briefing, which I did not learn about until after the contest. I am indebted to Division C Director Bob Dummer, the Chief Judge, for calmly resolving the problems that arose.

The Club visits are nearly complete but documenting them with reports is only now gaining momentum. Again, the ADs are helping each other out, as needed. They all still expect to be able to complete their reports before the November 30 deadline. Our big challenge for the second half-year is to help our clubs with their membership-building campaigns.

David Rasmussen - Division D (read by Administration Manager Dave Degenhardt):

Division D is saddened by the death of Past District Director, Bruce Trippet, of Uncommon Speakers. The Division D Table Topics contest winner is Kate Humprey, Pillsbury Club. Our Tall Tales winner is Wilhelm Mwengi, PowerTalk. Area Directors helped out in numerous contests.

Allianz, Sunrisers and Power Talk are at 20 members toward Distinguished status.

We are 75+% complete on club visits, but still have some more reports to write and clubs to check in with. Congratulations to Brian Rice for completing all reports and to Beth Plamondon and Mary Benson for completing all visits.

Our team hopes to help toward corporate Club Officer Training, as we have a strong representation of corporate clubs in Division D.

Executive Team Reports (1-2 minutes):

Ashok Sunkavalli, Public Relations Manager:

Our team is doing a fantastic job thanks to my fantastic team Johnny Harbieh, Bob Bazinet, and Margie Peterson. They are doing an incredible job helping do all the PRM work. We are doing a fantastic job in doing the social media promotions in all the social channels. We added TikTok and we are doing social media posts on a constant basis.

A couple of things I wanted to highlight:

We did a PR practical workshop last month. It has been well received. We had a little less attendance than what we had expected, but we are constantly promoting to all the VPPRs in the District to make their club websites are up to date and ensure that the TI brand is protected.

We are doing constant publications and calendar updates as PRM duties. Our editor is doing a fantastic job making sure that all the schedules are up to date on the D106 calendar that are provided by our trio leaders. We also published the second officers' training schedule. Website enhancements are constantly being done. The scrolling you are seeing on the website is being done by Johnny. He is doing a fantastic job. A lot of the other PRMs in the other Districts in Region 4 have reached out to me and said they like our D106 website, which is kudos to the PRM team for doing an awesome job.

We started another interesting video podcast series - mentor/mentee series. We have posted so far 2 of them, and it has been well-received from the members from what I am hearing. Kudos to Johnny and Margie for doing a fantastic job. I love the recent one, the chess masters, done by our own Ed Aylward and George Kane. These are the highlights of the PRM tasks. Thank you for all the support.

Administration Manager, Dave Degenhardt:

I have assembled the minutes from our last meeting and got them out to you all and have been working with Gopu and Ed to get folks to sign up for this meeting and attend with the calendar invites and reminders.

Trio Reports (2-3 minutes):

Club Growth Director's Report– Katy Hursh:

In June the NSE - North Star Evaluators Club - in Division A chartered after one year of meeting monthly. They will be holding a hybrid charter party in Duluth next Saturday, November 19th at 8 AM. Great appreciation goes to all charter members, sponsors, and mentors in seeing this club succeed. Thank you!

Also, in June the Zenith club in Duluth held a farewell meeting and decided to dissolve. One of their members has transferred membership to the Riverview club in Cloquet and has been a faithful attendee. In August we had a demo meeting for a businesswomen's group in Duluth. It was a positive experience but went no further. Plans to start a comedy club were put on hold and will be discussed later in the meeting. In October two more clubs dissolved, The Rat Pack from Division C and the All American Speakers from Division D.

In November we have a demo meeting scheduled for Tuesday morning November 22nd for a corporate club down in St. Paul. They are called NVent. They have been a lead for a couple years, so it is exciting they are on board. We also have another potential demo meeting on the horizon for a gentleman who has also reached out wanting to start a corporate club. We have some exciting things in the works!

Program Quality Director's Report – Ed Aylward

Club Officer Training for round 1 has concluded. We trained 430 club officers trained (58.5%). All clubs would have at least 4 officers trained if that percentage was uniform since $0.585 \times 7 = 4$. The distribution wasn't even though as many clubs managed to have all seven officers trained and too many clubs trained fewer than four. Round 2 Club Officer Training is coming together with 5 dates on the calendar for the remainder of calendar 2022. January and February dates will be added before January. There is still a need for talented volunteers to assist as trainers. If you have a name to suggest, then please contact me or Matt Villella.

District Officer Training began in July, and we achieved 85% of Division Directors and Area Directors trained. 85% is our expected minimum. We will continue to offer training linked to our District Executive Committee meetings.

Your district trio is not exempt from training requirements. Gopu, Katy, and I were full participants in 16 to 17 hours' worth of training in the two days prior to the Toastmasters International Annual Convention in August.

Area and Division Table Topics and Tall Tales competitions are complete. I am looking for talented contest Toastmaster volunteers and contest Chief Judge volunteers for the District final Table Topics and Tall Tales competitions to be held (Hybrid/Virtual) on 12 May 2023.

