

2019 General Service Conference Agenda Items and Outcomes

Committee Consideration: item was discussed by a Conference committee, but no action taken or made by the Conference as a whole. (CC)

Advisory Action: 2/3rds or more of the conference members voted in favor of a committee recommendation or floor action, which makes it binding on the General Service Board (AdvAc)

I. Agenda

A. Review suggestions for the theme of the 2020 General Service Conference (GSC).

It's a standing agenda item to choose the theme for the next years conference. They have a list of 88 suggestions that were sent in by the fellowship. FYI, this year's theme is "Our Big Book – 80 Years, 71 Languages"

OUTCOME: The Committee recommended that the 2020 GSC theme be: "2020: A Clear Vision for You." (get it?!) PASSED 117 to 7, so AdvAc

B. Review presentation/discussion topic ideas for the 2020 General Service Conference.

It's a standing agenda item to choose the presentation topics for the next years conference. They have a list of 84 suggestions that were sent in by the fellowship. FYI, this year's presentations are "Yesterday's World – Our Legacies Begin", "Today's World – Demonstrating Integrity, Anonymity and Service" and "Tomorrow's World – Courage to be Vigilant"

OUTCOME: The committee recommended that the three 2020 presentation/discussion topics be: "Recovery - Who Is Missing in Our Rooms?"; "Unity - Practicing Our Principles"; and "Service - Keeping A.A. Relevant." PASSED 123 to 3, so AdvAc

C. Discuss workshop topic ideas for the 2020 General Service Conference.

It's a standing agenda item to choose the workshop topics for the next years conference. They have a list of 79 suggestions that were sent in by the fellowship. FYI, this year's workshops is "Clarity of Purpose - Addressing the Needs of Our Meetings"

OUTCOME: The committee recommended that to 2020 workshop be "Attraction Through Action." PASSED 123 to 4, so AdvAc

D. Review the General Service Conference Evaluation Form, process and 2018 Evaluation Summary.

All conference attendees are asked to fill out an evaluation form. This shows what it will look like this year and how people responded last year. There's a need to verify the ability to fill it out online is working.

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee noted improvements were made to this years evaluation forms based on last years suggestions. They suggest that Conference members be given a choice between the hard copy and online version of the evaluation and the online version should be formatted so it can be updated during the conference week.

E. Discuss report on the Conference Agenda Process from the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference.

Before the January board weekend, all delegates on a conference committee should have a conference call with the corresponding trustees' committee chair and staff secretary to review the possible agenda items. Discuss if that happened and how it went. This is to give delegates more say in selecting agenda items.

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee encourages Conference committee chairs to communicate with their committee both before and after the Board weekend conference calls with their corresponding trustees' committee chairs. This may help to ensure all Conference committee members are fully informed. The committee reviewed the results of the 2019 survey of Conference committee chairs, and reviewed the report on the Implementation and Effectiveness of the Conference Agenda Process from the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference, which included sharing from the 2019 Conference committee chairs. The committee noted that the January conference call portion of the plan was implemented and request reporting of the 2019 participant survey results to the 2020 Conference Agenda Committee.

II. Cooperation with the Professional Community

A. Discuss progress on implementation of AAWS LinkedIn page.

Last year it was decided to have a LinkedIn page to better reach professionals. The trustees have hired a consultant to create the page. The page has not yet been created but the consultant gave their findings in January and the committee is to review the consultants questions and recommendations about appearance, style, posting content, implementation and maintenance of a LinkedIn page and how the trustees replied. This is the same consultant who did the communications audit and addresses shortcomings found in our outreach to professionals

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee discussed the progress on implementing a static LinkedIn page and felt that the overall goal had not yet been achieved. The committee agreed that the wording suggested for the LinkedIn page did not adequately describe Alcoholics Anonymous. The presence of a LinkedIn page describing Alcoholics Anonymous would be a valuable tool to aid local C.P.C. committee work to inform professionals about A.A. The committee requested that the trustees' Committee on CPC/Treatment and Accessibilities revisit the plan for implementing a LinkedIn page taking into consideration the following suggestions:

- *Add a disclaimer explaining that the "promoted" content on the LinkedIn page is not affiliated with Alcoholics Anonymous.*
- *Include information from current A.A. literature about what A.A. does and does not do that can be useful to professionals who work with alcoholics.*
- *Add a concise description of Alcoholics Anonymous that is based on the Conference-approved literature intended for professionals that was reviewed at the October 2018 trustees' meeting.*
- *Add a link to aa.org and a link to the information for professionals' page.*
- *Add a link to the About A.A. newsletter.*

➤ *Include a schedule of C.P.C. exhibits at national level events that are coordinated through the General Service Office.*

➤ *Annually provide a report tracking the A.A. LinkedIn page, including visits to aa.org from the LinkedIn page for review by the Conference Committee on C.P.C.*

Bonus material! --> The communications consultant says "cooperation with the professional community" is unintentionally off-putting — sounds as if A.A. is doing the professional a favor. This agenda item also talks about GSO/GSB having a new communications department

B. Consider request to remove text "They may help arrange hospitalization" from the pamphlet "Alcoholics Anonymous in Your Community."

An Area is requesting this sentence be removed because: "they" is ambiguous, is it individual members or AA as a whole; it could cause someone new considering coming to AA to assume they have to be hospitalized; or that AA will find treatment for them and pay for the cost

OUTCOME: The committee recommended that the text be removed. PASSED 123 to 4, so AdvAc.

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee requested that the trustees' committee review the pamphlet "AA in Your Community" with a focus on what professionals can expect from AA and AA members and bring a report back to the 2020 Conference Committee on

C. Review contents of C.P.C. Kit and Workbook.

The committee has a kit (a selection of pamphlets, guidelines and other service materials pertinent to CPC work) and a workbook (a unique publication of specific information to help CPC committees) It is a standing agenda item to review these items for possible updating

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee reviewed these and noted their value to local CPC committees and suggested a section be added where local experiences can be noted.

III. Corrections

A. Consider request for a review of all corrections related literature in order to make the language more modern and inclusive.

