

COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS

Agenda

Committee Considerations:

- The committee reviewed the Conference Evaluation Form and made no changes.
- The committee discussed providing the General Service Conference Evaluation Form in an anonymous digital format, in addition to the current paper format, and requested that the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference explore this option and provide a report to the 2016 Conference Agenda Committee.
- The committee reviewed the report on the Conference Agenda Process from the trustees' Committee on the Conference with appreciation. After a thorough and lengthy discussion, the committee noted that while there were several areas of progress, the report did not fully explore the potential role that the Conference Agenda Committee might play in the selection process of Agenda items in the future. Therefore the committee requested that the trustees' Committee on the Conference fully explore the potential role that the Conference Agenda Committee might play in the selection process of Agenda items in the future and provide a report to the 2016 Conference Agenda Committee.
- The committee supported the concept under consideration by the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference to make trustees' Committee background available to the delegate chairperson of their corresponding Conference committee at the quarterly board weekend prior to the Conference. The committee noted that this would increase the effectiveness of the delegate chairpersons' participation in the trustees' committee meeting.
- The committee discussed adding a review of the Conference week schedule (Conference Agenda) to the standing items on the committee agenda and took no action, noting that this is not necessary as this is included in the Conference Agenda Committee's Scope.

Archives

Committee Considerations:

- The committee reviewed the contents of the Archives Workbook noting minor editorial changes and a new section, "Sharing on Digital Archives," which will provide sharing and suggestions for Archives committees.
- The committee discussed the "Shared Experiences" section in the Archives Workbook, which is refreshed every five years. The committee suggested including experience shared by local archivists and archives committees on where archives are housed, associated costs, access procedures, and description of contents.

Cooperation With the Professional Community

Committee Considerations:

The committee reviewed the contents of the Cooperation With the Professional Community Kit and Workbook and made the following suggestions:

- That changes suggested by the 2015 Cooperation With the Professional Community Conference Committee to the Cooperation With the Professional Community Workbook be forwarded to the trustees' Committee on Cooperation With the Professional Community/Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities for review and implementation.
- That the trustees' Committee on Cooperation With the Professional Community/Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities review the pamphlet, "Three Talks To Medical Societies by Bill W., Co-Founder of A.A.," noting the 2015 Conference Committee's concerns related to its language, outdated information and relevance to modern day medical professionals.

The committee noted that future development of material may be needed to reflect current information about A.A. to be provided to medical professionals, perhaps utilizing past and current Class A trustees.

- That the trustees' Committee on Cooperation With the Professional Community/Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities continue to read and review the selection of pamphlets included in the C.P.C. Kit, taking into consideration whether the current selection best supports the needs of C.P.C. Committees and professionals in terms of language and content, particularly in the following pamphlets:
 - Speaking At Non-A.A. Meetings
 - A Brief Guide To Alcoholics Anonymous
 - Is There an Alcoholic In the Workplace?
 - How A.A. Members Cooperate With Professionals
 - The A.A. Member—Medications and Other Drugs

Corrections

Committee Considerations:

- The committee discussed the Corrections Correspondence Service (C.C.S.) and requested that the trustees' Committee on Corrections consider reviewing the effectiveness of the criteria used for linking alcoholics behind the walls with outside volunteers. One specific concern is the distance requirement for correspondents participating in the Corrections Correspondence Service (C.C.S.).
- The committee discussed ways to engage members in Corrections service and noted the helpfulness of the new service piece, "Engaging A.A. Members in Corrections Work" is in this effort.
- The committee reviewed the contents of the Corrections Kit and Workbook and suggested that the prison issue of the A. A. Grapevine publication, La Viña, be included in the English-language Corrections Kit.

Finance

Committee Considerations:

- The committee reviewed the suggested area contribution for delegate expense for the Conference and after a lengthy discussion, agreed an increase was not appropriate at this time.
- The committee received and discussed information from the A.A.W.S. Self-Support Committee, looked favorably on work to date and urged continuing efforts.
- The committee ran out of time and did not review the Self-Support packet, however, it noted it was reviewed in detail last year.

