



# District 54 Council Meeting Minutes

*Friday, May 09, 2025*

*Virtual Meeting*

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## **OPENING**

Maryann Reichelt, DTM, Logistic Manager, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. She led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **WELCOME**

Gary Vaughn, District Director, welcomed everyone to the meeting. He facilitated the District 54 Council Meeting.

## **OUR DISTRICT VISION, MISSION and CORE VALUES**

The reading of Our Vision and District Mission was led by Estelle Foster, Club Growth Director.

### **District Vision**

To restore and maintain a dynamic community of 50 clubs, with at least 40% achieving Distinguished status or higher, empowering members in communication and leadership.

### **District Mission**

We build new clubs and support all clubs in achieving excellence.

### **District Core Values**

We strive to adhere to the following core values:

- Integrity
- Respect
- Service
- Excellence

## **DISTRICT OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

| <b>Present</b> | <b>First</b> | <b>Last</b> | <b>Designation</b> | <b>OFFICE</b>                    |
|----------------|--------------|-------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>X</b>       | GARY         | VAUGHN      | EH3                | DISTRICT DIRECTOR                |
| <b>X</b>       | WENDY        | PESAVENTO   | DTM                | PROGRAM QUALITY DIRECTOR         |
| <b>X</b>       | ESTELLE      | FOSTER      | VC5                | CLUB GROWTH DIRECTOR             |
|                | PRINCE       | MOTIANI     | DTM                | PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGER         |
| <b>X</b>       | CHING-YUAN   | SU          | EH3                | ADMINISTRATION MANAGER           |
| <b>X</b>       | JASON        | HESSLER     | DTM                | FINANCE MANAGER                  |
| <b>X</b>       | DAN          | KYBURZ      | DTM                | IMMEDIATE PAST DISTRICT DIRECTOR |
| <b>X</b>       | MARYANN      | REICHELT    | DTM                | LOGISTICS MANAGER, NV            |
| <b>X</b>       | TROY         | LAPORTE     | LD2                | DIVISION A DIRECTOR              |
| <b>X</b>       | VANKAT       | CHANDER     | TC1                | DIVISION B DIRECTOR              |
| <b>X</b>       | ROSEMARY     | NASH        | LD4                | DIVISION C DIRECTOR              |
| <b>X</b>       | KEN          | KOCHER      | PM3                | DIVISION D DIRECTOR              |
| <b>X</b>       | CECE         | WROBLEWSKI  | DTM                | AREA 10 DIRECTOR                 |
| <b>X</b>       | MIMI         | MIERITZ     | PI2                | AREA 11 DIRECTOR                 |
| <b>X</b>       | CHRIS        | KOSTELEC    | MS2                | AREA 12 DIRECTOR                 |
| <b>X</b>       | DAWN         | WEBER       | DL1                | AREA 20 DIRECTOR                 |

|   |         |               |     |                  |
|---|---------|---------------|-----|------------------|
|   | JULIA   | ISSA-GHANTOUS | PM1 | AREA 21 DIRECTOR |
|   | ANN     | WARTH         | DL4 | AREA 22 DIRECTOR |
|   | DIONNE  | MOORE         | CC  | AREA 30 DIRECTOR |
|   | GREY    | ADKISSON      | PM1 | AREA 31 DIRECTOR |
| X | SHERRI  | DELEONARDIS   | DTM | AREA 32 DIRECTOR |
|   | KATIE   | JANDESKA      | SR1 | AREA 40 DIRECTOR |
| X | VALERIE | HECKMAN       | DL1 | AREA 41 DIRECTOR |
|   | KASHAUN | PARKER        | PM3 | AREA 42 DIRECTOR |

16 voting DEC members were present.

### ***ADOPTION OF COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA***

Gary Vaughn, District Director, reviewed the meeting agenda. The motion to adopt the agenda as given was moved by Dawn Weber, Area 20 Director, and seconded by Dick Poirier, DTM.

### ***VOTING PROCEDURES & SPECIAL RULES OF ORDER***

Gary Vaughn, District Director, reviewed voting procedures on behalf of Steve Vaccaro, District Parliamentarian.

Special rules are available on the district website for review.

- Unanimous consent may be used to adopt a motion or take action without a vote if there is no apparent opposition.

### ***CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE REPORT & QUORUM CERTIFICATION***

Dick Poirier, DTM, Credentials Committee Chair, provided the report.