An Area is suggesting the terms inmate and offender are not just no longer used but are considered offensive and therefore they don't use the book AA in Prison: Inmate to Inmate or the pamphlets Memo to an Inmate Who May Be Alcoholic or It Sure Beats Sitting In a Cell. They are asking for a change to this language to be something more inclusive to remove the barrier to this literature

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee considered the request and agreed to take no action. The committee noted there was not a widely expressed need to warrant a change in the language currently used in A.A. literature for corrections. The committee also noted the absence of suitable language alternatives that could be used across all areas.

B. Consider request that the General Service Office establish and help maintain a database of Correctional Facilities in each service area in the U.S. and Canada and the status of meetings held therein.

Area 49 suggests GSO keep a database of all the jails, state, provincial, and federal correctional facilities in each area, which ones have AA meetings and which of those have AA volunteers. This is mostly to allow new Corrections Chairs to quickly become effective in carrying the message to facilities where the service is needed. Estimates for this were \$25,000-\$30,000 or \$50,000 - \$60,000 depending on who might be hired to help create the wireframe and database.

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee considered the request and took no action. The committee noted the merits of the goal but considered that the diverse experiences and needs in different areas would be better served by a tool, or resource, that would help areas develop their own database tailored to their needs. The committee requested the staff on the corrections desk ask for shared experience from A.A. members involved in corrections service for tools currently being used to create local databases with correctional facility meeting information, the status of the meetings, contacts, possible needs, and any other relevant information, and that the information be considered for a possible service piece or added to the Corrections Workbook, as appropriate.

C. Review contents of Corrections Kit and Workbook.

The committee has a kit (a selection of pamphlets, guidelines and other service materials pertinent to Corrections work) and a workbook (a unique publication of specific information to help Corrections committees) It is a standing agenda item to review these items for possible updating

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee reviewed these and noted many of the pamphlets used in correction service work have staples. The committee shared that a growing number of correctional facilities will not allow materials with staples into their facilities. The committee requested that the Publishing Department give priority to pamphlets used in corrections service for publication without staples, including, but not limited to, "The Twelve Traditions Illustrated," "The Twelve Steps Illustrated," "Many Paths to Spirituality," "Is A.A. for Me?," "This Is A.A.," "Frequently Asked Questions About A.A.," "Do you think you're different?," "Too Young?" and "Women in A.A."

- **New Committee Consideration:** *(CC) The committee expressed appreciation for the hard work accomplished by the trustees' Committee on Corrections and encouraged the continued communication between the chairs of the trustees' and Conference committees on Corrections throughout the year*
- **New Committee Recommendation:** In reviewing the committee Composition, Scope and Procedure, the committee recommended "The purpose of the committee will be to encourage A.A. members to assume responsibility to carry the message to alcoholics who cannot, of their own free will, seek A.A. help" be changed to "The purpose of the committee will be to encourage A.A. members to assume responsibility to carry the message to alcoholics who cannot seek help outside the wall."

There was debate over whether this new language was better or worse.

OUTCOME: The motion FAILED, 47 for, 84 against

IV. Finance

A. Review suggested area contribution for delegate expense for the Conference.

In 2017, the suggested amount each Area sends to support the cost of their delegate attending the General Service Conference was raised to \$1,800. Should that be changed?

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee took no action, but discussed the costs of the Conference and suggested that the trustees' Finance and Budgetary Committee provide a detailed breakdown of Conference expenses be included as background when delegate expenses are reviewed every two years, beginning in 2021. They further requested that additional information regarding statistical information on delegate fees and contribution limits be available as background when reviewed every two years, beginning in 2021.

B. Review the Conference-approved level of \$5,000 for individual bequests to the General Service Board from A.A. members.

In 2012, the maximum amount an AA member who had passed away could leave to GSO/GSB in their will was raised to \$5,000. Should that be changed?

OUTCOME: It was noted only 6 and 7 people gave the maximum amount the last 2 years. Also that other programs have a far higher cap. The committee recommended increasing the bequest amount to \$10,000. PASSED 113 to 18, so AdvAc

C. Review the Conference-approved maximum annual contribution of \$5,000 to the General Service Board from an individual A.A. member.

In 2018, the maximum amount an AA member could give to GSO/GSB annually was raised to \$5,000. Should that be changed?

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee reviewed and took no action.

D. Review Self-Support Packet.

It's a standing agenda item to review the list of literature/documents that GSO publishes that are useful to finance committees/treasurers

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee suggested the following changes:

➤ *In the Finance Guidelines mirror the language on how to make a contribution from the end of "The A.A. Group Treasurer" pamphlet.*

➤ *Include the regular contribution envelope in the packet.*

➤ *Revise the back of the Self-Support card as suggested, to reflect the following:*

- *Move "What is the value of your sobriety?" under the title.*
- *Move last bullet under "Some facts" to be first: "Your contributions help ensure the future of our Fellowship worldwide."*
- *Rephrase the first bullet under "Some facts" to read: "Historically, less than half of all A.A. groups contribute to the General Service Office" and make it the second bullet.*
- *Remove second bullet regarding "Costs of services..." from "Some facts."*
- *Rephrase the third bullet under "Some facts" to read: "Gross profit from literature sales make up for the shortfall in contributions," or something similar to emphasize being more self-supporting.*

- Remove the titles “Personal thoughts” and “Some facts.”
- Include contribution information from the end of “The A.A. Group Treasurer”

V. Grapevine

A. Consider the list of suggested AA Grapevine book topics for 2020 and later.

The suggested books are: *The Early Days of AA* (stories from members in the 1930s, 40s and 50s about what AA was like then), *Getting Involved in General Service* (inspiring stories of experience), *Surrender and Hope* (Spanish-speaking AA members share how they came to surrender and join AA for a new life)

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee agreed to forward to the AA Grapevine Corporate Board the suggestion that these 3 books be produced by the Grapevine in 2020 or later.

B. Consider request to remove the “Alcoholism at Large” section from AA Grapevine.

Currently AA Grapevine & LaVina have a section each month on the medical, legal and social aspects of alcoholism, with a disclaimer that these are news reports from other cited sources. An Area wants to have this page removed, stating it's an outside issue. This has come up for debate numerous times in the past.

