

**Partial Transcript:**  
***The Future of AA Meetings Now that Zoom is Here to Stay***  
**An Interactive Workshop Sponsored by District 22**  
**April 27, 2021**

The following is a partial transcript of the Zoom workshop, *The Future of AA Meetings Now that Zoom is Here to Stay*, sponsored by District 22 of Massachusetts on April 27, 2021. Over 90 AAs and friends participated in the event, which was led by panelists who shared their experience, expertise, and ideas on three topics: Hybrid meetings, concurrent meetings, and accessibility issues. Read on! Lots of great information. [Also have a look at the District 22 website for links to resources and contact information provided by the panelists.](#)

**First panel (Hybrid Meetings)** Panelists: Maria G (Cape Cod, Orleans Young People Group), Chris M (Peace of Mind, Wakefield)  
Moderator: Kit (JFT, GSR), Chat Moderator: Cheryl C (JFT)

**Maria G:**

Hybrid since last spring. Started by bringing zoom to their meeting tent. Use a laptop (preferred) or phone.

Projector to show the zoom participants on a white wall to the members physically at meeting. In winter, back in clubhouse, used laptop to open Zoom and large screen to show the Zoom participants. Their goal was to marry the Zoom and in-person. Not have two separate meetings. Tech help.

**Chris M:**

First plan – but don't plan too much!

Remember our primary purpose and remember the newcomer. Let God in.

Use a host for zoom participants and a host for in-person meeting.

In-person attendees need to know there is a camera. There are usually blind spots.

Equipment suggested:

Laptop

A stable connection to internet, hopefully using Wi-Fi

Large TV or projector with HDMI output and screen (or wall to project)

Wide angle USB camera

Optional in large halls: Bluetooth speaker, wireless microphone

**1<sup>st</sup> Panel Q&A:**

Q: Who can see whom? A: Projector shows zoom participants to Zoom and in-person. Q: Who can the zoom people see? Only in-meeting participants in view of the meeting camera

Q: Is there any kind of sound system?

A: Depends on room size. A wireless mic which can be passed around. 120\* camera.

Q: How to you go back and forth? A: The two hosts communicate

A “share chair” can be used for the in-person meeting participants. Also use speaker format on zoom (big speaker square) so everyone is focused just on the Zoom speaker (for Zoom shares)

Q: How does group select speaker? A: Depends on group

**Second Panel (Concurrent Meetings)** Panelists: Mara W (First Shot Lexington, GSR), Liz D (JFT Arlington)

Moderator: Sandra (Saturday Morning Miracles Newton), Eileen (Chat Moderator, D22 Treas.)

**Mara:**

Majority of participants from home group meeting went to Zoom, while 2 committed members kept the in-person meeting going – the meetings are held at the same time, but not together (as happens with hybrid meetings). Same format and service positions for both Zoom and in-person meetings (in-person meeting required sanitized cleaning).

Zoom meeting made accessible to new people while avoiding bombing by using an ID and password. Zoom meeting has a chair for the meeting and a zoom virtual host. These are monthly positions.

**Liz D:**

Zoom meetings for 6am and 7am began immediately (start of pandemic). The two zoom meetings each have a small group to discuss format. Some new service positions added. The in-person and zoom meetings have their own service positions. Meet together for business meetings.

Are we one group or multiple groups? JFT culture is different per meeting. JFT established two committees (6am and 7am Zoom) to review best practices.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Panel Q&A:**

Q: Are there any sample scripts for the concurrent meetings? A: The Zoom scripts are on [the JFT website](#)

Q: How is zoom paid for? A: JFT Treasury

Q: Using Venmo/Paypal? A: Member contributions per the AA preamble and 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition. First Shot uses Venmo. JFT uses Paypal. Aware of potential hacking and/or breach of anonymity.

Q: Should meetings be held back-to-back or concurrently? *No discussion per se.*

Q: Is there an advantage to separating the groups for governance? A: Advantage to separate is more service work. Per Todd A, only one group number even if separate.

**Third Panel (Accessibility)** Panelists: Jerry B (Malden), Jeff (Chelmsford Dawn Breakers)  
Moderator: Linda (Daily Reflections Newton, GSR)

**Jerry B:**

Be aware that some meetings listed as accessible are not. Physical barriers can include non-accessible bathrooms; even one step into the hall can keep out a person using a walker. Devices for deaf include captioning (on Zoom). For the blind, Zoom has good accessibility – with Zoom link instead of having to enter ID and PW. Zoom is best option for the blind. Accessibility information available on <https://area30accessibilities.org/>

**Jeff:**

Treatment centers, Coordinator for Emerson Hospital. Zoom compliance to meet each treatment center's requirements. Inside the treatment center, need a champion to keep this going. Zoom meetings may not allow feedback to group speaker.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Panel Q&A:**

Q: Should accessibility designations be in meeting book? A, Jerry B: Survey the meeting venues to make sure book is correct.

Q: Can there be a signer? A: The LA meeting has one.

Q: How can groups help? A: Contact [treatment@aaemass.org](mailto:treatment@aaemass.org)  
For those interested in organizing a remote commitment, Tewksbury has many groups coming in.

Q: Is there a back-up to global Zoom outage? A: [www.freeconferencecall.com](http://www.freeconferencecall.com) is an option.