

**NOTE:** These are Advisory Actions only. Details are contained in full Conference committee reports.

## **CONFERENCE ADVISORY ACTIONS OF THE 61<sup>ST</sup> GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE**

The following recommendations were approved by the 61<sup>ST</sup> General Service Conference and the General Service Board:

### **Floor Action**

It was recommended that:

1. The 61<sup>st</sup> General Service Conference express its appreciation and gratitude for the French-language magazine “La Vigne,” and the value it has for French-speaking members of Alcoholics Anonymous and the respect “La Vigne” has shown for the Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous.

### **Agenda**

It was recommended that:

2. The theme for the 2012 General Service Conference be: “Anonymity: Our Spiritual Responsibility in the Digital Age”
3. The following be presentation/discussion topics for the 2012 General Service Conference:
  - a) Carrying the A.A. Message:
    1. Still Our Primary Purpose
    2. Social Web Sites
    3. Young People in A.A.
    4. Importance of Sponsorship
  - b) Change – Essential to A.A.’s Growth:
    1. Service: Our Third Legacy
    2. Spirit of Rotation
    3. Diversity – Let’s Keep Our Doors Open for Any Who May Suffer from Alcoholism
    4. Archives – Where the Past Meets the Present
4. The following be the workshop topic for the 2012 General Service Conference: “Safety in A.A.: Our Common Welfare.”

## Archives<sup>1</sup>

No recommendations.

## Cooperation With the Professional Community

No recommendations.

## Corrections

It was recommended that:

5. The following changes be made to the pamphlet "A.A in Correctional Facilities":

That the text in the section on "Meetings" which reads,

"Since the Twelve Steps are the basis of our recovery in A.A., many groups hold Step meetings. The leader might share a bit of his or her story and talk briefly about a particular Step and then throw the meeting open for discussion. Each type of meeting serves a different purpose; all are needed."

Be replaced with:

"Many groups also hold Step meetings, Tradition meetings or Big Book studies. Each type of meeting serves a different purpose; all are needed."

And that the heading and text of the section "Step meetings," which reads,

*"Step meetings*

In addition to a leader sharing his or her experience with a Step, some groups might read from *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, followed by a discussion. Many groups find listening to cassette tapes on the Steps helpful. (Tapes are available from the General Service Office.)"

Be replaced with:

*"Step meetings, Tradition meetings and Big Book studies*

Since the Twelve Steps are the basis of our recovery in A.A., many groups hold Step meetings. Some groups read passages from the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* or the Big Book, followed by a discussion.

Groups may also read and discuss the Twelve Traditions, the best answers we have found to the questions "How can A.A. best function?" and "How can A.A. best stay whole and so survive?"

Since the Big Book contains not only directions for how many of our members practice the Twelve Steps, but also a brief history of our Fellowship's beginnings and personal stories to help newcomers identify with other alcoholics, many A.A. groups devote meeting time to the study of this basic text.

<sup>1</sup>Members of this committee serve on this as a secondary committee assignment.

Audio recordings of the Big Book and *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* are available from the General Service Office. The pamphlets “The Twelve Steps Illustrated” and “The Twelve Traditions Illustrated” may also be helpful.

## Finance

It was recommended that:

6. The following changes be made to the pamphlet “Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix:”
  - “AND” be replaced with “OR” between the pie charts that start on page 12 and an additional “OR” added after the second pie chart.
  - insert an additional blank pie chart and distribution text as follows to the beginning of the pie chart examples:



|                             |         |
|-----------------------------|---------|
| District                    | _____ % |
| Area Committee              | _____ % |
| G.S.O.                      | _____ % |
| Intergroup/Central Office   | _____ % |
| Other A.A. Service Entities | _____ % |
| Other A.A. Service Entities | _____ % |

- Other minor editorial changes.

## Grapevine

It was recommended that:

7. In the spirit of being self-supporting while also protecting our Traditions of attraction, anonymity, and non-affiliation, A.A. Grapevine be permitted to utilize digital channels and current (commissionable) support and distribution technologies, such as, but not limited to, smart phones, tablets, e-readers, applications and commissioned online stores for the sale and distribution of magazines, books and products. The committee requests that the Board ensure that all contracts protect our Traditions, with the option to discontinue any and all contracts at any time. The Committee requests that a status and financial report be submitted to the 2012 Grapevine Conference Committee.
8. The A.A. Grapevine Board, in consultation with the A.A. World Services Board and under the guidance of the General Service Board chairman, continue to investigate what efficiencies and objectives can be accomplished by combining services and sharing resources, including reviewing Concept 11, while still maintaining editorial and corporate independence.
9. The editorial revisions made by the A.A. Grapevine staff to “The A.A. Grapevine and La Viña: Our Meetings in Print” pamphlet be approved with minor suggestions.

