

April 2012

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

CONFERENCE ADVISORY ACTIONS OF THE 62nd GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

The following recommendations were approved by the 62nd General Service Conference and the General Service Board:

Motion

It was recommended that:

1. The General Service Conference supports the General Service Board's development of a plan to restructure the current A.A. World Services, Inc. and A.A. Grapevine, Inc., corporate and governance structures. The plan may, among other things, address the separate corporate existence of both entities, as well as issues of governance and operations. The plan will be designed to increase unity, better reach and connect the General Service Office and the Grapevine to the broader Fellowship while addressing financial stability. The plan will be submitted to the 63rd General Service Conference for approval prior to implementation.

Floor Action

It was recommended that:

2. The limit on one-time bequests from A.A. members to the General Service Board be increased from \$3,000 to \$5,000.

Agenda

It was recommended that:

3. The theme for the 2013 General Service Conference be: "The General Service Conference Takes Its Inventory – Our Solution in Action."
4. The following be presentation/discussion topics for the 2013 General Service Conference:

Spiritual Principles for World Service:

- a) The Triangle – More Than a Shape
- b) The General Service Conference Inventory – Why is it Necessary?
- c) Self-Support – What Does it Mean to the Fellowship?
- d) Primary Purpose – Carrying the A.A. Message

The following inventory questions listed in the "INVENTORY PLAN," which were approved by the 2011 G.S.C., be discussed each year for the 2013, 2014 and 2015 General Service Conferences:

2013

A. Effectiveness of the Conference/Conference Process Overall

1. Reflecting on Concept One, how does the Conference ensure that it is the conscience of A.A. as a whole?
2. How well is the use of floor actions serving us?
3. Reflecting on Concept Ten, how well is the authority of the Conference defined?
4. How well does the Conference fulfill the General Warranties of Concept Twelve?

B. Composition of Conference

1. Should delegate areas be more consistently based on actual membership numbers?

C. Committee System

1. Could the committee process be improved to more effectively introduce change in the Fellowship, and if so, how?

D. Yearlong Process Effectiveness

1. What improvements could be considered to make sure the agenda selection process is more effective?
2. How well do all Conference members communicate to the Fellowship about why we have a Conference and how the committee system works? How could we improve in this communication?

E. Conference Preparation (background, content, delivery, etc.)

1. How well do the delegates balance their preparation for the Conference, especially in keeping with Concept Three and Article Three of the Conference Charter? How could we improve in the practice of our rights and responsibilities under Concept Three and Article Three of the Conference Charter?

F. Conference Week Schedule

1. How can we improve the way time is allotted during the Conference for reports, presentation/discussion/workshop topics, and thorough discussion of agenda items?
2. How are leadership and participation affected by late night work sessions?

G. General Service Board/Corporate Boards (A.A.W.S. & A.A. Grapevine)

1. Is the current makeup of the board (numbers and proportions) still the most effective? If not, what changes should we consider?
2. How could we improve the methods used to solicit trustees and directors to get the most appropriate people interested in the positions?

3. What more could be done to insure the General Service Board remains transparent and thorough in their reporting to the Fellowship?

H. Leadership

1. Reflecting on Concept Nine, are the qualities of leadership, as identified in the leadership essay in the Service Manual, still the qualities that we should try to encourage in Conference members? If so, how successful are we in encouraging those qualities? If not, what changes should we consider?

2014

A. Effectiveness of the Conference/Conference Process Overall

1. Reflecting on Concept Four, how effective are we in treating all Conference members as equals (no one regarded as second class)?
2. Reflecting on Concept Five, how well does the Conference facilitate the hearing and resolution of minority appeals/report? How could it be improved?
3. Does the structure encourage each individual in the Fellowship to feel and act as a member of a “society of alcoholics in action?” If not, how could we improve?
4. Does the yearlong Conference process effectively encourage all Conference members to lead (or serve) in the spirit of our upside-down service structure? If not, how can we encourage all Conference members to do so?

B. Composition of Conference

1. Should regional divisions be based on membership numbers, the number of areas contained in each region or some other criteria? Please explain.

C. Committee System

1. What is the right balance of participation among committee members (delegates, staff) and how can we best achieve that balance?

D. Yearlong Process Effectiveness

1. How well is the message of the Conference theme being carried out throughout the year?
2. What other suggestions do we have for how to improve the effectiveness of the yearlong process?

E. Conference Preparation (background, content, delivery, etc.)

1. How can we improve the manner in which Conference background material; is developed and distributed?

F. Conference Week Schedule

1. At the Conference, what is the difference between being a leader or being a reporter? Can a person be both at the same time?

