

1 Toastmasters International – District 28
2 Online District Council Meeting – 30 September 2023
3 District Director Karen Smith, DTM Presiding
4 Administration Manager – Ian Chalmers
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6

7 **Call to Order**

8 The meeting was called to order by Logistics Manager, Jonathan Ettie @ 10:01 but start delayed due to
9 problem with checking in attendees. Jerome Maben, Club Growth Director asked everyone to name
10 themselves with designation first.

11 **District Mission**

12 District Director (DD) formally opened the meeting proper at 1023 with a reading of the District Mission
13 and a reminder that only voting delegates may participate in debate.

14 **Agenda**

15 There was no roll call taken and Joel Book believed that regarding adoption of the agenda, there had to
16 be a quorum established to do this. The Parliamentarian, James Brown confirmed that this was correct.

17 Introduction of Credentials Chair, Kim Purohit who confirmed that each of D28 84 active clubs have 2
18 votes, one for President & the other for Vice President of Education – which is 168 total. A third is
19 required for the quorum which would be 56. Having an attendance of 58 confirmed quorum. This figure
20 also includes 17 committee members.

21 A motion to approve the agenda was moved by Karen Solomon president Northeastern Toastmasters and
22 seconded by Liz Cezat president Motor City Speak Easy. District Director asked if there was any discussion
23 - there were none. Those in favor come off mute and say Aye – all. Those against say Nay – there were
24 none. The agenda was adopted unanimously as prescribed.

25 **Minutes**

26 Parliamentarian James Brown explained that for approval of the minutes to be achieved, all those eligible
27 to attend and vote had been emailed a copy of the September 17, 2022, and April 22, 2023, minutes. The
28 District Director confirmed the voting system in force was an anonymous system for those eligible only
29 and based on an honesty system. The District Director asked James Parliamentarian if both sets of
30 minutes could be voted on together, James confirmed they must be done separately.

31 The District Director asked for a motion to approve the April 22, 2023 minutes, Joel Book moved to
32 advance the motion and Program Quality Director Sherri Anne Wynter seconded. The District Director
33 asked if there were any questions, there were none. Those in favor say Aye – unanimous & those against
34 say Nay – there were none. Minutes approved. September 17, 2022, minutes were shared on the screen.
35 Jonathan Ettie, VP LaSalle club made a motion to accept the minutes, seconded by Joel Book. District
36 Director asked if there were any questions, Liz Cezat wished to abstain from voting, as she was not at the
37 April 2023 meeting.

38 James Brown Parliamentarian confirmed that qualifying attendees could cast a vote, despite not being at
39 the previous meeting. Sherri Anne PQD considered on a point of order, that the ability to read the
40 minutes was the qualification required to vote. Those attending this morning did not have to have been
41 at the previous meeting, to be able to vote on the minutes today. Parliamentarian James confirmed if
42 you've read the minutes, are here today and are eligible to vote - you can do so. District Director asked 3
43 times if there were any further questions, there were none. Those in favor say Aye – unanimous. Those
44 against say Nay – there were none. Minutes approved.

45 **Budget report and discussion**

46 Finance Manager, Vera Johnson presented the budget on the screen and confirmed they voted a week
47 ago to agree a working budget of \$31,027 as shown. Once the DEC approves this, it will be sent to TI HQ
48 for review. Confirmation and identification on the screen, of members of the District Financial Team.
49 Although we were overextended by \$11k on the International Convention in Bahamas, this can be
50 approved as an exception. The reason for this was the hotel accommodation for the Trio was \$2700 each.
51 However, District Director only had to pay a heavily reduced fee and former DD John Salalila did not
52 register for the Conference, as he was only there for networking. John didn't attend any sessions. Vera
53 was aware that other Districts over spent as well. All other categories are within our policy limits – our
54 District is prudent. Immediate Past District Director John did order \$14k of Recognition items at the end
55 of the TM year in June 2023.

