

## 70TH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS

### Agenda

There are no committee considerations from the 2020 Conference Committee on Agenda.

### Archives

- The committee considered requests to develop a book on A.A. history from 1955 through the present and following a lengthy discussion, suggested that the trustees' Archives Committee consider possible themes, content ideas and the time period such a book might cover. The committee requested a report be brought back to the 2021 Conference Committee on Archives.

### Cooperation with the Professional Community

- The committee discussed the request to discontinue the pamphlet "A.A. in Your Community" and took no action. The committee noted that this pamphlet is vital to local C.P.C. committee work to introduce A.A. to professionals and that the title defines A.A. as a community resource. The committee also noted that an update to the language and style is needed.
- The committee requested that the trustees' C.P.C./Treatment and Accessibilities Committee explore ways to update content of the pamphlet "A.A. in Your Community" with a focus on modern professional settings and consider those who consume content in various formats. The committee suggested the following items regarding modern digital resources be considered such as:
  - The Meeting Guide app
  - A.A.W.S. and AAGV YouTube channels
  - A.A.W.S. LinkedIn page
  - Space to leave local contact information
- The committee requested that a progress report or a draft of "A.A. in Your Community" be brought to the 2021 Conference Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community.

## **Corrections**

- The committee heard a report from the A.A.W.S. publishing director on the efforts to provide digital distribution of A.A. literature into correctional facilities. It was reported that several viable options had been identified to make A.A. literature in digital formats available for alcoholics in correctional settings. The publishing director also provided an update on staple-free pamphlets and reported that the first phase of the plan to publish the most used A.A. pamphlets staple-free is already moving forward.
- The committee reviewed the Corrections Kit and Workbook and provided a list of suggestions. The committee requested that the pamphlet "The 'God' Word" be added to the list of contents for the Kit and suggested several changes in the Workbook to reflect current practices and resources.

## **Finance**

- The committee discussed a request to revise the pie chart percentages on page 12 of the pamphlet "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix" and the consensus was no changes were needed and took no action as these are suggested percentages.
- The committee reviewed a report from the trustees' Finance Ad Hoc Committee on Google Grants and the Seventh Tradition. The committee strongly suggests forwarding this report to the trustees' Finance and Budgetary Committee and the appropriate 71st General Service Conference committee.

## **Grapevine**

- The committee considered a request to change the language of the first sentence of the A.A. Preamble as follows: "Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of people who share..." and took no action.
- The committee also discussed making suggested changes to the A.A. Preamble for gender neutral pronouns. The committee requested that the Grapevine Board consider developing examples of generalized language options and that a progress report or draft versions be brought back to the 71st General Service Conference.
- The committee agreed to forward to the AA Grapevine Corporate Board the suggestion that Grapevine produce in the year 2021 or later:
  1. *Step Three - Turning It Over* (working title)  
Previously published stories from the pages of Grapevine by A.A. members about their various experiences with Step 3.

2. *Character Defects - Steps 6 & 7 (working title)*  
Previously published stories by A.A. members about their experience with Steps 6 and 7, from the pages of Grapevine.
- The committee agreed to forward to the AA Grapevine Corporate Board the suggestion that Grapevine produce the following La Viña books in the year 2021 or later:
    1. *AA and Families in Recovery (working title)*  
Spanish-speaking A.A. members share experiences about how drinking affects the whole family and how A.A. helps repair them, from the pages of La Viña.
    2. *Old-timers Stories (working title)*  
Long-time Spanish-speaking A.A. members share their experience, strength and hope, from the pages of La Viña.
    3. *Twelve Steps (working title)*  
Spanish-speaking A.A. members share stories of experience with A.A.'s Twelve Steps, from the pages of La Viña.
  - The committee discussed a request for AA Grapevine, Inc. to establish an Instagram account in line with the Twelve Traditions and encouraged them to continue with their planning. The committee suggested that the Grapevine Board provide additional information on implementation, anonymity, security, affiliation, outside contributions, privacy, and promotion and bring a progress report back to the 71st General Service Conference.
  - The committee discussed ways that AA Grapevine could get feedback on which new book topics to publish. The committee suggested an annual survey in English, Spanish and French be utilized to get input from the Fellowship.

### **International Conventions/Regional Forums**

- The committee reviewed and accepted a report from the International Convention consultants, Talley Management, outlining the steps taken prior and post cancellation of the 2020 International Convention on March 28, 2020.
- The committee discussed the use of the Lord's Prayer for closing the Big Meetings at the International Convention and had a thoughtful and wide-ranging discussion which included:
  - The use of the Lord's Prayer in A.A. meetings can create controversy and support the perception of A.A. as a religious organization.