Grapevine

Committee Considerations:

- The committee reviewed the 2015 Grapevine Office Report on Audio Strategy and requested that the Grapevine office provide an updated status and financial report on the project, including practices, financials, metrics and plans for the future to the 2016 Conference Committee on the Grapevine.
- The committee reviewed the A.A. Grapevine Board's 2015 Office Report on La Viña and agreed that La Viña is published as cost effectively as possible given existing parameters and conditions. The committee agreed with the A.A. Grapevine Board's suggestion to develop and implement a communication plan that utilizes (but is not limited to) A.A. Grapevine, Inc.'s newsletters, Forum presentations, and *Box 4-5-9* to clarify to the Fellowship La Viña's unique status as a hybrid entity that is at once a service to the Fellowship and is also required to strive to become self-supporting.
- The committee encouraged the support and purchase of Subscription Gift Certificates by local service committees, groups and members as a way to carry the A.A. message. These subscriptions would be used to provide magazines to people in correctional facilities, treatment centers, nursing homes, and other facilities or locations. This work would be accomplished at the local area level.
- The committee discussed ways to increase organization-wide support for Grapevine and La Viña and suggested that:
 1. Areas champion and embrace Grapevine/La Viña as the International Journals of A.A. through consistent narrative support in all relevant presentations, reports, announcements, newsletters and letters.
 2. All A.A. entities be offered the opportunity to include a GV/LV link (with or without images) on local/area websites.
 3. All areas participate in AAGV Inc.'s 2015 Subscription Challenge.
- The committee agreed to forward to the A.A. Grapevine Board the suggestion that Grapevine produce in the year 2016 or later:
 1. Armed Forces Members' AA Stories (working title)

Members who have served in the military share their experiences with getting sober or staying sober in AA, previously published in Grapevine magazine and/or AAGrapevine.org.

2. Voices from Early AA (working title)

A collection of stories from the earliest days of Alcoholics Anonymous and Grapevine, previously published in Grapevine magazine and/or AAGrapevine.org.

- The committee reviewed the Grapevine Workbook.

International Conventions/Regional Forums

Committee Considerations:

- The committee heard reports on the upcoming 2015 International Convention:
 - Over 40,000 people have registered for the Convention so far. About half of those have pre-purchased the special 2015 Convention souvenir book, *Alcoholics Anonymous: 80 Years – Happy, Joyous and Free*. The Grapevine's commemorative edition of the book, *Happy, Joyous and Free*, has also been preordered and subscriptions to the Grapevine and La Viña have been sold through the preregistration process.
 - This is the third International Convention where online registration was available. Communications have been made to insure that all attendees are prepared for the Convention experience, and understand the challenges of weather and getting around the large convention facility.
 - Preparations are in place for the anonymity-protected broadcast of the Friday night Flag Ceremony.
 - The Advance Program guide has been sent to all registrants and is available on G.S.O.'s A.A. website.
 - Notices have been included in Convention material to emphasize A.A.'s Anonymity Traditions to attendees and the *Box 4-5-9* spring issue featured the article "Anonymity and the 2015 International Convention." The Convention program also includes a new panel meeting titled "Anonymity and the Convention – I get It!"
 - The Convention APP will be launched in early May for download on mobile devices.
 - New to the International Convention will be an Anonymity Booth and a "Carry the Message" pavilion featuring booths providing information on A.A.'s Cooperation With the Professional Community, Corrections, Grapevine/La Viña, Public Information, Special Needs-Accessibilities and Treatment committee service.
- The committee discussed ways to encourage interest in Regional Forums and attract first-time attendees, and suggested:
 - That delegates and area trusted servants communicate the value of Forum participation early and often;
 - Share with the Fellowship the easy availability of one-on-one conversations with trustees, directors and staff members that can be found at the Forums;
 - Consider utilizing A.A. Conventions and other A.A. events as opportunities to share the new Regional Forum Flyers with the Fellowship;