56 TI HQ have not decided on whether the next Conference may be hybrid? We could have budgeted for a
57 net loss, but this would make the budget difficult to approve. We will not be spending everything and
58 have some padding in there. Vera asked for any questions and Ray Rivera, Tankmasters asked why was
59 there was no Recognition awards ceremony last year – will there be one this year? Vera said it is planned
60 that after the DEC meeting on November 4th, 2023, there will be a joint recognition event for both years.

61 District Director reminded all attendees to raise their hand on the screen to await being recognized, if
62 they wish to ask a question. Karen Solomon, Northeastern said looking through the budget, are there any
63 other sources of revenue besides dues? Vera said in the past District Conventions had to break even.
64 Every District has lost money on hybrid conferences. D28 must be careful not to lose money. Before we
65 had a large District reserve in place. We need to keep 25% in reserve. World HQ are looking into other
66 revenue streams? Revenues have dropped 30% in the last 3 years. Trios will have to plan ahead of time
67 going forward, as it takes time to get approval from HQ.

68 LaShon Bowers, Detroit Rocks asked why the District Reserve is down? This is due to IPDD John Salalila,
69 spent \$14k on Recognition items. Vera will provide an accruals budget. John spent this money to cover
70 two years after being unable to spend anything until June 2023, due to the inactivity of the former
71 Finance Manager. World HQ came in and sorted the situation out, but we were unable to spend anything,
72 until this was completed in June 2023. Vera remembers in 2016-2018 there were huge amounts in our
73 reserves and HQ were going to take a large amount out. Some Districts had \$300k in reserve. Vera
74 Johnson FM will provide something, as we need to be transparent to show why there has been a drop in
75 the Reserve.

76 Liz Cezat, Motor City Speak Easy asked if the \$14k IPDD John Salalila spent was supported by others, Vera
77 will defer to District Director on this. District Director explained the reason IPDD John Salalila spent this
78 money was to cover 2-3 years of awards. Awards are not cheap for Area Directors, Division Directors and
79 the like plus the cost of awards has increased from before. Liz Cezat, Motor City Speak Easy asked who
80 approved the \$14k spend. District Director said as this was from last TM year and she is only District
81 Director this TM year, she is unable to answer that. Liz Cezat, further asked in terms of transparency, can

82 the budget from last year be posted please? Yes, Vera will provide. HQ monitors everything and we will
83 have to explain why anything is under or over budget. District Director said that once the budget is
84 approved, it will be posted on the D28 website.

85 Liz Cezat, Motor City Speak Easy asked about the increase from 45 US to 60 US biannually and will D28 be
86 getting more from our increased dues? Vera said yes D28 revenues will be greater with the increase. Ray
87 Rivera, Tankmasters asked regarding ERP in 2022 – will D28 have to pay for Pathways changes in 2024?
88 Vera was not sure about this, as HQ is currently calculating figures for each District. CGD Jerome raised
89 concern about posting our budget onto a publicly accessible website – is this appropriate?
90 Parliamentarian James was asked for his opinion on this ‘very good question’. James didn’t know the
91 answer and asked Joel if he knew the answer. Joel suggested that James call TI HQ on Monday for an
92 answer – he will do.

93 Vera FM said 990’s can be published which is how Executive salaries @ TI HQ are known. They have been
94 posting budgets for the last 20 years, but it is best to seek clarification with World HQ. Certainly, the
95 budget means something to us – but to others? IPDD John didn’t post last year. LaShon said never been a
96 problem posting for nonprofits, as they always post the % they spend. It should be posted to show if
97 you’re in line with what you are supposed to be spending.

98 Marci Turner GLR Club thought that rather than ‘worrying’ about exposure – why not email to the
99 website? 33% increase in dues is horrendous – we will have a hard time both attracting new and keeping
100 existing members. Hard to justify when meetings are on zoom – would like an explanation as to why the
101 increase? Vera said there has not been dues increase since 2011 – 33% is very high and she has
102 recommended that they go forward in small increments in future.

