

**VII.**

**POLICY &  
ADMISSIONS**

## **AGENDA**

### **Conference Policy/Admissions Committee**

Sunday, May 19, 2019 – 3 - 6 p.m.

Monday, May 20, 2019 – 9 a.m. - Noon

Room 403

Chairperson: Christine G.

Secretary: Mary C.

### **Conference Committee Members**

#### **Panel 68**

Christine G.\*  
Mary K.  
Michael K.  
Dave R.\*\*

#### **Panel 69**

Barb C.  
Lori C.  
Alain G.  
Kevin H.  
Ray M.

\*chairperson

\*\*alternate chairperson

- ◆ Introductions – Christine G., Conference committee chairperson.
- ◆ Review Conference committee Composition, Scope and Procedure – Christine G., Conference committee chairperson.
- ◆ Review history of Conference committee – Mary C., secretary.
- A. Review dates for the 2022 General Service Conference.
- B. Review report from G.S.O.'s general manager on General Service Conference site selection.

#### **NOTE: 1989 Conference Advisory Action**

Each Conference Committee carefully consider their agenda items and strive to make their recommendations for Advisory Actions to the Conference at the policy level. To be more financially responsible, when a Conference Committee recommendation involves a substantial expenditure of money, an estimate of cost and its impact on the budget be part of that recommendation.

- C. Consider a process for how a Conference committee could review, discuss and act on proposed agenda items not forwarded to a 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.
- E. Discuss a request to “develop a procedure to deal with special requests/agenda items.”
- F. Consider revising the “Process for Polling the General Service Conference Between Annual Meetings.”
- G. Reconsider the 1986 Advisory Action regarding a simple majority vote by the full Conference.

**2019 Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions**

**ITEM A:** Review dates for the 2022 General Service Conference.

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**Background notes:**

Each year the Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions considers the dates for the General Service Conference three years in advance and takes into consideration the importance of avoiding conflict with significant holidays.

The dates under consideration are for 2022.

**1<sup>st</sup> Choice – Sunday, April 24 – Saturday, April 30, 2022**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Choice – Sunday, May 1 – Saturday, May 7, 2022**

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**Background:**

1. List of Conference Dates from 1993 to 2021
2. 2022 April-May calendar with suggested General Service Conference dates
3. 2022 Calendar and list of significant holidays and observances



List of Conference Dates from 1993 to 2021

April 18–24, 1993  
April 17–23, 1994  
April 30–May 6, 1995  
April 21–27, 1996  
April 13–19, 1997  
April 19–25, 1998  
April 18–24, 1999  
April 30–May 6, 2000  
April 22–28, 2001  
April 21–27, 2002  
April 27–May 3, 2003  
April 18–24, 2004  
April 17–23, 2005  
April 23–29, 2006  
April 22–28, 2007  
April 27–May 3, 2008  
April 26–May 2, 2009  
April 18–24, 2010  
May 1–7, 2011  
April 22–28, 2012  
April 21–27, 2013  
April 27–May 3, 2014  
April 19–25, 2015  
April 17–23, 2016  
April 23–29, 2017  
April 22–28, 2018  
May 19–25, 2019  
April 19–25, 2020  
April 25–May 1, 2021

**CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background**

**POLICY/ADMISSIONS**  
**Item A**  
**Doc.2**

**1<sup>st</sup> Choice – Sunday, April 24 – Saturday, April 30, 2022**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Choice – Sunday, May 1 – Saturday, May 7, 2022**

| <b>2022 April</b> |               |                |                  |                 |               |                 |
|-------------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| <b>SUNDAY</b>     | <b>MONDAY</b> | <b>TUESDAY</b> | <b>WEDNESDAY</b> | <b>THURSDAY</b> | <b>FRIDAY</b> | <b>SATURDAY</b> |
|                   |               |                |                  |                 | <b>1</b>      | <b>2</b>        |
| <b>3</b>          | <b>4</b>      | <b>5</b>       | <b>6</b>         | <b>7</b>        | <b>8</b>      | <b>9</b>        |
| <b>10</b>         | <b>11</b>     | <b>12</b>      | <b>13</b>        | <b>14</b>       | <b>15</b>     | <b>16</b>       |
| <b>17</b>         | <b>18</b>     | <b>19</b>      | <b>20</b>        | <b>21</b>       | <b>22</b>     | <b>23</b>       |
| <b>24</b>         | <b>25</b>     | <b>26</b>      | <b>27</b>        | <b>28</b>       | <b>29</b>     | <b>30</b>       |