- Although the prayer is part of the history of A.A. and is widely used and supported in some areas, it could make some members feel excluded.
- The benefits of autonomy and keeping the newcomers in mind when selecting how to close A.A. meetings.
- The diversity of our Fellowship and the need for everyone to feel included.
- Consideration of surveying the Fellowship for a wider sharing regarding use of the Lord's Prayer.
- Given the international nature of the International Convention, how the Lord's Prayer is perceived in other countries.

The committee agreed that further discussion on the use of the Lord's Prayer as a closing at the Big Meetings of the International Convention would be beneficial and suggested that the 2021 Conference Committee on International Conventions/Regional Forums continue discussion at the 71st General Service Conference.

- The committee discussed ways of encouraging interest in Regional and Local Forums and attracting first time attendees and suggested that the General Service Office consider:
  - Providing options for remote attendance.
  - Providing digital access to Regional Forum materials and presentations (including use of the Meeting Guide App or mobile app).
  - Developing service material for host committees providing shared experience on hosting a Regional Forum and stimulating participation.
  - Developing a "video invitation" from the G.S.B. chair.

Suggestions for implementation at the local area included:

- Early and consistent communication about Regional Forums, including "What is a Regional Forum; no registration fee; what happens at a forum.
- Involve members at all levels of service; do "sponsorship road trips."
- Use the Regional Forum video after it is released.

## **Literature**

- The committee reviewed the progress report regarding the pamphlet "The Twelve Steps Illustrated" and requested that a progress report or draft pamphlet be brought back to the 2021 Conference Committee on Literature.
- The committee reviewed the progress report regarding the pamphlet "The Twelve Concepts Illustrated" and requested that a progress report or draft pamphlet be brought back to the 2021 Conference Literature Committee.

- The committee reviewed the progress report regarding the development of the pamphlet on A.A.'s Three Legacies and requested that a progress report or draft pamphlet be brought back to the 2021 Conference Committee on Literature.
- The committee reviewed a progress report on the revision of the pamphlet "Too Young?" The committee looks forward to reviewing a draft revised pamphlet and/or samples of other potential formats of the pamphlet at the meeting of the 2021 Conference Committee on Literature.
- The committee reviewed a progress report on the revision of the pamphlet "Young People and A.A." The committee looks forward to reviewing a draft revised pamphlet and/or samples of other potential formats of the pamphlet at the meeting of the 2021 Conference Committee on Literature.
- The committee reviewed the progress report regarding the development of the pamphlet for Spanish-speaking women in A.A. and requested that a progress report or draft pamphlet be brought back to the 2021 Conference Committee on Literature.
- The committee considered if proposed agenda items for plain language, simplified language, accessible translations and large print versions of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*, as well as workbooks to help study the program of Alcoholics Anonymous, can be addressed with a common solution.

The committee requested that the trustees continue to explore this topic. The committee requested that the trustees' make available to the Fellowship, as soon as possible, in Spanish, English and French, the presentation "The Big Book: Researching Issues, Possible Tools and Access (70th General Service Conference 2020)" that was presented to the committee during their May 2, 2020 agenda reduction meeting. The committee noted the importance for the Fellowship to be informed about the nature of the accessibility challenges with regard to A.A. literature.

The committee requested that a progress report be brought back to the 2021 Conference Committee on Literature.

- The committee reviewed the progress report regarding safety and A.A. to be included in *Living Sober* and "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship." The committee requested a review of the draft language be taken with accessibility in mind as it relates to reading level. The committee requested that a progress report or draft pamphlet be brought back to the 2021 Conference Committee on Literature.
- The committee discussed a draft update of the pamphlet "The Twelve Traditions Illustrated" and noted the accessibility of the language in terms of reading level as well the extent of work done on the current version of the update.

The committee noted that through the process of updating this pamphlet, the final draft update is a distinct item from the original version of “The Twelve Traditions Illustrated,” addressing a different audience and serving a different purpose.

The committee forwarded to the trustees’ Literature Committee suggestions on the draft update which the committee considered a new piece of literature on the Twelve Traditions. The committee requested that a progress report or draft pamphlet be brought back to the 2021 Conference Committee on Literature.

- The committee discussed not retiring the existing version of the pamphlet “The Twelve Traditions Illustrated” and requested that a written description be provided by the trustees’ Literature Committee explaining how an existing version of a literature item might remain in publication after a revised, updated version has been approved, and requested that a report be brought back to the 2021 Conference Committee on Literature.
- The committee discussed the “A.A.W.S. Policy on Publication of Literature: Updating Pamphlets and Other A.A. Materials,” approved by A.A.W.S. in January 2020 and noted that concerns expressed by the 69th General Service Conference were addressed in full by the revised policy.