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee considered the request and took no action. The committee affirmed Grapevine and La Viña’s editorial freedom, as expressed in the Grapevine Charter that states: “to prepare, edit, print and publish...written material concerning generally the subject of alcoholism and related matters and dealing with various means, methods, techniques and procedures available or proposed for the treatment, relief, rehabilitation and recovery of persons suffering from or potentially subject to alcoholism.” The committee requested that the disclaimer for the Alcoholism at Large section be printed more prominently and visibly.

C. Review progress report on AA Grapevine Workbook revisions.

This workbook is receiving comprehensive revisions ("by a freelancer who is familiar with the history, procedures and products of AAGV")

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee reviewed the progress report and looks forward to reviewing a progress report or draft at the next Conference. They also forwarded suggestions to the Grapevine office including expanding shared experience and how to use GV/LV as a recovery tool.

D. Review AA Grapevine Fellowship Feedback Survey and summary.

They took a survey of current, past and non-subscribers and want the committee's feedback on the results to determine resulting actions. Highlights of findings:

- **Opportunities Identified**
 - There is an opportunity to improve perceptions and relevance of Grapevine and La Viña as important personal recovery tools
 - There is confusion about how Grapevine and LaViña are funded, clarifying this may increase revenue
 - Current content formula could be improved to reach younger members and be more relevant to members with long-term sobriety
 - There is a desire for a simpler subscription model and less interest in a stand-alone digital subscription
 - Existing digital experience problems are barriers to adoption, these should be prioritized for improvement
 - There is an opportunity to learn from La Viña engagement strategies

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee reviewed the materials and noted the actions the Grapevine Board and staff have taken on the findings. The committee looks forward to a progress report at the next Conference on further actions taken.

VI. Literature

A. Review progress report on the development of the pamphlet for Spanish speaking women in A.A.

59 stories were submitted for consideration of use in the pamphlet. The process to review and select stories for a draft pamphlet will begin with the July 2019 trustees' Literature Committee meeting.

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee reviewed the progress report and looks forward to reviewing a progress report or draft pamphlet at the 2020 General Service Conference.

B. Review progress report on the development of the pamphlet on A.A.'s Three Legacies.

The pamphlet will describe A.A.'s Three Legacies and how they work together, then a section on the history of the Legacies using quotes from Bill W. Then members' stories of experience, strength and hope related to the Legacies. The subcommittee will continue with reviews of the 46 submitted stories for the pamphlet to be forwarded to the July 2019 trustees' Literature Committee meeting

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee reviewed the progress report and looks forward to reviewing a progress report or draft pamphlet at the 2020 General Service Conference.

C. Consider requests to develop a Fifth Edition of the book Alcoholics Anonymous.

4 different Areas requested this. The 1st edition was published in 1939, the 2nd edition 16 years later in 1955, the 3rd edition 21 years later in 1976, the 4th edition 25 years later in 2001. So we're "in the zone" of when to start again. They also request stories to better reflect our current membership (including 1 Area's request for a "section" of stories from young people)

OUTCOME: The committee recommended that a 5th edition draft be developed and a progress report be brought back in 2020 to the conference literature committee, adhering to the 1995 advisory action that the first 164 pages remain unaltered. FAILED 78 against, 54 for. A CC further noted that if a 5th edition is developed, new stories should be gathered from a broad cross-section of the Fellowship, but took no action on a specific section for young people.

D. Review progress report regarding updating the video "Your General Service Office, the Grapevine and the General Service Structure."

They're working on the selection of a video production company. Proposals to 6 companies went out - they're trying to do multiple video projects with the company to optimize costs. The video should reflect a contemporary presentation of the General Service and AA Grapevine offices, as well as a current portrayal of the General Service structure

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee reviewed the progress report and looks forward to reviewing a progress report or draft revised video at the 2020 General Service Conference [we saw a snippet of the existing video. Yeah, it needs updating!]

E. Review progress report on the update regarding text on anonymity to the pamphlet “Questions and Answers on Sponsorship.”

Proposes adding new language in several places on how sponsors can explain the importance of anonymity

OUTCOME: The committee recommended adding text regarding anonymity: Under the section, “What does a sponsor do and not do?” (p. 13), after the current bullet “Impresses upon the newcomer the importance of all our Traditions,” add a new bullet with the following language: “Emphasizes the relevance and spiritual value of anonymity, both on a person to person basis, as well as at the public level including social media. (For more information see the pamphlet, “Understanding Anonymity”).” Under the section, “How can a sponsor explain the A.A. program?” (p. 15), add a 6th paragraph: “Many sponsors discuss the significance of anonymity at a personal level and public level early on. Anonymity at a personal level provides protection for all members from the identification as alcoholics, a safeguard often of special importance to newcomers. At the public level of press, radio, films, and other media technologies, such as the internet, anonymity stresses the equality in the Fellowship of all members by putting the brake on those who might otherwise exploit their A.A. affiliation to achieve recognition, power, or personal gain. The sponsor is quick to point out the benefit of anonymity at this public level. Sponsors may provide examples from their own experience of maintaining public anonymity” PASSED, 121 to 6, so AdvAc.

F. Consider the development of a Literature Committee Workbook.

Other committees have workbooks to help guide them, but literature doesn't

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee suggested that the trustees’ Committee on Literature develop this Workbook and provide a progress report to the 2020 General Service Conference.

G. Review progress report on the update to the pamphlet “Too Young?”

They're talking to a graphic artist/video producer as this may become a video as well as a pamphlet "that would be innovative and attractive to young people." There are 2 target audiences: Tweens and Teenagers and those groups would benefit from different approaches. Nothing ready to present on this until 2020.

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee reviewed a progress report and looks forward to reviewing a draft revised pamphlet and/or samples of other potential formats of the pamphlet at the 2020 General Service Conference.

H. Review progress report on the update to the pamphlet “Young People and A.A.”

Of the new stories submitted, narrowing it down to 10-12 to include in the pamphlet. Develop engaging graphics, and edit the stories into smaller “bite-sized” excerpts to fit into a three-section format: What It Was Like, What Happened, and What It Is Like Now. Use a more dynamic, less text-heavy pamphlet. A draft or progress report will be presented at the July 2019 meeting of the trustees’ Literature Committee.