G. General Service Board/Corporate Boards (A.A.W.S. & A.A. Grapevine)

1. Reflecting on Concept Eleven, does the General Service Board exercise serious care in having the best possible assistance in carrying out their duties? How can this process be improved?
2. Does the current role of the board most effectively address the needs of the Fellowship? If not, how should their role be changed?
3. Is the selection/election process for trustees and directors effective and impartial/fair? How would you change it?

H. Leadership

1. How can we improve the methods of selecting effective leaders and nurturing leadership qualities in our trusted servants?
2. What more could be done to ensure broad diversity of representation in our A.A. leaders?

2015

A. Effectiveness of the Conference/Conference Process Overall

1. Reflecting on Concept Two, how can we better serve as the actual voice and be an effective conscience for our whole society?
2. Reflecting on Concept Three, how can we effectively balance the freedoms and responsibilities that come with the right of decision?
3. How might any one of the Concepts be revised in essence or wording to more effectively and relevantly guide our leaders?

B. Composition of Conference

1. Is the size and structure (proportions of delegate/trustee/staff) of the Conference the most effective for conducting the work of the Fellowship? If not, how could it be made more effective?

C. Committee System

1. Committee system (Structure, Composition, Effectiveness, etc.): Does the Conference committee system function in accordance with our principles? If not, what changes should we consider regarding: a) structure b) composition c) effectiveness?

D. Yearlong Process Effectiveness

1. How can we better communicate that the Conference process is more than one spring week in New York?
2. How do the delegates and regional trustees support the yearlong process effectiveness?

E. Conference Preparation (background, content, delivery, etc.)

1. What more could be done to prepare delegates for the Conference?

F. Conference Week Schedule

1. What Conference activities give participants the most opportunities to be leaders?
2. Does the time allotted and the manner in which information is communicated from the trustees and board members allow delegates to adequately understand and/or question their reports? How could this be improved?

G. General Service Board/Corporate Boards (A.A.W.S. & A.A. Grapevine)

1. Reflecting on Concept Six, how can the Conference ensure that the authority we delegate to the General Service Board is commensurate with the responsibility we have entrusted to them?
2. Reflecting on Concept Eight: (a) How well is the General Service Board exercising custodial oversight and how effectively are they serving as the principle planners and administrators of policy and finance? (b) What are the boundaries between oversight vs. delegation? When is each practiced?
3. Should the Fellowship have more direct influence in the selection of Class A trustees, corporate directors, and General Service trustees? If yes, how might that be accomplished?

H. Leadership

1. How well is the Third Legacy Procedure serving us? How could it be improved?

Archives¹

No recommendations.

¹Members of this committee serve on this as a secondary committee assignment.

Cooperation With the Professional Community

It was recommended that:

5. The current statement regarding "Singleness of Purpose" in C.P.C. literature which reads:

"Some professionals refer to alcoholism and drug addiction as 'substance abuse' or 'chemical dependency.' Nonalcoholics are, therefore, sometimes introduced to A.A. and encouraged to attend A.A. meetings. Anyone may attend open A.A. meetings, but only those with a drinking problem may attend closed meetings"

be revised to read as follows:

"Some professionals refer to alcoholism and drug addiction as 'substance abuse' or 'chemical dependency.' Nonalcoholics are, therefore, sometimes introduced to A.A. and encouraged to attend A.A. meetings. Nonalcoholics may attend open A.A.

meetings as observers, but only those with a drinking problem may attend closed A.A. meetings.”

6. The text in the “What A.A. Does Not Do” section in the C.P.C. pamphlets “A.A. in Your Community”, “If You Are A Professional” and “Members of the Clergy ask about Alcoholics Anonymous” be replaced with the text in the section “What A.A. Does Not Do” in the “A.A. at a Glance” flyer and the entire section read as follows:

What A.A. Does Not Do

A.A. does not: Furnish initial motivation for alcoholics to recover...solicit members...engage in or sponsor research...keep attendance records or case histories...join “councils” or social agencies (although A.A. members, groups and service offices frequently cooperate with them)...follow up or try to control its members...make medical or psychological diagnoses or prognoses...provide detox, rehabilitation or nursing services, hospitalization, drugs, or any medical or psychiatric treatment...offer religious services or host/sponsor retreats... engage in education about alcohol...provide housing, food, clothing, jobs, money, or any other welfare or social services...provide domestic or vocational counseling...accept any money for its services, or any contributions from non-A.A. sources...provide letters of reference to parole boards, lawyers, court officials, social agencies, employers, etc.

Corrections

It was recommended that:

7. The revised draft pamphlet “It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell” be approved.
8. The pamphlet “A Message to Corrections Professionals” be revised with the following changes:
 - a) Replace the first paragraph under the section “Release and paroles” with the following paragraph:

One point which usually needs to be explained is why inmates have any need of A.A. while they are incarcerated. The answer is that the A.A. program is far more than staying away from alcohol. A.A. has been called a way of life, and its success for groups that meet while in custody shows that this program can help the alcoholic inmate live a sober and contented life, both while in custody and after release.