Literature

Committee Considerations:

- The committee reviewed a suggestion to produce a book combining “Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions” with the “Twelve Concepts for World Service” and took no action. The committee noted that the *Twelve Concepts for World Service* are suitably placed with *The A.A. Service Manual* and in a stand-alone volume.
- The committee suggested consideration of developing a service piece on A.A. as a resource for the mental health professional.
- The committee reviewed the complete text of “The A.A.W.S., Inc. Policy on Publication of Literature” and suggested that “The A.A.W.S., Inc. Policy on Publication of Literature” always be included as background for the Conference Committee on Literature.
- The committee suggested that the trustees’ Literature Committee develop a plan for the systematic review of recovery literature and bring it to the 2016 Conference Literature Committee for its review.
- The committee suggested that a white imprint area for local use be included on the back of each pamphlet as it comes up for reprint.

Policy/Admissions

Committee Considerations:

- The committee reviewed a request for a representative from the General Service Board of A.A. in the Czech Republic to attend the 65th General Service Conference as an observer. In light of a recent communication from the General Service Board of the Czech Republic that their group conscience had come to a decision not to send an observer to the 65th General Service Conference, no action was necessary.
- The committee requested that, to assist the committee in its deliberations, when background for any agenda item of the committee references specific policy, that the policy referenced be included as part of the background.
- The committee considered a request that a recording of the A.A. meeting at the opening dinner of the General Service Conference be provided to each member of the General Service Conference and took no action. The committee agreed that the A.A. talks at the Opening Dinner of the Conference are enjoyable and reflect the A.A. stories of the speakers, but are not specifically focused on A.A. service.

Public Information

Committee Considerations:

- While discussing the proposed video public service announcement, “Doors,” the committee expressed their appreciation for the thinking behind attempting to use

already-recorded A.A. members' stories, as both a cost-saving measure and for the purpose of authenticity.

- The committee reviewed the 2014 Annual Report from the trustees' Committee on Public Information regarding G.S.O.'s A.A. website. The committee appreciated the inclusion of selected website analytics and looks forward to emerging clarity of how this information might be useful to A.A.'s work of carrying the message.
- The committee discussed a brief video on anonymity produced to accompany the annual Anonymity Letter to the Media, and agreed that the video is an engaging tool for communicating with the press. The committee suggested that the Intra-Office Website Committee (I.O.W.C.) explore additional pages on the aa.org website where this video might be useful, in addition to the Press/Media page, and pass along their suggestions to the A.A.W.S. Board for consideration.
- The committee reviewed the 2015 Public Information Comprehensive Media plan and expressed their appreciation for the report's responsiveness to suggestions offered by the 2014 Conference Public Information Committee. The committee offered the following suggestions:

Refining existing tools.

Considering the immediate need for guidance on the use of social media by A.A. members, the committee asked the staff secretary to share information with all P.I. committee chairs and area delegates about existing literature that offers suggestions regarding A.A. principles and the Internet. The distribution of this information should correspond with the launch of the new Anonymity Resource Page planned for the aa.org website, which promises to be a useful tool for sharing information on this vital topic with A.A. members, the media, and the general public.

The committee also suggested that the Publishing Department develop a new section in the Public Information Workbook on the Internet and Social Media based on existing literature on the subject, with the understanding that such content may need updating as new information is gathered about online platforms.

The committee agreed with the suggestion in the report from the trustees' Public Information Committee on A.A. Video P.S.A.s that the Spanish video P.S.A. "Tengo Esperanza" be translated into English and French, and that the 2016 Conference Public Information Committee consider centrally distributing and tracking the new spots.

Exploring new forms/channels of presenting/distributing content.