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee reviewed a progress report and looks forward to reviewing a revised draft pamphlet at the 2020 General Service Conference.

Bonus material! --> There's a new Appointed Committee Member to liaison with young people and help GSO/GSB better meet their needs.

I. Review proposed revision to A.A. World Services' "Policy on Publication of Literature: Updating Pamphlets and Other A.A. Materials."

This item comes from AAWS. Currently, creating new or changing existing literature must get approval from the conference. Our communications audit brought up that many of our pamphlets are outdated and/or not relevant their intended targets. AAWS would like more latitude in making updates, especially to outdated statistics, language, graphics, etc., adding more inclusive language, and selecting formats and translations. There was also a proposal from a past delegate of how delegates could do more to review proposed changes to pamphlets between conferences

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee discussed the draft of the proposed revision and supports the proposed policy and its intended impact to support more effectively carrying the A.A. message.

In keeping with Concept Eight which states in part, "The Trustees of the General Service Board act in two primary capacities: (a) with respect to the larger matters of overall policy and finance, they are the principle planners and administrators..." the committee expressed support for G.S.O.'s publishing professionals and their efforts working on behalf of A.A.

In keeping with Concept One which states in part, "The final responsibility and the ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship," the committee recognized the importance and the sensitivity of maintaining the integrity of the Conference process for developing and updating literature to best reflect A.A.'s collective experience, strength and hope.

The committee requested that the final version of the complete text of A.A. World Services' "Policy on Publication of Literature: Updating Pamphlets and Other A.A. Materials" be included as background for future General Service Conference committees. --> I think this was the most contentious item all week

J. Consider request to revise the pamphlet "The A.A. Group."

A group suggested adding "Do you feel safe coming to the group? Are the group's members treated with respect?" to the list of group inventory questions

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee considered the request and took no action. The committee noted that the pamphlet already addresses safety.

K. Review progress report regarding the update to the pamphlet "The Twelve Traditions Illustrated."

They've developed a simplified script for all Twelve Traditions and now are working on the graphics. The changes won't be available until the July board meeting. The original request was to add language about anonymity on social media to Tradition 11.

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee reviewed the progress report and suggested an emphasis on the importance of anonymity on social media perhaps by adding an image of the Anonymity in the Digital Age poster as well as the following text:

"To quote Bill W.'s writing on page 15 from The Language of the Heart, "...it should be the privilege, even the right, of each individual or group to handle anonymity as they wish." However, when dealing with social media, personal anonymity as well as the group's anonymity may be easily compromised. We must be careful when using social media to not use full names and/or photos of A.A. members in a way that would identify them or others as A.A. members." The committee looks forward to reviewing a progress report or revised draft pamphlet at the 2020 General Service Conference.

L. Review progress report regarding language on safety and A.A. for inclusion in *Living Sober* and "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship."

The edits involved safety in a sponsorship relationship and not safety in the rooms, which is likely what the original request was asking for. They are seeking clarification
OUTCOME: (CC) The committee reviewed the progress report and clarified that the language is meant to focus on safety at the group level.

M. Consider revising the Foreword to the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* .

Currently, the forward only references the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions and an Area is requesting adding a mention of the Concepts (and where to find them) to help make members aware of them. Changing Bill W's writings is usually not done
OUTCOME: The committee recommended that a paragraph be added to the forward (which was not written by Bill) after the paragraphs on the steps and traditions: "A.A.'s Twelve Concepts for World Service are an interpretation of A.A.'s world service structure. The Concepts provide guidelines for carrying the message to thousands of suffering alcoholics yet to come. They aim to record the 'why' of our service structure. They may be found in The A.A. Service Manual combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service." FAILED 106 against, 25 for.

N. Consider suggestion to add "Nonalcoholics may attend open meetings as observers" to the end of the open meeting side of the Primary Purpose (blue) card.

The background mentions this language would be consistent with other literature, but also that this was suggested in 2013 and the motion failed (doesn't say why)

OUTCOME: The committee recommended to add the language. FAILED 100 against, 32 for.

O. Consider request to update the pamphlet "The Twelve Steps Illustrated."

The trustee committee felt that a new version of the pamphlet "The Twelve Steps Illustrated" is warranted to capture a simplified language that reflects the meaning of the Steps more effectively than the current version and to include quality illustrations, but without losing the powerful meaning of our steps/message. They want it to be accessible to individuals with low reading levels

OUTCOME: The committee recommended that the trustees Literature Committee update the pamphlet and bring back a progress report or draft to the 2020 GSC.

PASSED 118 to 9

P. Review matrix of A.A. recovery literature.

The matrix shows data for each piece of literature - when it was copywritten, last reviewed, print distribution rates per language for the last several years, and online views and downloads. This allows the Literature committee to see what should be updated/discontinued, etc

OUTCOME: It was noted "The Twelve Concepts Illustrated" hasn't been updated since 1986 so the committee recommended the trustees' Literature Committee update it and bring back a progress report or draft to the 2020 GSC. PASSED 116 to 17, so AdvAc

OUTCOME: (CC) It was noted "Is AA for Me?" hasn't been updated since 1989 so the committee suggested the trustees' Literature Committee consider an update.

VII. Policy/Admissions

A. Review dates for the 2022 General Service Conference.

It's a standing agenda item to choose the week of the future conference 3 years hence (avoiding conflicts with holidays)

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee noted GSO's General Manager had to change the GSC dates for 2021 and establish the dates for 2022 in order to move forward with a contract with the hotel in Brooklyn, NY. Moving forward, it is anticipated hotel contracts will be negotiated for two year period to be more cost effective, and that the process for 2023-2024 would be starting in 2020. To provide flexibility, 3 dates, in order of preference, were selected for each of those years. 4/23-29, 4/30-5/6 and 4/16-22, 2023 and 4/14-20, 4/28-5/4 and 5/5-11, 2024. GSO to notify conference members as soon as dates are finalized.