The next round of speech competitions begins early in 2023. Contest categories are Evaluation and International. Finals for these two competitions will take place on 13 May 2023. These will also be hybrid/virtual speech competitions.

District Director's Report – Gopu Shrestha

This is our second District Executive meeting. You are probably still confused about what is DEC meeting and what is DOT meeting. District Executive Council meetings consist of Area Directors, Division Directors, Trio members, and admin officers. Every quarter we present our reports to show all District officers, especially Area Directors and Division Directors, what is going on and what is next. This way, we all work for members of District 106.

It was our pleasure to visit the International Convention in-person on Aug 14-20 at Nashville, Tennessee. We were trained, as the PQD said for 17 hours, on how to serve clubs and its members and I represented your votes to elect International Director and vote on the proposed agenda for the year 2022-2023. After returning to our District, we the trio felt a big responsibility and our accountability to members. That is the power of the training they provided us. The convention is one of the best event Toastmasters International hosts. I highly recommend all members to run for District office, especially Trio members, and visit any international convention. You will find the true value of an organization you are affiliated with.

We were able to conduct a successful District Council meeting on September 10. This council meeting approved the District budget for the year 2022-2023 and appointed 23 Area Directors and other admin officers. After approval, we the district officers are fully onboard to implement what we promised in District Success Plan and will comply with the approved budget accordingly.

As I share my district vision “Family First, Work in a Team and Always ask for help”, I see my district team share my mission and show their contribution in Club Officer Training as well as fall speech contests. Eighteen clubs trained 7 out of 7 club officers. Eleven clubs trained 6 officers. Twenty-three clubs trained 5 officers, and eighteen clubs trained 4 officers. My PQD is already preparing his list to hand over ribbons for Magnificent 7 and some awards for clubs who are training 4+ members in 2nd round also.

I see the 1st round of paid clubs has increased because of strong communication from District officers led by our Club Growth Director.

Now I am checking if any Area Directors have missed their club visit reports. So far, I know more than 75% of clubs have been visited by Area Directors, and reports are yet to be submitted.

Last but not least, we all signed up to serve clubs and their members without compromising District officers’ family and professional lives. I hope all my District officers share my feelings and will be a role model for incoming leaders who can sign up for next year’s leadership roles.

Thank you to all the District executive team for providing your best services to our District 106 club members and officers!

Timer Report (Kathy Schakel-Carlson):

Individual times were not recorded for the Division Director reports but they were all between 45 seconds and 1 minute, 45 seconds.

Public Relations Manager report by Ashok was 2 minutes, 35 seconds.

Administration Manager report by Dave was 28 seconds.

Club Growth Director report by Katy was 1 minute, 48 seconds.

Program Quality Director report by Ed was 2 minutes, 5 seconds.

District Director report by Gopu was 3 minutes, 33 seconds.

New Business (District Director Gopu Shrestha): none

Announcements (District Director Gopu Shrestha):

Paid Clubs – Since we are targeting to be a Distinguished District, I see here our base club number is 100, but this renewal period is bringing us down to 90, so 10 clubs are not paid. Division A has all clubs paid! Thank you, Division A Director, for your follow-up. Division B, 2 clubs are still unpaid, Division C 4 clubs, Division D 1 club, and Division E 3 clubs. All these clubs, the Division Directors are aware of and are following up.

Club Visit Reports – As you know, November 30 is the last day to submit Club Visit Reports. In order to have a Distinguished Area, you have to have 75% of your club visits in. I know at least 75% of clubs have been visited and the club reports are yet to be submitted.

Holiday Party – Our Program Quality Director, Logistics Manager, and Division E Director are working behind the scenes to schedule a holiday party. This is a party where we want all our members to come with food and enjoy ourselves and have some fun. Our team, led by our Program Quality Director, is trying to schedule a venue and date. Stay tuned.

Club Officer Training, Round 2 – Toastmasters International allowed us to start training in November and run until February 28. Our Program Quality Director is planning to publish the dates soon and is thinking about the TLI. The dates are yet to come but keep checking the website for details. We are heading toward a Distinguished District and your small effort will help us to make our District a Distinguished District.

The next DEC meeting will be 3 months from now (date to be determined). Please prepare your reports. Half the program year will be done, and it will be time for you to find your successor and shadow him or her with your role. This is the best way to transfer our leadership skills to the next generation. If you are an Area Director or Division Director, find your successor and ask him or her to work with you. This is how we develop leaders.

Questions/Swag Handout (Program Quality Director Ed Aylward):

- 1) Q: At the beginning of this meeting we did not have a quorum, and our District Director explained that we were still able to conduct business. How?
A: Denise Sundquist – We are sending out the notes and people will have a week to respond.
- 2) Q: What social media site has been added to District 106 by our PR team?
A: Brian Perry – TikTok.
- 3) Q: From where did District Director Gopu source the swag he is giving away?
A: Ashok – International Convention.

The meeting adjourned at 9:44 AM, CDT.