| <b>2022 May</b> |               |                |                  |                 |               |                 |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| <b>SUNDAY</b>   | <b>MONDAY</b> | <b>TUESDAY</b> | <b>WEDNESDAY</b> | <b>THURSDAY</b> | <b>FRIDAY</b> | <b>SATURDAY</b> |
| <b>1</b>        | <b>2</b>      | <b>3</b>       | <b>4</b>         | <b>5</b>        | <b>6</b>      | <b>7</b>        |
| <b>8</b>        | <b>9</b>      | <b>10</b>      | <b>11</b>        | <b>12</b>       | <b>13</b>     | <b>14</b>       |
| <b>15</b>       | <b>16</b>     | <b>17</b>      | <b>18</b>        | <b>19</b>       | <b>20</b>     | <b>21</b>       |
| <b>22</b>       | <b>23</b>     | <b>24</b>      | <b>25</b>        | <b>26</b>       | <b>27</b>     | <b>28</b>       |
| <b>29</b>       | <b>30</b>     | <b>31</b>      |                  |                 |               |                 |

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## Calendar for Year 2022 (United States)

|         |    |    |    |    |    |    |          |    |    |    |    |    |    |       |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|-------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| January |    |    |    |    |    |    | February |    |    |    |    |    |    | March |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Su      | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa | Su       | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa | Su    | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa |
|         |    |    |    |    |    | 1  |          |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |       |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
| 2       | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 6        | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 6     | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 9       | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 13       | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 13    | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 16      | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 20       | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 20    | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 23      | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 27       | 28 |    |    |    |    |    | 27    | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |
| 30      | 31 |    |    |    |    |    |          |    |    |    |    |    |    |       |    |    |    |    |    |    |

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|-------|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|-------|------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| April |    |    |    |    |    |     | May |    |    |    |    |    |       | June |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Su    | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa  | Su  | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa    | Su   | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa |
|       |    |    |    |    |    | 1 2 |     |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5 6 7 |      |    |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  |
| 3     | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9   | 8   | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14    | 5    | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 |
| 10    | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16  | 15  | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21    | 12   | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 17    | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23  | 22  | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28    | 19   | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 24    | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30  | 29  | 30 | 31 |    |    |    |       | 26   | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |    |    |

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|------|----|----|----|----|----|-----|--------|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| July |    |    |    |    |    |     | August |    |    |    |    |    |     | September |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Su   | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa  | Su     | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa  | Su        | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa |
|      |    |    |    |    |    | 1 2 |        |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5 6 |           |    |    |    | 1  | 2  | 3  |
| 3    | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9   | 7      | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13  | 4         | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 |
| 10   | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16  | 14     | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20  | 11        | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 17   | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23  | 21     | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27  | 18        | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 24   | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30  | 28     | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |     | 25        | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |    |
| 31   |    |    |    |    |    |     |        |    |    |    |    |    |     |           |    |    |    |    |    |    |

|         |    |    |    |    |    |    |          |    |    |    |    |    |    |          |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| October |    |    |    |    |    |    | November |    |    |    |    |    |    | December |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Su      | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa | Su       | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa | Su       | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa |
|         |    |    |    |    |    | 1  |          |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |          |    |    |    | 1  | 2  | 3  |
| 2       | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 6        | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 4        | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 |
| 9       | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 13       | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 11       | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 16      | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 20       | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 18       | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 23      | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 27       | 28 | 29 | 30 |    |    |    | 25       | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |
| 30      | 31 |    |    |    |    |    |          |    |    |    |    |    |    |          |    |    |    |    |    |    |

## CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background

### Holidays and Observances:

|        |                                |         |                               |
|--------|--------------------------------|---------|-------------------------------|
| Jan 1  | New Year's Day                 | Jul 10  | Eid al-Adha                   |
| Jan 17 | Martin Luther King Jr. Day     | Jul 30  | Muharram                      |
| Feb 14 | Valentine's Day                | Sep 5   | Labor Day                     |
| Feb 21 | Presidents' Day (Most regions) | Sep 26  | Rosh Hashana                  |
| Mar 1  | Isra and Mi'raj                | Oct 5   | Yom Kippur                    |
| Mar 17 | St. Patrick's Day              | Oct 8   | The Prophet's Birthday        |
| Apr 3  | First Day of Ramadan           | Oct 10  | Columbus Day (Most regions)   |
| Apr 16 | Passover (first day)           | Oct 16  | Last Day of Sukkot            |
| Apr 17 | Easter Sunday                  | Oct 31  | Halloween                     |
| Apr 18 | Easter Monday                  | Nov 11  | Veterans Day                  |
| Apr 18 | Tax Day                        | Nov 24  | Thanksgiving Day              |
| Apr 23 | Last Day of Passover           | Nov 25  | Black Friday                  |
| Apr 28 | Lailat al-Qadr                 | Dec 19  | Chanukah/Hanukkah (first day) |
| May 3  | Eid al-Fitr                    | Dec 24  | Christmas Eve                 |
| May 5  | Cinco de Mayo                  | Dec 25  | Christmas Day                 |
| May 8  | Mother's Day                   | Dec 26  | Last Day of Chanukah          |
| May 30 | Memorial Day                   | Dec 26' | Christmas Day' observed       |
| Jun 19 | Father's Day                   | Dec 31  | New Year's Eve                |
| Jul 4  | Independence Day               |         |                               |

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**2019 Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions**

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

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**Background notes:**

2018 Additional Committee Consideration of the Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions:

The committee reviewed the report from G.S.O.'s general manager on site selection of the General Service Conference. The committee looks forward to a progress report for review by the 2019 Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions.

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**Background:**

1. General Manager's report on General Service Conference site selection
2. Advisory Actions regarding General Service Conference site selection

**Memorandum**

**Date:** February 8, 2018  
**To:** 2019 Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions  
**Copy:** Trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference  
**From:** Greg T., General Manager of the General Service Office  
**Re:** Site selection for the General Service Conference

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In May 2018 the General Service Office began a Request for Information/Request for Proposal (RFI/RFP) process to determine whether there were more venues than the two currently in use (for the past 25-plus years) for consideration to hold the General Service Conference in such venues.

The two sites currently under contract are the Crowne Plaza Times Square New York Hotel at Broadway and 48th-49th Streets in New York City and the Hilton Westchester Hotel in suburban Rye Town, New York (Westchester County).

The reasons for seeking information and potential bids for Conference sites are multiple, including the following: 1) The costs at each current venue have risen over time, including and especially for our increasing audio/visual needs; 2) the cost comparison between the two current sites (in 2018 it cost up to \$400,000 more to hold the Conference in the city than it would have cost in the alternative location); 3) the suitability of sleeping rooms and meeting rooms, including the space for our general sessions of the entire Conference body with support resources, as well; 4) possibly better transportation connections than we currently have, especially to La Guardia and JFK airports.

After an unsuccessful RFI outreach to hotel corporations in late spring 2018, the General Manager authorized the Meetings, Events and Travel Services team (newly formed to provide support for our major Board and Conference meetings) to engage a consultant, Talley Management, to help in the effort to cast as wide a net as possible in this effort and gather concrete information in order to identify opportunities and come to decisions, if possible, regarding future Conferences as well as General Service Board Weekends and AA Grapevine and A.A. World Services corporate board meetings.

With the consultant's able assistance, we sent out RFPs to eleven (11) hotels in New York City, Westchester County, Long Island, Connecticut and New Jersey.

## CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background

Moving forward, G.S.O. management will explore issues regarding the location of the United States/Canada General Service Conference at a site outside the City of New York. In this way, future research about the possibility of the Conference meeting outside of New York (city and state) can be addressed.

This RFP process did not include sites outside of New York City (e.g., Midwestern U.S. or Canadian cities) but focused on the New York metropolitan area. The office intends to explore.

We have successfully completed the RFP process and are moving forward with contract negotiations for the 2021 and 2022 Conference venue(s).

Note: The 2019 General Service Conference will be held at Crowne Plaza Times Square Hotel, New York City, May 19-25, and the 2020 Conference will be held at the Hilton Westchester Hotel, Rye Brook, New York, April 19-25.