103 TI membership numbers have dropped, and HQ’s costs have increased. Membership is down worldwide –
104 only Africa is growing even India and China growth numbers are flat. The fact everything is priced in US
105 dollars doesn’t help with moves in currency rates for other countries. 33% is a onetime shot. This will
106 affect who joins and renewals. Liz Cezat, Motor City Speak Easy said that to halt losing members due to
107 the increase, members will be asking for justification of the increase. If Finance people are looking at the
108 money, they should look to raise revenue in a different way. What are we getting for our increase?

109 District Director said the number of people that took advantage of the early renewal offer in August for
110 \$45 was poor – only 274 members chose to do this. Inflation hits everything all around the world and
111 borrowing is currently about 7%pa. There had to be an increase, so the organization could break even.
112 Marci Turner, GLR Club said how could we exist at \$45 in 2022 but are now being told they can only
113 operate by increasing to \$60? Karen said they had to increase it and as it is 11.30 and we are due to finish
114 in 30 minutes we would like to move on. Marci said inflation isn’t 33% but the increase is.

115 Jonathan Ettie pointed out a math error on the budget – the line total shows \$1416 whereas it should be
116 \$1410. Vera will amend with thanks to Jonathan for pointing out. Carol Durling, Confident
117 Communicators – is TI increasing the budget for marketing? Vera said club growth has 15% and yes
118 money is allocated for marketing. Vera had an unlimited marketing budget before but never spent it all.
119 We want to grow and do NOT want to be blended with District 62. We are not going to Lansing for our
120 TLI’s. D28’s culture is diverse with its unique international blend of NW Ohio, SW Michigan and SW
121 Ontario.

122 District Director asked for a motion from the floor to accept the budget with the one mathematical
123 correction, Kim Kensley-Prager, Visionary Virtual proposed the motion. Jeff Hagen, Erie Shores seconded
124 the motion. James Brown Parliamentarian reminded the meeting, that you move a motion don’t place it.
125 Kim restated that she moved a motion to accept the budget as is, with the one correction. District

126 Director asked 3 times if there were any matters to discuss. There was none and all in favor say Aye –
127 unanimous. Those against say Nay – there were none – carried.

128 **District Executive Committee Appointments**

129 Division Directors have already been approved but Area Directors are appointed. District Director read
130 out all the names of the 2023-2024 Area Directors C1-C4, E1-E4, I1-I3, M1-M3, N1-N4, O1-O3 & W1-W3.
131 District Director asked for a motion to appoint all the Area Directors for 2023-2024. Jonathan Ettie LM,
132 moved to accept the motion and Jeff Hagen, Erie Shores seconded the motion. District Director asked 3
133 times if there was any discussion – there was not. Those in favor come off mute and say Aye –
134 unanimous. Any opposed say Nay – none – carried. There was no Speaker Bureau update.

135 **District Leadership Reports**

136 District Director asked for 2-3 minutes for each, due to time constraints.

137 **Finance Manager**

138 Vera Johnson said much has been covered elsewhere already and our numbers are solid. DEC hybrid
139 meetings have broken even to date and as long as we can increase our membership numbers, we will be
140 ok.

141 **Public Relations Manager Report**

142 Alecia Goodlow-Young said some of the D28 websites are not up to date nor are several Club websites.
143 We need Clubs to update and add content to their websites. The Bridge will be coming out bi-weekly and
144 we are always looking for good content and training achievements. Meet-Up, which is paid for by D28,
145 should be used by all clubs as it is a great asset. Any problems joining meet-up, please contact Alecia. She
146 talked to the Webmaster Mark Mockel and John Salalila recently and is now aware how to get onto it.

147 **Club Growth Director**

148 Jerome Maben is excited and enthused for the district and showed the dashboard which he recommends
149 everyone use regularly. It covers paid clubs, payments and distinguished clubs. Dues must be paid by the
150 end of today September 30th as this is the last day. If there are any concerns about dues, he is responsible
151 for the marketing of the 84 active clubs. We need to grow our numbers of clubs. Jerome showed his
152 pipeline of potential new clubs. There is a need to contact outstanding leads. Any Area or Division
153 Directors who can help with follow up of potential new clubs in the pipeline, would be appreciated. We
154 can stem the rising costs and increase membership but need sponsors plus mentors and coaches where
155 appropriate. If we work together, we will sustain and remain vibrant.