B. Review report from G.S.O.'s general manager on General Service Conference site selection.

We have used the same 2 hotels for the past 25+ years for the conference and board weekends. The costs at both are going up, and it costs \$400,000 more to host the GSC in NYC than Rye Town. They sent out Requests For Proposals to 11 hotels in NYC, Westchester County, Long Island, Connecticut and New Jersey and are now in contract negotiations for the 2021 and 2022 Conference venue(s). Doesn't say which hotel/where. In the future they will investigate other cities/states for hosting the GSC

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee reviewed the report and looks forward to a progress report for review by the 2020 General Service Conference. At the committee meeting, the pros and cons of non NYC locales were discussed.

Bonus material! -->There's a newly formed Meetings, Events and Travel Services team to provide support for our major Board and Conference meetings

C. Consider a process for how a Conference committee could review, discuss and act on proposed agenda items not forwarded to a Conference committee.

Right now, the General Service Board decides what becomes an agenda item at conference. This proposal effectively gives delegates a minority opinion, allowing delegates to see what items were received but not moved on to the agenda and if they agree or not. The proposal is to add a standing agenda item to each Conference committee to review items that did not make the agenda. The committee can then request an item be reconsidered by the trustee committee if they disagree with the assessment to not make it an agenda item. Consider how much time this may add to the committees at conference

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee considered this process and appreciates the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference's work on developing a process thus far. The committee noted the inclusion of a rationale on items not forwarded that are listed on the grid of proposed agenda items. The committee requested that the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference continue developing the process outlined in their report and provide a report to the 2020 General Service Conference that includes more information regarding the distribution of background and the January conference call between the trustee committee chair and the corresponding Conference committee.

D. Discuss the process of approving qualified representatives from other A.A. service structures to observe the U.S. and Canada General Service Conference.

Sometimes, visitors from AA general service boards of other countries (India and the Ukraine in recent years) have been admitted to our conference as observers to see how we do things. The vote to admit them does not occur until our conference. A change is being proposed so they know they will be admitted before travelling so far.

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee requested that the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference develop a process for this, that would allow for these observers to be presented for General Service Conference consideration prior to the General Service Conference week for review by the 2020 General Service Conference.

E. Discuss a request to “develop a procedure to deal with special requests/agenda items.”

Last year, the GSB wanted people from the communications audit team to observe the conference, but it was past the deadline for such requests and there was no official way for getting approval (they came anyway). This is requesting the committee develop a procedure for dealing with things like this, including late breaking agenda items.

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee took no action, noting that Concept Three and the Conference Charter provide adequate guidance and flexibility for dealing with agenda items that are outside of the usual process.

F. Consider revising the “Process for Polling the General Service Conference Between Annual Meetings.”

This is a new procedure that was adopted last year to give conference members a way to vote on items between conferences. It was used last year, and it didn't allow for discussion. This proposal suggests instead of having 2 weeks for voting, allow 1 week for "discussion" (electronically) and then 1 week for voting

OUTCOME: The committee recommended changing the 2 week voting period to a 1 week discussion followed by 1 week voting period. PASSED 125 to 2, so AdvAc

G. Reconsider the 1986 Advisory Action regarding a simple majority vote by the full Conference.

I thought this was proposing no longer needing a 2/3rds majority to vote something into an Advisory Action. Nope. This is saying in 1986 it was decided that if something didn't receive 2/3rd majority, but it did get a simple majority, the board was to take that as "a strong suggestion" to act on it and that hasn't been happening. Indeed, "it has not been a practice for many years to record the count on each vote at the Conference". The trustees are looking for guidance on how they should react to votes

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee discussed reconsidering the 1986 Advisory Action and took no action. The committee asked that implementation of this 1986 advisory action resume with the 69th General Service Conference Final Report:

"If a committee recommendation does not receive the two-thirds vote required to become a Conference Advisory Action, but has a majority of votes, it automatically becomes a suggestion and be duly noted in the Conference Report"

- **New Committee Consideration:** *(CC) The committee noted the trustees' General Service Conference (GSC) Committee scheduled a Presentation/Discussion on the Equitable Distribution of the Workload of Conference Committees at the 69th GSC. The committee looks forward to receiving a plan or progress report on this important process for review by the 2020 GSC from the trustees' Committee on the GSC.*

VIII. Public Information

A. Review 2018 annual reports from the trustees' Public Information Committee regarding aa.org and aagrapevine.org.

Reports the things they added/removed/changed on aa.org. Average # of daily visits to aa.org: 41,793. Grapevine website has been getting 55,000 - 59,000 visitors a month. They are redesigning the aa.org website and launching a new app later this year, but changed the consultant we are using because we didn't like the design

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee reviewed and accepted the 2018 annual report from the trustees' PI Committee regarding the 2 websites. The committee suggested that the A.A.W.S. Publishing Department update all A.A. pamphlet covers to prominently display the G.S.O. website "www.aa.org." and also suggested that it may be helpful to include "www.aagrapevine.org" on the cover of A.A. pamphlets.

B. Review a report regarding the 2019 Public Information Comprehensive Media Plan.

Includes: Review A.A. literature for targeted audiences; utilize new media technologies (social and others) to raise awareness of AA; provide the most effective methods of communication with all who may benefit from A.A.'s message; optimize of A.A.'s online and social media presence to ensure A.A. stays relevant in today's society as a solution to alcoholism; increase use of videos for informational topics and to convey our message; inventory P.I. materials and services with an eye towards inclusion and acceptance; incorporate information on A.A. into basic education

OUTCOME: The committee recommended that the trustees' committee on PI develop a plan to produce video shorts based on current A.A. pamphlets that provide information about A.A. to the public and that a report be brought back in 2020 to the GSC PI committee. No specific pamphlets were identified for the project. PASSED 122 to 4, so AdvAc

C. Public Service Announcements (PSAs):

1. Review the distribution and tracking information for the video PSA “Changes.”

Thru January 2019, the English “Changes” PSA aired 4,358 times equaling an audience of 36,697,516, the Spanish “Cambios” TV PSA aired 419 times, an audience of 6,104,017 and Canada aired it 367 times, an audience of 1,773,812. The report included lots more info like the donated media value and what channels aired it
OUTCOME: (CC) The committee reviewed and accepted the information on centralized distribution, tracking and evaluation of "Changes."