**Conference Advisory Actions Regarding General Service Conference Site Selection**

**2017** *It was recommended that:*

General Service Office management submit a report on the process, implementation and status on the site selection of the General Service Conference for review by the 2018 Policy/Admissions Committee.

**2008** *It was recommended that:*

The responsibility for General Service Conference site selection be delegated to General Service Office management, subject to approval of the General Service Board; and that a report be forwarded to the 2009 General Service Conference.

**1991** *It was recommended that:*

The 1992 General Service Conference annual meeting be held in the city of New York. (Floor Action)

**1970** *It was recommended that:*

The General Service Office have the right to choose the hotel for the 1971 General Service Conference without conferring further with the delegates to the Conference. (Delegates Only Meeting)

**1969** *It was recommended that:*

Inasmuch as G.S.O. is now giving consideration to relocation of the office in New York, consideration might also be given to the relocation of the site of this annual meeting, with a view to returning to single-room accommodations, so that the advantages of private meditation, study, thought and rest might be restored. It was further suggested that the rising costs of the annual meeting might be controlled, or at least reduced, by a study of possible alternative hotel accommodations. (Delegates Only Meeting)

**1956** *It was recommended that:*

The proposal that meetings of the General Service Conference be "rotated" from New York City in even years to a different geographical section in odd years be tabled for consideration at some future date.



## 2019 Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions

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

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### Background notes:

*From the January 26, 2019 minutes of the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference:*

The committee agreed to forward a final process for how a Conference committee could review, discuss and act on proposed agenda items not forwarded to a Conference committee to the Conference Policy and Admissions Committee for consideration. The committee requested staff develop a workflow diagram of the process to include in the background.

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### Background:

1. Final Subcommittee Report on Agenda Items Not Forwarded Process
2. Proposed Agenda Items Not Forwarded Process
3. Workflow diagram of proposed process
4. Appendix B – Proposed Conference Agenda Items Not Forwarded
5. Grid of Proposed Items for the Agenda of the 2019 General Service Conference
6. 2016 Subcommittee Report on the Agenda Item Selection Process
7. 2018 Report on the Implementation and Effectiveness of the Conference Agenda Process Including Sharing from the 2018 Conference Committee Chairs
8. FAQs on Consideration for Proposed Conference Agenda Items
9. Proposal for annual review
10. Proposal for Two-Year Process for Agenda Items

**2018 Subcommittee of the  
Trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference**

January 26, 2019

**Final Report on Agenda Items Not Forwarded Process**

**Subcommittee:** Cathy B., chair; Josh E., David N., and Patrick C. secretary

**Scope item:** To consider topics regarding area delegate review of agenda items, including consideration of:

1. A process for area delegate review of agenda items not forwarded;
2. A requested grid revision regarding agenda items not forwarded;
3. A 2-year process for proposed agenda items.

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The subcommittee was appointed in July 2018 and initially met two times.

At the October 27, 2018 trustees' Committee on the GSC meeting the committee reviewed a preliminary report on a process for how the Conference Agenda Committee could review, discuss and act on Proposed Agenda Items Not Forwarded to a Conference committee.

The subcommittee was asked to develop a final version of the process and provide it for review at the January 2019 meeting. The subcommittee agreed that the next steps could be completed via email.

The subcommittee created the "Proposed Agenda Items Not Forwarded Process - Jan 2019 DRAFT" that is being submitted to the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference for review.

## **Proposed Agenda Items Not Forwarded Process**

January 26, 2019

### **Trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference**

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At the October 2018 trustees' Committee meeting, the subcommittee was asked to bring a draft process to handle agenda items not forwarded.

Development of this process was prompted by the following:

- 2018 Conference Agenda Committee request for the trustees' committee to create a process for area delegate review of proposed agenda items that were not forwarded to a Conference committee and bring a report to the 2019 Conference Committee on Agenda.
- 2016 Conference Advisory Action that "The General Service Board develop a new policy and a plan that enhances the General Service Conference agenda review and selection process, providing the area delegate members of the Conference a role in the vetting and selection of proposed agenda items through the Conference process, to be brought to the 2017 General Service Conference."