## **International Conventions/Regional Forums**<sup>1</sup>

No recommendations.

### **Literature**

It was recommended that:

10. The revised pamphlet “The A.A. Member—Medications and Other Drugs” be approved.
11. The trustees’ Literature Committee continue to develop literature which focuses on spirituality that includes stories from atheists and agnostics who are sober in Alcoholics Anonymous. The committee expressed support for the trustees’ efforts to develop a pamphlet which reflects the wide range of spiritual experiences of A.A. members and asked that a draft pamphlet or progress report be brought to the 2012 Conference Committee on Literature for consideration.
12. The following text under “When you’re a G.S.R.,” in the pamphlet “G.S.R. General Service Representative” which currently reads:

“You are linking your home group with the whole of A.A. Back in 1953, when the “group contact” was suggested as a new type of trusted servant, the job was seen simply as a good means of exchanging up-to-date information...”

Be replaced with:

“You are linking your home group with the whole of A.A. In 1950, a new type of trusted servant, “group representative,” was suggested to help in the selection of delegates to the newly-formed General Service Conference. By 1953, the job of “group representative” was also seen as a good means of exchanging up-to-date information....”

### **Policy/Admissions**

It was recommended that:

13. Oscar Calle B. and Jesus Cesar Perez S. from the General Service Structure of Peru be admitted to the 61<sup>st</sup> General Service Conference as observers.
14. Sheila D. and Martin B. from the General Service Structure of Great Britain be admitted to the 61<sup>st</sup> General Service Conference as observers.
15. Mike D., alternate delegate, Area 50, Western New York, be seated as a Conference member at the 61st General Service Conference because John C., the Panel 60 delegate for Area 50 resigned.

<sup>1</sup>Members of this committee serve on this as a secondary committee assignment.

16. Mel C., alternate delegate, Area 83, Eastern Ontario International, be seated as a Conference member at the 61st General Service Conference because Robb W., the panel 61 delegate for Area 83 is unable to attend.
17. The General Service Conference conduct a thorough inventory of itself in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan formulated by the Conference Inventory Planning Committee.
18. The 64<sup>th</sup> General Service Conference be held April 27-May 3, 2014 since these dates do not conflict with any significant holidays or hotel availability.
19. The Conference Committee on Archives meet separately at the General Service Conference following a joint meeting with the trustees' Committee on Archives.
20. The following procedure for the submission of Concept V minority appeals to the General Service Conference be established:
  - 1) The minority, expressing a feeling or opinion in light of the right of appeal to the General Service Conference, has been very rare. It is hoped that an individual entitled under Concept V to appeal would exhaust every avenue offered within the General Service Conference structure prior to making an appeal to the General Service Conference.
  - 2) Those entitled to appeal to the General Service Conference are members who, on the inverted triangle of the A.A. service structure, fall *below* the General Service Conference level – members of staffs, committees, corporate boards or trustees, as referenced, in the first paragraph of Concept V of *The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service*.
  - 3) The minority should announce, in writing, to the chair of the General Service Board, the General Service Conference delegate chair and to the General Service Office Conference coordinator that it intends to appeal under Concept V to the General Service Conference.
  - 4) All Conference members will be given notice through the General Service Office of the minority's decision to file an appeal.
  - 5) Appeals under Concept V, including any minority report and background, must be received in writing 30 days prior to the General Service Conference in order for these materials to be distributed to Conference members. The G.S.O. Conference coordinator will be responsible for seeing that this material is made available to all Conference members within 10 business days after its receipt.
  - 6) The minority's appeal will be presented before the start of deliberation on Committee Reports:
    - The minority will be given a maximum of ten minutes to present their appeal.
    - The majority will then be given a maximum of ten minutes to present their position.

7) The discretion to debate a minority's appeal rests with the Conference body.

The chair will ask if there is a motion to decline to consider the minority's appeal.  
A motion to decline to consider a minority's appeal:

- Must be made without comment.
- Needs a second.
- Is not debatable.
- Requires a *two thirds majority*.