2. Review the 2018 Report on the Relevance and Usefulness of Video Public Service Announcements.

The trustees recommend discontinuing "My World" but found all other current PSAs to be relevant and useful

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee reviewed and accepted this report.

3. Consider request that the video PSA “My World” be discontinued.

Doesn't say why, just that the trustees reviewed it & recommend it be discontinued

OUTCOME: The committee recommended discontinuing the video. PASSED 124 to 6, so AdvAc

4. Consider request to approve the development of a new PSA in video format that utilizes full-face actors (not members of A.A.).

An Area brought this up. They watched PSAs from Australia where full faces were used and they thought they were more impactful because of it. We never use videos with faces of actual AA members because of anonymity. Could it be confusing to viewers to reconcile anonymity and faces being shown?

OUTCOME: The committee recommended that the "Policy on Actors Portraying A.A. Members or Potential A.A. Members in Videos Produced by the General Service Boards or its Affiliates" be reaffirmed. It was explained that someone shown with an active drinking problem is not considered a potential A.A. member. The Australian PSAs meet our policy. PASSED 101 to 22, so AdvAc

OUTCOME: The committee recommended 2 PSAs be developed in 2019 with a maximum cost of \$50,000 each and if full face characters are shown, include a "actor portrayal" disclaimer on screen. PASSED 115 to 13, so AdvAc

D. Review draft language addressing anonymity and safety proposed for the pamphlet “Understanding Anonymity.”

Propose adding in the Q&A section: "Q. Is it okay to call the proper authorities if I witness inappropriate or even criminal behavior at a meeting? A. Groups strive to provide as safe an environment as possible in which members can focus on sobriety, and, while anonymity is central to that purpose, it is not intended to be a cloak protecting inappropriate or criminal behavior. Calling the proper authorities in such cases is a serious step meant to preserve the safety of members and does not go against any A.A. Traditions."

OUTCOME: The committee recommended adding to Understanding Anonymity "Q. Is it okay to tell someone if I witness or experience inappropriate behavior that happens either during or outside meeting times? Can I alert the proper authorities if there is criminal behavior? A. Groups strive to provide as safe an environment as possible in which members can focus on sobriety, and, while anonymity is central to that purpose Groups strive to provide as safe an environment as possible in which, it is not intended to be a cloak protecting inappropriate or criminal behavior. Saying something about inappropriate behavior or calling the proper authorities does not go against any A.A. Traditions and is meant to preserve the safety of all members." PASSED 108 to 20, so AdvAc

E. Consider request to update language in the flyer "A.A. at a Glance."

Propose changing the wording of the last sentence in the section titled "How A.A. Members Maintain Sobriety" from: "Sobriety is maintained through sharing experience, strength and hope at group meetings and through the suggested Twelve Steps for recovery from alcoholism" to "Sobriety is maintained through sharing experience, strength and hope at group meetings and through the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, which are suggested as a program of recovery."

OUTCOME: The committee recommended the change. PASSED 114 to 14, so AdvAc

F. Review the 2018 trustees' Public Information Committee progress report on the usefulness and effectiveness of the A.A.W.S. YouTube account.

There are 24 videos up. There's data on the top 10 videos, top traffic sources, top searches and top countries, viewing, age of viewers, etc. Overall, from April-December 2018: 18,903 total views, 2,685 subscribers, 24,057 minutes total watch time, 62% from mobile users

OUTCOME: The committee recommended that a progress report on the usefulness and effectiveness of the AAWS YouTube channel be brought back to the 2020 Conference Committee on PI. PASSED 94 to 35, so AdvAc

OUTCOME: The committee recommended that all current video PSA titles be updated for search optimization purposes. PASSED 127 to 1, so AdvAc

G. Review the 2018 trustees' Public Information progress report on the use of Google AdWords and Google Grants to carry the A.A. message.

Background only available to Conference Committee at this time

OUTCOME: The committee recommended that AAWS and AAGV apply for LegitScript certification to qualify for Google AdWords/Grants. PASSED 91 to 36, so AdvAc

OUTCOME: The committee recommended that AAWS apply for Google AdWords Grants for the purpose of providing information about AA to the public. PASSED 91 to 36, so AdvAc

OUTCOME: The committee recommended that AAWS implement Google AdWords for the purpose of providing information about AA to the public and that a report be brought back to the 2020 GSC PI committee. PASSED 101 to 27, so AdvAc

H. Review contents of P.I. Kit and Workbook.

The committee has a kit (a selection of pamphlets, guidelines and other service materials pertinent to PI work) and a workbook (a unique publication of specific information to help PI committees) It is a standing agenda item to review these items for possible updating

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee reviewed the contents, and asked that the contents of both continue to be updated with current and relevant information for P.I. committees.

- **New Committee Consideration:** *(CC) The committee suggested the trustees' Committee on PI explore online platforms as a possible additional media outlet for future public service announcement distribution.*
- **New Committee Consideration:** *(CC) The committee suggested that the "how to find A.A." section of all existing PSAs be edited to include current terminologies that describe how people search for A.A.*

IX. Report and Charter

A. Discuss General Service Conference *Final Report*.

No additional background given

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee agreed with the suggestion from G.S.O. management that more privacy is needed in the GSC Final Report for Conference members' personal information, and that as of 2019:

- *The roster section for Area Delegates include only each person's name, city, state or province.*
- *The bios of trustees and nontrustee directors include only each person's name, city, state or province.*
- *No email addresses for delegates, trustees, or nontrustee directors will be included.*

B. Review progress report from A.A.W.S. Publishing Department on the redesign of *The A.A. Service Manual, 2018-2020*

They are looking into modifications to the physical format (change binding so it lays open), design (fonts, tabs, bigger margins for taking notes), organization of content (write with GSRs as the intended audience, more logical flow, highlight changes from last edition) and tone of content (present service in positive light, build trust, tone of offering "suggestions") Rough draft in fall 2019

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee forwarded their comments to the Publishing Department, so we don't know what exactly they suggested/what their opinions were of the various options

C. Discuss A.A. Directories (Canada, Eastern U.S., and Western U.S.)

Conference committee members sent directories for review

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee considered the AA Directories (Canada, Eastern US, and Western US) especially in light of the new ERP system and Meeting Guide app, and requested that the General Service Office explore alternative methods of accessing and distributing the contact information contained in these Directories. The committee requested that a report be brought back to the 2020 Report and Charter Conference Committee.