The committee considered favorably the suggestion that the 2015 trustees' Public Information Committee gather information about the potential for using platforms such as Twitter, Instagram and Google+ for the purpose of providing information about A.A. to the public. The committee strongly suggested that the exploration take into consideration the still-relevant concerns regarding potential implications to our Traditions reflected in the 2012 Report of the Public Information Social Media Page Subcommittee. The committee suggested that the General Service Board explore these resources and report back to the 2016 Conference Public Information

Committee with consideration of the following:

- Specific benefits of using each resource for reaching the still-suffering alcoholic;
 - How each platform will help the public information task of providing accurate information about what A.A. is and what it is not;
 - How each platform might be utilized while still maintaining member anonymity;
 - How each platform might be utilized while avoiding the appearance of promotion and still allowing our friends to recommend us;
 - How user interaction with A.A. content on such platforms might avoid controversy, or the appearance of endorsement or affiliation;
 - Clear distinctions between (a) public information work, and (b) general communication such as fellowship among members, and interaction between members and nonmembers;
 - Information about terms of service and privacy policies;
 - Information about the use of these platforms by other Twelve Step fellowships;
 - Information about the local use of these platforms gathered from various parts of the A.A. Fellowship (e.g. delegate areas, intergroup/central offices, YPAAs, the National A.A. Technology Workshop and G.S.O.s outside the U.S. and Canada).
- The committee discussed a suggestion that the trustees' Public Information Committee explore a project for anonymity videos produced by A.A. members for A.A. members and agreed that emerging technologies for how member-submitted content might be gathered should be explored prior to developing a proposal for such a project. The committee asked the staff secretary to forward a list of questions and concerns to the trustees' P.I. Committee, and asked that a report or draft proposal be brought back to the 2016 Conference Public Information Committee for review.
 - The committee discussed how to increase A.A. member participation in local public information work, and asked the staff secretary to share a list of suggestions with the trustees' Public Information Committee and with local P.I. chairs.
 - The committee reviewed the contents of the P.I. Kit and Workbook, and made the following suggestions:
 - Information about the new video on anonymity be included with information already in the Kit about annual communication with the media.
 - The committee suggested that the text on page 14 of the current P.I. Workbook be revised to reflect the current content on the F-20 Anonymity Card.
 - The committee suggested that the information on page 47 of the current P.I. Workbook regarding the G.S.O.'s A.A. website be updated to reflect the redesigned website.
 - The committee suggested that the online PDF version of the P.I. Workbook, when referencing other A.A. publications on the aa.org website, be linked digitally to those items online. The committee suggested that other service workbooks might need review for similar updates.
 - While discussing potential changes to the P.I. Kit and Workbook, the committee agreed that it would be helpful to have a way to easily identify new or updated information on the aa.org website and in printed material. The committee asked the staff secretary to share this suggestion with the A.A.W.S. Board.

Report and Charter

Committee Considerations:

- The committee accepted a report from the Publishing Department outlining the General Service Office process for timely and accurate preparation and publication of *The A.A. Service Manual 2015-2016 Edition*, and the 2015 General Service Conference *Final Report*. The committee noted that the “Report of the 2015 General Service Conference Inventory” in the *Final Report* may take longer to prepare than the other front matter and asked to review the page proofs of the inventory report as soon as possible prior to publication.
- The committee requested the opportunity to review the page proofs of the *Final Report of the General Service Conference Inventory* prior to publication.
- The committee reviewed a list of editorial updates from the Publishing Department for *The A.A. Service Manual* and suggested some revisions.
- In keeping with the 2009 Advisory Action that the General Service Board, the A.A.W.S. Board and the A.A. Grapevine Board annually review *The A.A. Service Manual* and forward necessary updates to the Conference Committee on Report and Charter, the committee reviewed the updates from the General Service Board, the A.A.W.S. Board and the A.A. Grapevine Board and suggested some revisions.
- The committee considered a request to include a chart in *The A.A. Service Manual* in the section “Working with Local Intergroups and Central Offices” on pages S41-S42 and took no action. The committee noted that since local intergroups and central offices are not part of the general service structure, a chart could be misleading; and that the description of this vital service provided by these local intergroup/central offices was adequately expressed in the text.
- The committee considered the complexities involved in annual production of *The A.A. Service Manual* and requested that the General Service Office consider publishing *The A.A. Service Manual* every other year and requested that a report on alternative publishing schedules, including cost considerations, be brought back to the 2016 Conference Committee on Report and Charter.
- The committee considered the A.A. Directories (Canada, Eastern U.S., Western U.S. and International) and suggested that the section currently called “Online Meetings” be reviewed and possibly renamed “Online Meetings/Groups” to reflect the Twelfth Step work that some online groups carry out beyond the meetings.
- The committee considered the General Service Conference *Final Report* and suggested that the Publishing Department consider using a larger font to make the *Final Report* more accessible; and requested that a report from the Publishing Department on the feasibility of producing a large-print format of the General Service Conference *Final Report* including cost estimates be brought back to the 2016 Conference Committee on Report and Charter.