8) If the Conference decides to debate the appeal, it then takes the form of a motion which does not require a second. If passed by substantial unanimity, it becomes an Advisory Action.

9) Whether or not an appeal is debated, a summary of the minority's report and the disposition of the appeal will be published in the *Final Conference Report*.

### **Public Information**

It was recommended that:

21. The 2011 A.A. Membership Survey be conducted by area on a random basis as was done in the 2007 A.A. Membership Survey.
22. The following "Policy on Actors Portraying A.A. Members or Potential A.A. Members in Videos Produced by the General Service Board or its Affiliates" be approved:

Videos produced and distributed by the General Service Board or its affiliated corporations, Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. and Alcoholics Anonymous Grapevine, Inc., that include actors portraying A.A. members or potential A.A. members shall not show the actor's full face, unless:

- a. The General Service Board, by substantial unanimity, agrees that the proposed video is consistent with the A.A. tradition of attraction rather than promotion, and that such use of an actor or actors does not in fact or in appearance place personalities before principles, and
- b. The General Service Conference authorizes, by substantial unanimity, the production and distribution of such video.

For purposes of this Policy, a "video" is any item of visual media in which a live actor appears, regardless of the medium in which the video is presented (DVD, film, electronic file, etc.).

For purposes of this Policy, a "potential A.A. member" is a character in a video who is portrayed as seeking help from A.A., or who is portrayed as the recipient of Twelfth Step work in any form.

Existing videos using actors to portray A.A. members or potential A.A. members may continue to be produced and distributed until retired from service.

The videos “Markings on the Journey,” and “Bill Discusses the Twelve Traditions,” each of which is currently distributed only to A.A. groups, as well as “Bill's Own Story,” which also has restricted distribution, may continue to be produced and distributed.

A copy of this policy shall be given to all entities participating in the production of a video prior to commencement of production. The background documentation for the policy will always be distributed with the policy.

23. A culturally sensitive Spanish–language Public Service Announcement be developed by the trustees’ Public Information Committee, independent of any English language P.S.A. (production cost not to exceed \$40,000) to better ensure the hand of A.A. is there whenever anyone anywhere reaches out.
24. The revised “Understanding Anonymity” pamphlet be approved.
25. The revised “The A.A. Fact File” be approved.
26. The section titled “How You Can Find A.A. in Your Town” in “A.A. At a Glance” be changed to “How To Find A.A.,” and that that section which reads:

*“Look for Alcoholics Anonymous in any telephone directory. In most urban areas, a central A.A. office or intergroup, staffed mainly by volunteer A.A.s will be happy to answer your questions and/or put you in touch with those who can.”*

be amended to read:

*“Look for Alcoholics Anonymous in any telephone directory, your local newspaper or “How to Find A.A. Meetings” on the home page of our website [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org). In most urban areas, a central A.A. office or intergroup, staffed mainly by volunteer A.A.s will be happy to answer your questions and/or put you in touch with those who can.”*

## **Report and Charter**

It was recommended that:

27. The following text be added to *The A.A. Service Manual* in Chapter Nine: The General Service Board after the section titled “General Service Trustees” on page S69:

### **“Trustees Emeriti**

The General Service Board has designated rotating board chairpersons as trustees emeriti. Trustees emeriti are invited to attend quarterly board meetings of the General Service Board and the annual General Service Conference. They are a resource of corporate memory and are often asked to share their experience with past board decisions, how previous General Service Boards conducted business, and the processes they used to reach a group conscience. Trustees emeriti do not vote on any matter before the General Service Board or the Conference.”

28. The following text on page S67 in *The A.A. Service Manual* under “NOMINATION PROCEDURE” in the section on Regional Trustees:

"2. Two Conference Actions should be kept in mind. In 1977, the Conference recommended that a delegate not be eligible as a trustee candidate until one year after his or her last Conference. And in 1985, it was recommended that 'no area shall submit an individual as candidate for both regional trustee and trustee-at-large U.S./Canada in the same year.' "

Be replaced with:

"2. Prior Conferences have recommended that no area submit the same person as a candidate for both regional trustee and trustee-at-large/U.S. or Canada at the same Conference. Also, a General Service Conference delegate is not eligible as a trustee candidate until one year after his or her last Conference."