The General Service Board has recognized the desire by the Conference for greater delegate participation in the agenda process. The following are actions that have already been or will be put in place to increase communication concerning agenda items:

- For over 20 years, the General Service Board has welcomed the chairpersons of Conference committees and the delegate chairperson at the quarterly Board Weekend prior to the General Service Conference.
- All Conference committee chairs are given a complete set of background for their corresponding Trustee Committee meeting at the January Board Weekend (with confidential information removed, i.e. Nominating resumes or works in progress). This background is sent to them prior to the Board Weekend when background is available for trustee committee members.
- Starting in 2016, trustees' committee chairs have spoken via conference call to Conference committee chairs both before and after board weekend, giving the chairs an opportunity to voice their views regarding potential Agenda Items.

## CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background

Starting in January 2019 the following action was requested by the 2018 Conference Committee on Agenda to increase delegate communication concerning agenda items:

Before the January board weekend, the entire Conference committee will have a conference call with the corresponding Trustees' committee chair and staff secretary to review items submitted as agenda items and to talk about items still being considered by the trustees' committee.

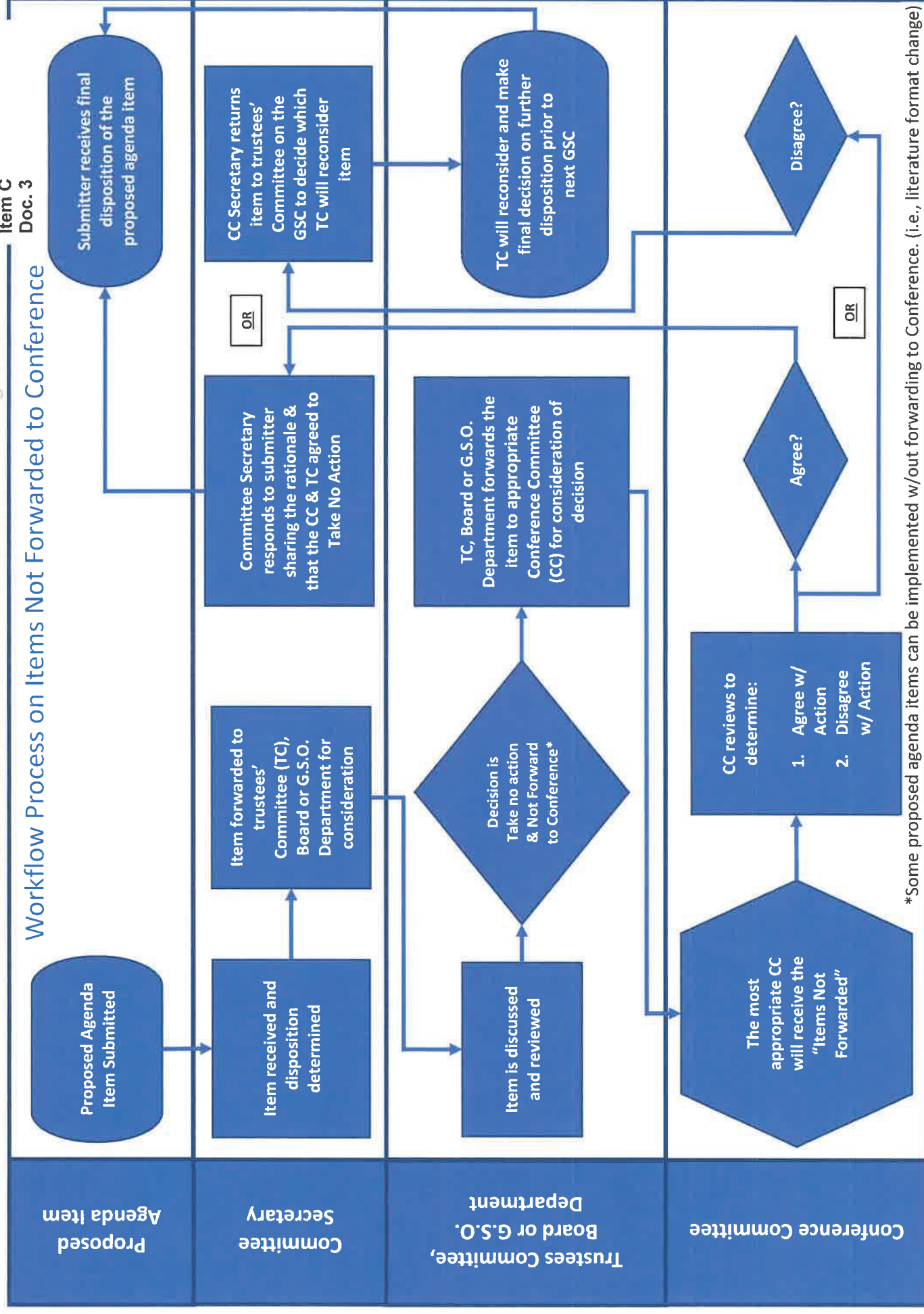
In order to continue to involve Delegates in the selection of agenda items, the following is the proposed process regarding Agenda Items Not Forwarded to a Conference committee. This process is meant to include the Delegates' voice in what is important to the Fellowship as well as provide the Fellowship with an opportunity to give feedback for consideration:

1. Any agenda items that a trustee committee does not forward will be sent to the corresponding (or appropriate) Conference committee for review. A standing agenda item would be added to each Conference committee "to review those grid items that were not forwarded". The Conference committee is not being asked to act on the agenda item, the committee is tasked with determining whether to agree with the trustee committee's decision to take no action or determine if the agenda item should be sent back for further work and consideration by the trustee committee. The disposition of these items after review would follow a process:
  - i. If the Conference committee agrees that no action will be taken; the secretary of the committee will respond to the group or individual that submitted the item that the Conference committee agreed with the trustee committee's decision to take no action.
  - ii. If the Conference committee decides more discussion or research is indicated; the item will be returned to the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference for reconsideration. The Conference committee will include their reasoning for sending the agenda item back for further consideration. The trustees' Conference committee will use the Conference committee discussion to determine which trustees' committee will reconsider and make the final decision as to disposition of the item prior to the next Conference.
2. Delegates would make their decision based on the background and information provided to the trustees' committee exclusive of any material deemed confidential (i.e. Trustee or director candidate resumes).

## CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background

3. Background for each item would be reviewed by the trustee committee secretary with any inaccuracies being corrected before inclusion in the Conference committee background.
4. In addition, a line would be added to each Conference Committee's Composition, Scope and Procedure describing the new annual process to review agenda items not forwarded.
5. The draft process would first need to be reviewed and approved by the 2019 Conference Committee on Policy & Admissions and then by the full 2019 Conference.
6. If approved by the 2019 Conference, implementation would begin with the 2020 Conference with the process overseen by the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference. In order to evaluate the process, the trustee's Conference Committee would be provided with the following information:
  - i. A list of Agenda Items Not Forwarded grouped by assigned committee
  - ii. The history of:
    - (a) # of Agenda Items Not Forwarded
    - (b) Average Agenda Items per Committee
    - (c) Average Time Needed by Committees
  - iii. Survey responses provided by delegates. (Survey to be developed by the trustees' Conference Committee to poll delegates on how beneficial the process is, how much work it added to the committee process, etc.) if the draft process is approved by the 2019 Conference.

## Workflow Process on Items Not Forwarded to Conference



\*Some proposed agenda items can be implemented w/out forwarding to Conference. (i.e., literature format change)



# HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## Proposed Conference Agenda Items – Not Forwarded October 27, 2018

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# ANALYZING THE INFORMATION

## Some of the reasons items were not forwarded:

- Recent consideration of same idea (within 2 years)
- Took no action, but continue to explore
- No widely expressed need
- Project already in development stage or authorized
- Concern had previously been researched and addressed
- Forwarded internally for future consideration or to be acted upon
- Proposal in conflict with principles of trust and participation reflected in our Concepts and the Conference Charter