156 (District Director asked for a 15-minute extension to the meeting. Parliamentarian James Brown said we
157 need to have a motion to extend the meeting. Sherri Anne PQD motion extension and Steven Cornel
158 seconded. All in favor – Aye – unanimous. Nays – none – carried.)

159 **Program Quality Director**

160 Sherri Anne Wynter said it is her pleasure to serve as PQD. 96% of Area and Division Directors have been
161 TLI trained. 274 officers trained at the summer TLI. Further TLI's November 18, 2023, virtual & January
162 20th 2024 @ LTU hybrid. With thanks to all who took part in the TLI's.

163

164

165 **District Director**

166 Karen Smith confirmed April 20, 2024 Conference – need to vote on new Trio, so all need to attend.
167 Karen knows there are a lot of questions about the increase in fees, there was much discussion at the
168 Conference in Bahamas. Whilst an increase had to come, they will do in small increments from now on.
169 D28 want to be distinguished this TM year but for this to happen, clubs need to be distinguished first.
170 Please monitor the dashboards. Not enough of the educational requirements are being input.

171 If you have less than 20 members, you only need an increase of 3 members (not 5) to be Distinguished.
172 Please VPs of Ed keep this in mind, there is a lot of missed opportunity as a lot of speeches are being
173 made but not all are getting put onto Pathways. The district pays for Meet-Up but only 50% of clubs
174 currently use it. Please work with Alecia to improve this. Julia Shonka in the chat, said Corporate clubs
175 don't tend to use MU so it won't be possible to achieve 100%.

176 Jonathan Ettie, Logistics Manager closed the meeting at 12:14pm.

177 IC 09-30-2023

178 APPENDIX A: ROLL CALL

OFFICE	MEMBER	(P)resent / (A)bsent
District Director	Karen Smith	P
Program Quality Director	Sherri Anne Wynter	P
Club Growth Director	Jerome Maben	P
Immediate Past District Director	John Salalila	P
Finance Manager	Vera Johnson	P
Administration Manager	Ian Chalmers	P
Public Relations Manager	Alecia Goodlow-Young	P
Division C Director	Linda Orlando	P
Area C-1 Director	Michael Declan Crouse	P
Area C-2 Director	Mo Anand	A
Area C-3 Director	Chelsea Carter	A
Area C-4 Director	Emily Bauman	A
Division E Director	Dan Leung	P
Area E-1 Director	Fatima Majid	A
Area E-2 Director	Ivy Clay	P
Area E-3 Director	John Schmidt	P
Area E-4 Director	Walter Wang	A
Division I Director	Miriam Roth	A
Area I-1 Director	Sambath Kumar	A
Area I-2 Director	Sara Hoffman	A
Area I-3 Director	Gayle Lawson	P

179 Total DEC Members = 38

180 Filled Positions = 38

181 Total DEC Attendees = 24

182 Quorum = 20

183

Logistics Manager	Jonathan Ettie	P
Parliamentarian	James Brown	P

184

OFFICE	MEMBER	(P)resent / (A)bsent
Division M Director	Julia Shonka	P

Area M-1 Director	Larry Castleberry	A
Area M-2 Director	Glynis Talley Roche	A
Area M-3 Director	Chera Best	P
Division N Director	Arun Das	P
Area N-1 Director	Sangeya Wiggins	A
Area N-2 Director	Christopher Niekra	P
Area N-3 Director	Julius Lawrence	P
Area N-4 Director	Hissie Johnson	A
Division O Director	Michael Wood	P
Area O-1 Director	Crystal Taylor	P
Area O-2 Director	Debora Nelson	P
Area O-3 Director	Marjorie Uncapher	P
Division W Director	Poornima Hedge	P
Area W-1 Director	Tracey Gibson	A
Area W-2 Director	Murray Rosenthal	A
Area W-3 Director	Lawrence Moeb	P

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