29. The following text on page S68 in *The A.A. Service Manual* under “NOMINATION PROCEDURE” in the section on Trustees-at-large:

"In the areas, the same procedure used in selecting a regional trustee candidate is followed. No area should submit the same name for regional and at-large trustee in the same year."

Be replaced with:

"Prior Conferences have recommended that no area submit the same person as a candidate for both regional trustee and trustee-at-large/U.S. or Canada at the same Conference. Also, a General Service Conference delegate is not eligible as a trustee candidate until one year after his or her last Conference."

30. The section titled “Inactive Service Workers” in Chapter Four on page S37 in *The A.A. Service Manual* be revised to read:

**“Inactive Service Workers**

How does the area deal with area officers and committee chairs who have been absent from two or more assemblies? While the area assembly needs to establish its own practices or guidelines, it is generally suggested that a service worker be asked to resign if he or she is unable to carry out the responsibilities of the position.”

31. The following sections be added to *The A.A. Service Manual* as follows:

Add to Chapter Two, page S28, before section titled “Group Information”:

**“Inactive General Service Representative**

A.A. relies on the autonomy of each group regarding the period of time and involvement that constitutes inactivity. While the group needs to establish its own practices or guidelines, it is generally suggested that a service worker be asked to resign if he or she is unable to carry out the responsibilities of the position.”



Add to Chapter Three, page S33, before section titled “The Alternate D.C.M.”:

**“Inactive District Committee Member**

A.A. relies on the autonomy of each district regarding the period of time and involvement that constitutes inactivity. While the district needs to establish its own practices or guidelines, it is generally suggested that a service worker be asked to resign if he or she is unable to carry out the responsibilities of the position.”

32. The following text in the section titled “What Goes On at the Conference” on page S55 in *The A.A. Service Manual*:

**“What Goes On at the Conference**

A typical Conference lasts a full week, with sessions running from morning to evening. The opening day features an opening dinner and a five-speaker A.A. meeting, and business sessions from Monday to Friday include committee meetings, presentations, workshops and new trustee elections. Each delegate serves on one of the standing Conference committees, which meet early in the week and do the principal work of the Conference. (Some delegates also have a secondary committee assignment.) The committees bring recommendations to the full Conference for consideration as possible Advisory Actions (see Chapter Eight for more on the committee system), and generally the last two days (or more) are devoted to discussion and voting on committee recommendations. A closing breakfast on Saturday, following the last day of Conference business, provides an opportunity for goodbyes, and for rotating trustees to say their farewells. Every other year, a visit to the home of Bill W. and Lois in Westchester County is scheduled.”

Be replaced with:

**“What Goes On at the Conference**

A typical Conference lasts a full week, with sessions running from morning to evening. The opening day features roll call, keynote address, an opening dinner and a five-speaker A.A. meeting. Business sessions from Sunday to Friday include committee meetings, presentations, workshops, and new trustee elections. Each delegate serves on one of the standing Conference committees, which meet early in the week and do the principal work of the Conference. (Some delegates also have a secondary committee assignment.) The committees bring recommendations to the full Conference for consideration as possible Advisory Actions (see Chapter Eight for more on the committee system), and generally the last two days (or more) are devoted to discussion and voting on committee recommendations.

Although outside of the Conference, a delegates-only meeting is often held prior to the opening day of the Conference. On Saturday, following the last day of Conference business, a closing breakfast provides an opportunity for goodbyes, and for rotating trustees to say their farewells. In alternate years, a visit to G.S.O./Grapevine offices or the home of Bill W. and Lois in Westchester County is scheduled.”

33. The General Service Board develop text to add to Article 3 in the current Conference Charter as found in *The A.A. Service Manual* which includes the principles of participation, petition and appeal, for consideration by the 2012 Conference Committee on Report and Charter.

#### **Treatment Facilities/Special Needs/Accessibilities**

It was recommended that:

34. The recovery pamphlet "A.A. for the Alcoholic with Special Needs" be approved.
35. The name of the committee be changed to the Conference Committee on Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities and that these changes be reflected in the committee's Composition, Scope and Procedure.
36. The title of the pamphlet "A.A. in Treatment Facilities" be changed to "A.A. in Treatment Settings" and that the term "treatment facilities" be replaced with a more appropriate reference such as "Treatment Committees" or "treatment settings" wherever it appears in the pamphlet.

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