- District 54 currently has 46 paid clubs in good standing.
  - Each club receives 2 votes (one for the President and one for the Vice President Education).
- A total of 92 votes are available.
- A quorum, requiring 31 attendees (one-third of Presidents and Vice Presidents Education), has been met with 42 registered Presidents and Vice Presidents Education.
- Additionally, 14 District Executive Committee members have registered to vote, bringing the total eligible ballots to 56.
- A simple majority would be 29 if all ballots are cast.

Without objection, the motion to adopt the Credentials Committee report was approved by unanimous consent.



Credentials  
Committee Report ar

### ***SEPTEMBER DISTRICT COUNCIL MINUTES***

The minutes and related documents are available for review on the district website. Since no corrections were noted, the minutes were accepted as posted. Ching Yuan Su, District

Administration Manager, provided a summary to remind members of key discussions and decisions.

### **MID-YEAR AUDIT REPORT**

Elias Hayes presented the district Mid-Year Audit Report on behalf of Helen Dotson, 2025 Audit Committee Chair. The audit, conducted by Helen Dotson, Rachel Huls, and Elias Hayes, found all transactions from June to December 2024 were correctly executed and all funds properly supported the Toastmasters mission. Two recommendations were made to improve the accuracy and efficiency of future audit procedures. The committee concluded that the district leadership team is doing an excellent job managing district resources. Without objection, the report was accepted as presented.



Mid-Year  
Audit\_2025-02.pdf

### **ALIGNMENT REPORT**

Jason Heissler, DTM, Chair of the Alignment Committee, presented the report, which is available on the district website. To comply with Toastmasters International guidelines, the committee recommends geographically dividing the district into two divisions: Division A, responsible for the northern half, and Division B, responsible for the southern half. Ken Kocher, Division D Director, inquired about the possibility of renaming the divisions as Division N and Division S. After discussion, some members felt that Divisions A and B remain the most logical choice. Dan Kyburz, DTM, Immediate Past District Director, commended Jason's work.

Without objection, the alignment was adopted.

### **FINANCE MANAGER REPORT**

Jason Heissler, DTM, Finance Manager, presented the monthly Treasurer's report. As of March 31, the district reserve account balance was \$24,448.45, and as of April 30, the checking account balance was \$2,233.21. The P&L statement is attached for review.

- Membership revenue is 17% above budget, while expenses are \$4,700 under budget.
- The Quarter 3 Treasurer's Report, including the certificate page, has been submitted to Toastmasters International.
- The Year-End Audit Report is due by August 31.

Without objection, the report was accepted as presented.



FM\_Report\_D54\_20  
2505 - MAY.pdf

## ***DISTRICT LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT***

Dan Kyburz, DTM, District Leadership Committee Chair, explained that the current report is valid but incomplete, as it does not include candidates for Club Growth Director. He added that these candidates would be nominated from the floor. Gary Vaughn, District Director, thanked Dan and the committee for their efforts. Without objection, the report—available on the district website—was accepted as presented.

## ***ELECTION OF THE 2025-2026 OFFICERS***

Gary Vaughn presented district officer nominees for 2025-2026.

|                          |                 |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| District Director        | Wendy Pesavento |
| Program Quality Director | Estelle Foster  |
| Club Growth Director     | Chris Kostelec  |
| Division Director        | Kari Susairaj   |
| Division Director        | Troy LaPorte    |

- Dick Poirier, DTM, made a motion from the floor to nominate Chris Kostelec as Club Growth Director, which was seconded by Sherri DeLeonardis, DTM, Area 32 Director. No other nominations were received.
- Sherri requested clarification regarding the division assignment for both Division Director candidates. Dan Kyburz explained that they would decide between themselves once elected.
- As the election was uncontested, Ching Yuan Su, Administration Manager, cast one single secret vote on behalf of the group. The Club Growth Director and all other nominees were approved.

## ***DISTRICT ALIGNMENT REPORT***

Bonnie Tippy, DTM, District Representative, reported that Toastmasters International has initiated a district realignment process aimed at merging smaller districts to create larger, more sustainable districts of approximately 120-180 clubs each.

- District 54 is expected to remain largely intact, with addition of District 8 and the probable addition of clubs from District 19.
- The final decision will be made by Toastmasters International, with the new district configuration set to take effect in the 2026-2027 program year.
- For additional information, please visit the District Realignment FAQ page on the Toastmasters International website.

Dick Poirier inquired about preparations for the transition phase. Gary Vaughn responded that the district is making a strong effort to prepare clubs and members for the merging process.

## ***Division Reports***

The Division Directors submitted written reports, and verbal reports were presented in the order shown.

## ***DIVISION A***

Troy LaPorte, Division A Director, presented the Division A report, with the written report attached.