- **New Committee Consideration:** *(CC) 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, 2020-2022 Edition and the 2019 General Service Conference Final Report.*

X. Treatment and Accessibilities

A. Consider revising the pamphlet “Bridging the Gap” to include related corrections activities.

A suggestion to change the title and other edits to indicate BTG is for people coming from correctional facilities as well as from treatment. Background includes past discussions about this - some areas combine BTG to be treatment & corrections and others keep them separate

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee agreed with the concept. The committee requested that the trustees’ Committee on CPC/Treatment and Accessibilities consult with the trustees’ Committee on Corrections to review all treatment and corrections committee literature from G.S.O. related to bridging the gap and temporary contact activities with the following in mind:

- *How treatment and corrections material can be updated for currency and inclusion;*
- *How this material could be combined;*
- *What material might be discontinued;*
- *How the combined material might be broadened to encompass the full range of possibilities in which a temporary contact might be useful.*

The committee requested that a report be brought to the 2020 Conference Treatment and Accessibilities committee.

B. Consider adding a story from an A.A. member who is deaf to the pamphlet “Access to A.A.: Members Share on Overcoming Barriers.”

Only Conference Committee members have access to the proposed new story

OUTCOME: The committee recommended a specific story from a deaf AA member to include in the pamphlet and that the video version of the pamphlet be updated to include the story also. PASSED 111 to 18, so AdvAc

C. Consider updating the pamphlet “A.A. for the Older Alcoholic – Never too Late.”

Suggestions for updates: get more recent stories, replacing ones that reference the Depression and WWII; include information about online meetings; add information about A.A. Grapevine and its website

OUTCOME: The committee recommended updates: a revised introduction, current and inclusive stories, reference to online AA, and updated "How Do I Find AA?" section. They requested a progress report or draft pamphlet be brought back to the 2020 GSC T&A committee. PASSED unanimously, 124 to 0, so AdvAc

D. Discuss the concept of posting anonymity-protected interviews on aa.org with military professionals about their experience with A.A.

The suggestion is to create audio recordings. Stories would be for current/potential AA members and for professionals as CPC/PI use. Interview military professionals as friends of A.A. Ask their experience with the Fellowship, and how they overcame challenges working with A.A. A list of interview questions for both chaplains and medical professionals were created and reviewed by the committee

OUTCOME: The committee recommended that the trustees committee on CPC/T&A develop these audio interviews for posting online. PASSED 122 to 5, so AdvAc

Bonus Material! --> There's a new subcommittee to improve carrying the A.A. message to/improve cooperation with the Armed Services & veterans

E. Review draft of proposed Remote Communities Kit.

Review the proposed list of literature/service materials/publications

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee reviewed the draft kit and agreed that there is a need for this new material. The committee suggested that before the kit is made available that a guideline or workbook be developed for inclusion. The guideline or workbook might use a locally produced current Remote Communities workbook as an example. The committee also suggested that the guideline or workbook include a list of available material, with details, including the intended audience, and suggestions for when, why and how it might be used. They forwarded a list of additional pamphlets and service material to be considered for inclusion in the Kit and suggested the trustees' committee not include paper copies of the pamphlets in the Kit but provide a list of material by category and purpose, linked to encourage digital use.

The committee noted the availability and relevance of past articles in Grapevine, Box 4-5-9, and About A.A., and requested that the trustees' Committee on CPC/Treatment and Accessibilities and staff work with AA Grapevine to make past Remote Communities articles from Grapevine available for those involved in Remote Communities service.

F. Review contents of Treatment Committee Kit and Workbook.

The committee has a kit (a selection of pamphlets, guidelines and other service materials pertinent to treatment work) and a workbook (a unique publication of specific information to help treatment committees) It is a standing agenda item to review these items for possible updating

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee reviewed these and forwarded a list of suggestions to the trustees' Committee on CPC/Treatment and Accessibilities, but only they know what they were.

G. Review contents of Accessibilities Kit and Workbook.

The committee has a kit (a selection of pamphlets, guidelines and other service materials pertinent to accessibilities work) and a workbook (a unique publication of specific information to help accessibility committees) It is a standing agenda item to review these items for possible updating

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee reviewed this and forwarded a list of suggestions to the trustees' Committee on CPC/Treatment and Accessibilities, but only they know what they were.

XI. Trustees

A. Review resumes of candidates for:

1. Northeast Regional Trustee

OUTCOME: Francis G from Eastern Massachusetts was voted our new regional trustee

2. Southwest Regional Trustee

OUTCOME: James D was elected - he was the Saturday night speaker at this years Salt City Roundup

3. Trustee-at-Large/Canada

OUTCOME: Patricia L was elected

B. Review slates of trustees and officers of the General Service Board of Alcoholics

Anonymous, Inc.

OUTCOME: The recommended slate of trustees were elected 125 to 3 and the officers 124 to 3

Class A Trustees: Leslie S. Backus, Hon. Christine Carpenter, Michele Grinberg, J.D., Sister Judith Ann Karam, CSA, FACHE, Peter Luongo, Ph.D., LCSW-C, Nancy McCarthy, Al J. Mooney, M.D., FAAFP, FASAM Class B Trustees: Thomas A, Cathy B, Carole B, Beau B, James D, Mark E, Kathi F, Francis G, Patricia L, Jan L, David N, Newton P, Ginger R B, Cate W

Officers: Chairperson - Michele G, J.D., First Vice-Chairperson - Nancy M, Second Vice-Chairperson - Newton P, Treasurer - Leslie B, Secretary - Ginger RB, Assistant Treasurer - Bob S, Assistant Secretary - Mary C* *G.S.O. employees*

C. Review slate of directors of A.A. World Services, Inc.

OUTCOME: The recommended slate was elected 125 to 5

Beau B, Homer M, Cathy B, David N, Mary C, Gregory T*, Deborah K, Carolyn W, Jan L *G.S.O. employees*

D. Review slate of directors of AA Grapevine, Inc.

OUTCOME: The recommended slate was elected 125 to 5

Carole B, Tommi H, Josh E, Nancy M, Mark E, Ginger RB, Ino F, Albin Z, Kathi F *AA Grapevine employee*

E. Review draft procedures for partial or complete reorganization of the General Service Board.

A reorganization is not considered necessary at this time, but the trustees' Committee on Nominating was asked to develop the procedures. To my non-legal eye, I would describe this less as "restructuring" and more it's how to remove and replace every single Class A and B trustee & nontrustee directors

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee reviewed this draft procedures and agreed the procedure needed additional specificity, offered suggestions, and requested that the trustees' Committee on Nominating bring back a revised plan to the 2020 Conference Committee on Trustees

XII. Archives

- A. Consider request to add the 1940s home movie of the co-founders and their wives to the video "Markings on the Journey."