- b) Change the title of the section currently called “Release and paroles” to “Re-entry and Parole.”
 - c) The current statement regarding “Singleness of Purpose” in the last paragraph, which reads:

Some professionals refer to alcoholism and drug addiction as “substance abuse” or “chemical dependency.” Nonalcoholics are, therefore, sometimes introduced to A.A. and encouraged to attend

A.A. meetings. Anyone may attend open A.A. meetings, but only those with a drinking problem may attend closed meetings.

Be revised with wording that is consistent with the description of the difference between Open and Closed meetings in the pamphlet "The A.A. Group" on page 13, to read as follows:

Some professionals refer to alcoholism and drug addiction as "substance abuse" or "chemical dependency." Nonalcoholics are, therefore, sometimes introduced to A.A. and encouraged to attend A.A. meetings. Nonalcoholics may attend *open* A.A. meetings as observers, but only those with a drinking problem may attend *closed* A.A. meetings.

9. The trustees' Corrections Committee develop a draft replacement for the section "A.A. in correctional facilities" in the pamphlet "A Message to Corrections Professionals" to be brought back to the 2013 Conference Committee on Corrections.

Finance

It was recommended that:

10. The annual delegate's contribution be increased from \$1,200 to \$1,600.

Grapevine

It was recommended that:

11. AA Grapevine, Inc. move forward with an audio strategy to have members call in and record their story on 3rd party recording technology.
 - The stories will be subject to the same editorial process as print stories.
 - The Audio endeavor will, at a minimum, break even financially.
 - 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 2013 Conference Committee on the Grapevine as background.
12. A.A. Grapevine, Inc., carry out the "Sunset" proposal for Grapevine items. The "Sunset" proposal is a plan to phase out older or slow-moving Grapevine items and archive them digitally or make them available in another format.

International Conventions/Regional Forums¹

No recommendations.

¹Members of this committee serve on this as a secondary committee assignment.

Literature

It was recommended that:

13. The revised pamphlet “A.A. and the Armed Services” be approved.
14. The short form of the Twelve Concepts for World Service be added to the book *As Bill Sees It*.
15. The final revision of the *Living Sober* booklet, with changes to outdated language or practices, be approved with minor editorial changes.
16. The pamphlet “Circles of Love and Service” be revised, and requested that the trustees’ Committee on Literature prepare a draft pamphlet or progress report for the 2013 Conference Committee on Literature.

Policy/Admissions

It was recommended that:

17. Satander Bhalla and Daler Mathadu from the General Service Board of India be admitted to the 62nd General Service Conference as observers.
18. Roger Bédard alternate delegate, Area 89, Northeast Quebec Canada, be seated as a Conference member at the 62nd General Service Conference because Estelle Falardeau, Panel 61 delegate for Area 89, is unable to attend.
19. The 65th General Service Conference be held April 19-25, 2015 since these dates do not conflict with any significant holidays or hotel availability.
20. The use of electronic devices at the General Service Conference be approved in keeping with the “Guidelines for Electronic Device Users at the Conference” as presented to the 2012 General Service Conference, superseding the 2004 Advisory Action regarding the use of personal computers at the Conference.

Public Information

It was recommended that:

21. The Membership Survey pamphlet and the one-way Membership Survey display be updated to reflect the findings from the 2011 Alcoholics Anonymous Membership Survey with minor editorial changes.
22. The video public service announcement for the Spanish-speaking community, “Tengo Esperanza,” developed by the trustees’ Public Information Committee, be approved with minor edits.
23. The video public service announcement for the Spanish-speaking community, “Tengo Esperanza,” be centrally distributed, tracked and evaluated at a cost not to exceed \$40,000, in addition to the work of local committees, and that the information gathered

from the process be forwarded to the 2013 Conference Public Information Committee for their review.

24. The revised "Anonymity Wallet Card" be approved.

Report and Charter

It was recommended that:

25. All changes to *The A.A. Service Manual* be noted by vertical margin change bars in the edition in which the change appears for the first time.
26. The following term and definition be added to *The A.A. Service Manual* in Chapter One: Introduction to General Service in the section titled Glossary of General Service Terms:

"Rotation – the spiritual principle of sharing the responsibility for A.A. through changing leadership."

27. The current illustration on page S16 be modified in the following manner:
 - Replacing the bottom section of the illustration that deals with the General Service Board and its two operating corporations with the corresponding section from a previous version, minus the table-and-chair graphic.
 - Changing "District Committees" to "Districts."

Treatment Facilities/Special Needs/Accessibilities

No recommendations.