- The committee considered the General Service Conference *Final Report* and suggested that several items of interest be highlighted on the front cover including: “Advisory Actions,” “Area Highlights,” and “Presentations.”

Treatment Facilities/Special Needs/Accessibilities

Committee Considerations:

- The committee supported the trustees’ committee’s request for the A.A.W.S. Board to consider posting contents of A.A. literature items produced in audio formats on G.S.O.’s website, aa.org.
- The committee expressed appreciation for the A.A.W.S. Publishing Department’s consideration to publish a service piece of the Twelve Concepts for World Service for ASL signing purposes.
- The committee supported the efforts of the A.A.W.S. Board to explore ways to provide electronic versions of the Workbooks and other material in the Kits to committee chairs as an alternative to automatically mailing hard copies and noted the following:
 - The committee strongly encouraged that postal mailing of printed Workbooks and other material in the Kits be the primary means of delivery.
 - The committee noted that the “opt-in” measure in the welcome letter to new chairs did not reflect the intent of the 2014 Conference Committee’s Consideration and resulted in incomplete data. They suggested that a survey be taken of new chairs from the “exploratory period” who did not respond to their welcome letter to attempt to better understand the effectiveness of the electronic service material and the exploratory approach in general.
- The committee reviewed the Treatment Committee Kit and Workbook and forwarded suggestions for updates to the trustees’ Committee on Cooperation With the Professional Community/Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities.
- The committee reviewed the Special Needs-Accessibilities Committee Kit and Workbook and forwarded suggestions for updates to the trustees’ committee on Cooperation With the Professional Community/Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities.
- The committee requested the trustees’ Committee on Cooperation With the Professional Community/Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities consider how to better realize the commitment to make A.A. more readily available to all and suggested:
 - Focusing on the concept of overcoming barriers in accessing, receiving, and carrying the A.A. message, rather than the limiting concept of identifying “special needs” and to consider how this change might be reflected in the trustees’ committee scope.
 - Changing all references to “Special Needs-Accessibilities” to “Accessibilities,” including the trustees’ and Conference Committee names.
 - Revising the Special Needs-Accessibilities Workbook with a particular focus on emphasizing solutions to overcoming barriers.

- Reorganizing the Special Needs-Accessibilities Workbook to include the following sections: 1) Accessing the A.A. Message 2) Receiving the A.A. Message 3) Carrying the A.A. Message. Each section might include shared experience for overcoming barriers.

Trustees

Committee Considerations:

- The committee reviewed the resumes and approved, as eligible for election, all Class B trustee candidates for the Northeast and Southwest regional trustees and the trustee-at-large/Canada.
- Reflecting on the importance of Concept XI, the committee encouraged the General Service Board and A.A. Fellowship to identify, attract and recruit in a timely manner, a diverse, competent and qualified pool of candidates to serve as Class A (nonalcoholic) trustees, Class B (alcoholic) trustees, nontrustee directors and appointed committee members on trustees' committees.

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