This 1940s film was taken in the gardens at Stepping Stones (the home of Bill and Lois) and was donated to the GSO Archives in 2017 through legal transfer. It is a rare home movie, about two minutes long. As far as is known, it's the only moving image of the co-founders and their wives that exists. Only Conference Committee members get to see where in the existing video this new footage is added.

OUTCOME: The committee recommended adding the footage. PASSED unanimously, 134 to 0, so AdvAc

- B. Review Archives Workbook.

The committee has a workbook (a unique publication of specific information to help archive committees) It is a standing agenda item to review this for possible updating

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee reviewed the Workbook and newly released Archives Service Piece, "Archives Checklist: A quick guide for local A.A. archivists" and expressed satisfaction with the content. The committee suggested that the use of gender specific language be avoided, when possible, in future printings of the Archives Workbook.

- **New Committee Consideration:** *(CC) The committee appreciates the work of the trustees' Committee on Archives in exploring the feasibility of including in the A.A.W.S. Literature catalog all reproductions of archival materials being distributed by the Archives department upon request, but the committee expressed concerns of pursuing this suggestion, noting that over-exposure of these items would increase the workload of the Archives staff and could trivialize the archival materials.*

XIII. International Conventions/Regional Forums

- A. Discuss an anonymity-protected photograph of the flag ceremony to be taken at the 2020 International Convention.

An anonymity protected photo has been taken at each International Convention since the first International Convention in 1950 and they would like to do it again

OUTCOME: The committee recommended the picture. PASSED unanimously, 130 to 0, so AdvAc

- B. Consider a broadcast of the 2020 International Convention Opening Flag Ceremony, similar to the anonymity-protected delayed Internet broadcast of the 2015 International Convention Opening Flag Ceremony.

They did some form of this in 2005, 2010 and 2015. Viewership went up each time, from 1,760 to 13,790 to 448,165. In 2005 the video was up for 48 hours and required a password, 2010 similar amount of time but no password, 2015 13 days no password

OUTCOME: The committee recommended that an anonymity protected internet broadcast of the 2020 flag ceremony. It will be edited first to verify no faces can be seen so won't go up on the website until a day or 2 after the event. PASSED 130 to 1, so AdvAc

OUTCOME: The committee recommended Anonymity-protected video footage with highlights of the 2020 International Convention be produced for maintaining archival footage of the Convention, as well as for sharing the spirit and enthusiasm of the 2020 International Convention. PASSED 126 to 8, so AdvAc.

C. Discuss ways to encourage interest in Regional Forums and attract first-time attendees.

This is a standing agenda item

OUTCOME: (CC) The committee discussed ways of encouraging interest in Regional and Local Forums and attracting first time attendees and suggested:

- *Compiling notes from the first timer sharing at a Forum for later distribution to encourage members to attend a future Forum;*
- *Consider developing a Regional Forum app;*
- *Consider developing a micro-site in addition to surface mail for distributing the Regional Forum flyers;*
- *Increase awareness at the local level, including "intentional" outreach to different populations (i.e., young people, Spanish-speaking communities, Deaf and Hardof-Hearing);*
- *Encourage local welcome committees to create "Save the Date" flyers;*
- *Consider inviting A.A.W.S./AA Grapevine directors to "non-service" A.A. events to increase awareness of regional forums;*
- *Place information about Regional Forums in the AA Grapevine and La Viña.*

Floor Actions

- 1 A draft Fourth Edition of the Spanish Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, be developed and a progress report be brought to the 2020 General Service Conference.

OUTCOME: There was a motion to commit this to the trustees committee on literature so they can work on it - PASSED 104 to 28, so AdvAc

- 2 Production of *The Language of the Heart* in Spanish as an audio book be prioritized by AA Grapevine, Inc. and a timeline for production be reported at the 70th General Service Conference.

OUTCOME: It was learned One Big Tent is being translated into Spanish and then this is slated to be the next Spanish translation (+/- Dec 2020). Unclear why this information wasn't conveyed when a delegate asked the status numerous times. FAILED 71 against, 57 for.

- 3 The pamphlet "The God Word" be added as one of the pamphlets used in Corrections service for possible publication without staples.

OUTCOME: Voted declined to hear 95 to 32, so it didn't continue to the floor for debate

- 4 The pamphlet "A.A. for the Black and African-American Alcoholic" be updated and a progress report and/or a draft be presented to the 2020 General Service Conference.

OUTCOME: There was a motion to commit this to the trustees committee on literature so they can work on it - PASSED 120 to 12, so AdvAc (hadn't been updated since early 2000s)

- 5 In order to illustrate the importance of the committee recommendations that achieve simple majority but not substantial unanimity (i.e., a vote of two-thirds), that such "simple majority suggestions" be prominently included in the Conference Final Report.

OUTCOME: The current language calls for such votes to be "duly noted in the Conference Report" FAILED 113 against, 18 for

- 6 The "Alcoholism at Large" section be removed from the AA Grapevine.

OUTCOME: Voted declined to hear 105 to 27, so it didn't continue to the floor for debate

- 7 The "A.A.W.S. Policy on Publications of Literature: Updating Pamphlets and Other A.A. Materials" be recommitted to the trustees' Literature Committee with an updated policy to be brought back to the 70th General Service Conference

OUTCOME: PASSED 108 to 20, so AdvAc