- Rockford Communication League and Timely Talkers Toastmasters have achieved distinguished club status.
- 73% of Area Directors' club visits have been completed.
- In addition to club visits, this month's focus at the club and area level includes club officer elections and membership building.



Division A Report  
May 2025.pdf

## ***DIVISION B***

Venkat Chander, Division B Director, presented the Division B report, with the written report attached.

- Astounding Communicators and Pimiteoui Club have achieved distinguished club status.
- Area Directors have completed 64% of their club visits.
- Quad Cities Easy Speakers Toastmasters has been reinstated with 12 members.



Division B Report  
May 2025.pdf

## ***DIVISION C***

Rosemary Nash, Division C Director, presented the Division C report, with the written report attached.

- Thursday Noon Talkers has achieved 5 goals and is a distinguished club.
- Area Directors have visited some clubs and will submit their visit reports soon.
- Both ADM City Center and ADM Toastmasters are working on next year's officer board. The latter is also striving to meet more regularly.



Division C Report  
May 2025.pdf

## ***DIVISION D***

Ken Kocher, Division D Director, presented the Division D report, with the written report included as an attachment.

- New Lenox Toastmasters and McKinley Club have become distinguished clubs.
- Area Directors will complete club visits in May and submit their reports before the deadline.
- During a recent visit, Key City Toastmasters displayed great energy and showed significant improvements. This club is making a strong comeback.



Division D Report  
May 2025.pdf

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGER**

Prince Motiani, DTM, Public Relations Manager, was unable to attend the meeting.

District 54 page on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/d54tm>

District 54 group on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/498728804348481>

District 54 website link: <https://d54tm.com/>

District 54 on LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/76960127>

District 54 on UTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W3ei1dohTDg>

## **CLUB GROWTH DIRECTOR**

Estelle Foster, Club Growth Director, presented the Club Growth Director's report. The written report is attached.

- ALDI Inc. has 17 members for the new club and is working to recruit the remaining members.
- We have scheduled a virtual demonstration meeting with Savant Wealth and will need additional volunteers to assist.
- 28% of Area Directors' club visits and reports have been completed. The deadline is May 31, 2025.
- To achieve distinguished district status, we need 2 more paid clubs, 24 additional members, and 8 more distinguished clubs.



CGD Report May  
2025.pdf

## **PROGRAM QUALITY DIRECTOR**

Wendy Pesavento, DTM, Program Quality Director, delivered the Program Quality Director's report, which is attached.

- The District Contests will be held on May 10, 2025, with Dan Kyburz serving as Contest Chair, Noel Ganay and Dick Poirier as Chief Judges, and Jerry Evans as Contest Toastmaster.
- All current and incoming Division and Area Directors are expected to attend the June DEC meeting and Division and Area Director training session. The training will be led by the Trio, focusing on transition planning.
- The dates for the 2025 Summer TLI-South, TLI-North, and TLI-Virtual will be available on the district website soon. Sherri DeLeonardis and Rachael Berry will serve as deans of TLI-South and TLI-North, respectively.





PQD Report May  
2025.pdf

## ***DISTRICT DIRECTOR***

Gary Vaughn, District Director, presented the District Director's report.

- Through the collective effort of everyone, the district has achieved many accomplishments this Toastmasters year, including several potential clubs preparing to be chartered and numerous clubs nearing Distinguished status.
- Ken Kocher is now leading the effort to help reinstate Bolingbrook Area Chamber of Commerce Toastmasters.
- District 54 received a congratulatory letter from the Lieutenant Governor of Illinois recognizing the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Toastmasters meeting. This is a great encouragement for us!

## ***OLD BUSINESS***

- No old business was presented.

## ***OPEN DISCUSSION / Q&A***

- Maryann Reichelt inquired about the 2025-2026 Club Success Plan. Gary Vaughn responded that Toastmasters International has new requirements, and Area Directors will work with their clubs to prepare accordingly. Dan Kyburz added that Toastmasters International may require the long form instead of the short form in the upcoming year.
- Dick Poirier commented that we are very close to achieving Distinguished status. If a guest shows interest, we should make every effort to encourage them to join.

## ***NEW BUSINESS***

- No new business was presented.

## ***CLOSING THOUGHT***

Wendy Pesavento, DTM, Program Quality Director, reflected on the district's accomplishments during the 2024-2025 term and encouraged members to keep moving forward while maintaining momentum.

## ***ADJOURNMENT***

Gary Vaughn, District Director, formally adjourned the meeting at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Ching Yuan Su  
District 54 Administration Manager, 2024-2025