### **Policy/Admissions**

- The committee considered a proposed process for the equitable distribution of Conference committees’ workload and noted that the trustees’ General Service Conference Committee made significant progress on this complex challenge and further that the proposed process selected by the committee is the appropriate option. The committee agreed that the proposed process would help ensure an equitable distribution of the Conference committees’ workload and noted that the Proposed Agenda Item Submission Form would bring much needed structure and clarity to the process.

The committee requests that the trustees’ General Service Conference Committee clarify the specifics of the proposed plan and bring back a more fully developed process for review by the 2021 General Service Conference. The committee agreed that more specificity is needed on the following:

- Precisely how this proposed process will impact what will happen regarding agenda items considered at the Fall and Winter trustees’ committees’ meetings.
- Clarity on how the proposed process will impact or change the delegate chairs’ participation in the Winter Board Weekend and on the Conference Committees’ January conference call to obtain feedback on proposed agenda items. The committee noted that significant progress has been

made in involving delegates in the agenda item selection process and would not want to take any steps backward.

- Creating additional primary committees as needed: develop a sample composition, scope and procedures document for an “additional primary committee.”
- Provide examples, using sample agenda items, showing how the entire process would work.

The committee looks forward to receiving a more detailed plan for this important process for review by the 2021 General Service Conference from the trustees’ Committee on the General Service Conference.

### **Public Information**

- The committee reviewed and accepted the 2019 annual report from the trustees’ Public Information Committee regarding aa.org and aagrapevine.org.
- The committee reviewed and accepted the G.S.O. Communications’ Department report on the A.A.W.S. Meeting Guide App.
- The committee reviewed and accepted the 2019 trustees’ Public Information report on the usefulness and effectiveness of the A.A.W.S. YouTube account.
- The committee reviewed and accepted the 2019 trustees’ Public Information report on the current status of Google AdWords/Grants and requested that a progress report be brought back to the 2021 Conference Committee on Public Information.
- The committee reviewed and accepted the report of the status of the 2020 Public Information Comprehensive Media Plan. The committee looks forward to reviewing the new architecture being developed and suggested that social media, video/audio content, and accessibility to the A.A. message continue to be a priority in comprehensive media plan discussions.
- The committee reviewed and accepted a draft plan to create video shorts based on A.A. pamphlets. The committee noted the important role of short video content to carry the A.A. message and looks forward to receiving a report at the 2021 meeting of the Conference Committee on Public Information.
- The committee reviewed and accepted the 2019 report on the “Relevance and Usefulness of Video Public Service Announcements.” The committee noted the recent efforts by G.S.O. to explore editing a Conference-approved PSA to remain useful for local committees reflecting “social distancing” by A.A. groups and members.

- The committee reviewed and accepted the distribution and tracking information for the video PSA “Changes.”

Note: In keeping with a 2019 Advisory Action this PSA title was updated to “Sobriety in A.A.: We made changes to stop drinking” for search engine optimization (SEO).

- The committee reviewed and accepted a report regarding the new financial reporting system for PSA media valuations.
- The committee reviewed and accepted the report on the development of two PSAs.

The committee also expressed that in light of the recent Coronavirus pandemic it would be helpful to include information as to the many formats in which alcoholics find and carry the A.A. message. The committee looks forward to reviewing the two draft PSAs at their 2021 meeting.

- The committee reviewed a request “to create a new form of communication” to address anonymity on social media. The committee suggested that the trustees’ Public Information Committee continue to discuss this request and that preliminary information be gathered before moving forward.

Information to gather:

- Shared experience from the Fellowship on how A.A. members adhere to anonymity Traditions on various social media platforms.
- Suggested safety and etiquette while using social media.
- Anonymity on video meeting platforms.

While the committee recognizes that A.A. literature on anonymity is available (“Understanding Anonymity,” A.A. Guidelines on Internet, etc.) the committee noted that the content is dated and does not accurately reflect current technology or the Fellowship’s experience. Specific, updated material is needed and the consideration that a video service piece to communicate this sharing might be explored. The committee requested that the trustees’ Public Information Committee continue these discussions and that a progress report or draft proposal be brought back to the 2021 Conference Committee on Public Information.

- The committee discussed a request to develop a plan to create an A.A. podcast. The committee suggested that G.S.O. explore the development of a draft plan to create a G.S.O. podcast to be brought back to the 2021 Conference Committee on Public Information.
- The committee suggested that information such as function, target audiences, participation, possible episode topics and an implementation plan be included.

- The committee reviewed and accepted the trustees' Public Information Committee report on the A.A. Membership Survey. The committee noted it was encouraged by some of the findings by the survey professional and asked that the trustees' Public Information Committee continue to explore this topic. The committee also suggested the exploration of a possible digital questionnaire feedback form be part of their discussions.
- The committee reviewed the contents of P.I. Kit and Workbook. The committee shared concerns on the relevancy of a print copy workbook and kit for P.I. Committees.
- The committee had the following suggestions:
  - Explore the development of an A.A. Service Committee app.
  - Create a new digital PDF version of the Public Information Workbook that can be easily shared, updated by G.S.O. in a timely fashion, and edited locally to better reflect local committee work.
  - Gather broader shared experience from the Fellowship.
  - Include more sharing regarding Accessibilities in P.I. work.
  - Share a more up-to-date reflection of A.A. digital assets and how they can be applied to local P.I. work. (Example: A.A.W.S. YouTube Channel, Meeting Guide app, online video/e-radio PSA placement, QR Codes, virtual A.A. meetings/events/presentations etc.)
  - Include more short content communication templates to carry the A.A. message to the public.

The committee suggested that the trustees' Public Information Committee discuss this request and that a report be brought back to the 2021 Conference Committee on Public Information on these efforts.

### **Report and Charter**

- The committee accepted a report from the Publishing department outlining the General Service Office process for timely and accurate preparation and publication of the 2020 General Service Conference *Final Report*.
- The committee discussed restoring the two paragraphs with the accompanying footnote in the Concept Eleven essay of *The Twelve Concepts for World Service* that were removed by an Advisory Action of the 66th General Service Conference and took no action. The committee agreed that the footnote noting that the two paragraphs are available upon request from the G.S.O. Archives department is adequate.
- The committee reviewed the draft of *The A.A. Service Manual, 2020-2022 Edition* and noted the significant progress made toward the goals agreed upon by the 2019

Conference Committee on Report and Charter. The committee requested that an updated draft be brought back to the 2021 Conference Committee on Report and Charter. The committee will forward suggestions for the next draft to the Publishing department.

### **Treatment & Accessibilities**

- The committee suggested that the trustees' C.P.C./T.A. committee develop a Bridging the Gap Committee Workbook and provide a progress report to the 2021 General Service Conference. The committee suggested that the shared experience included in the workbook include a list of BTG temporary contacts available from G.S.O.
- The committee reviewed the progress report, "Review of Bridging the Gap Materials," and felt it met the goal of the 2019 committee consideration. The committee suggested that rather than combine Bridging the Gap related service materials, the trustees' C.P.C./T.A. committee consider updating existing service materials to reflect the suggested language updates for currency and inclusion. The committee expressed support for use of a "Question and Answer" style in the content across the range of Bridging the Gap related items. The committee also expressed support for the sample version of "A.A. Guidelines: Bridging the Gap/Temporary Contact Committees" included in the report.
- The committee reviewed the progress report on updating the pamphlet "A.A. for the Older Alcoholic." The committee noted that the submitted stories did not indicate a broad and diverse representation of A.A. experience and suggested a reopened call for stories based on the following experiences provided by trustees' C.P.C./Treatment and Accessibilities Committees:
  - Ethnic, cultural and LGBTQ communities
  - Lifestyle diversity
  - Got sober later in life
  - Veterans from the Vietnam War or later
  - Hearing loss or mobility issues
  - Online or telephone A.A. meetings
  - Dementia or Alzheimer mental health issues
  - Spiritual pathways

The committee looks forward to a progress report or draft pamphlet to be brought to the 2021 Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities.

- The committee reviewed the Treatment Committee Kit and Workbook and forwarded a list of suggestions to the trustees' C.P.C./Treatment and Accessibilities Committee.

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## **Trustees**

- The committee reviewed the resumes and approved as eligible for election all Class B trustee candidates for West Central and Western Canada Regional trustee.
- The 2020 Conference Committee on Trustees reviewed the slate of directors of A.A. World Services, Inc. and A.A. Grapevine, Inc. as well as the Summary of Events re: Appeal of Proposed A.A.W.S. Board of Directors Slate submitted by the chair of the trustees' Nominating Committee, May 1, 2020, and submitted the following suggestions to the trustees' Nominating Committee:
  1. Consider amending the BYLAWS of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. ARTICLE III, DIRECTORS to include language similar to that contained in the BYLAWS of The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc. regarding proposed new member trustees.
  2. Consider clarifying *Procedure No. 1 Grapevine and A.A.W.S. Boards Procedures for Nominating Corporate Board Directors*, specifically point 4 "Past Delegate – not eligible until one year after rotation," to mean not eligible to apply or serve until 1 year after end of rotation as delegate.

The committee requested that a report be brought to the 2021 Conference Committee on Trustees.

- The committee recommended approval of a revised slate of directors of the A.A. World Services Corporate Board, omitting the newly proposed A.A. World Services director as ineligible due to procedural issues. The committee reconvened a second time after they received communication from the general manager requesting that the committee also remove his name from the A.A. World Services Corporate Board slate. Following thorough discussion, the committee declined to change their original recommendation.