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# ANALYZING THE INFORMATION

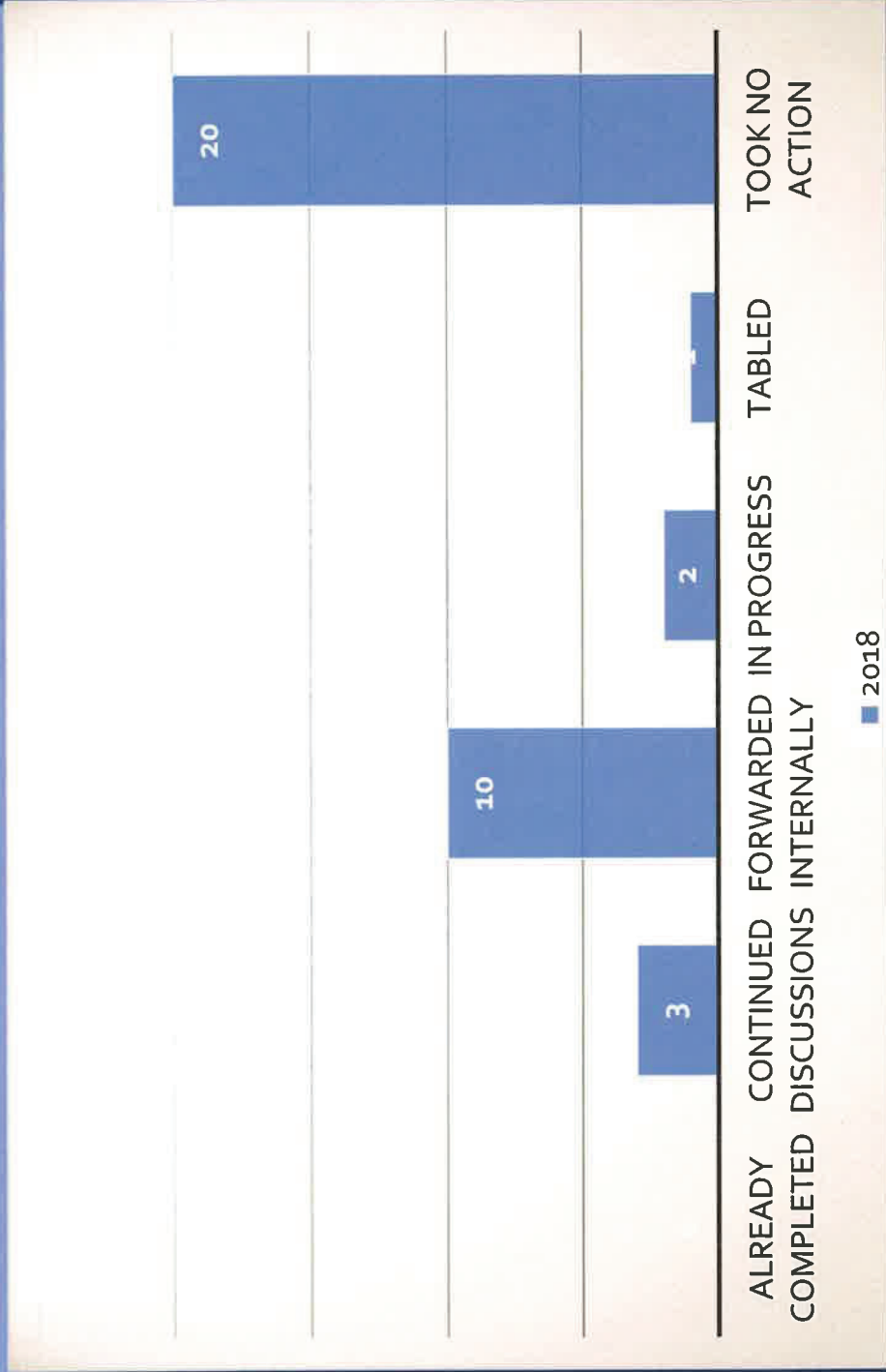
## Things to consider regarding a Conference committee's review:

- Time needed by staff and Publishing to get the items ready for conference
  - ❖ Timing is a major concern for the committee and for staff in having to determine and provide appropriate background and Publishing to have to translate it all.
- Additional workload and time spent in committee
  - ❖ Four year average per year is 29 proposed conference agenda items – not forwarded for one committee to review and discuss and decide on next action.
- Potential for less of a full group conscience and giving one conference committee a wide-ranging authority.
- In the end, items not forwarded don't die, they can be resubmitted.

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# PROPOSED CONFERENCE AGENDA ITEMS – NOT FORWARDED (2018)

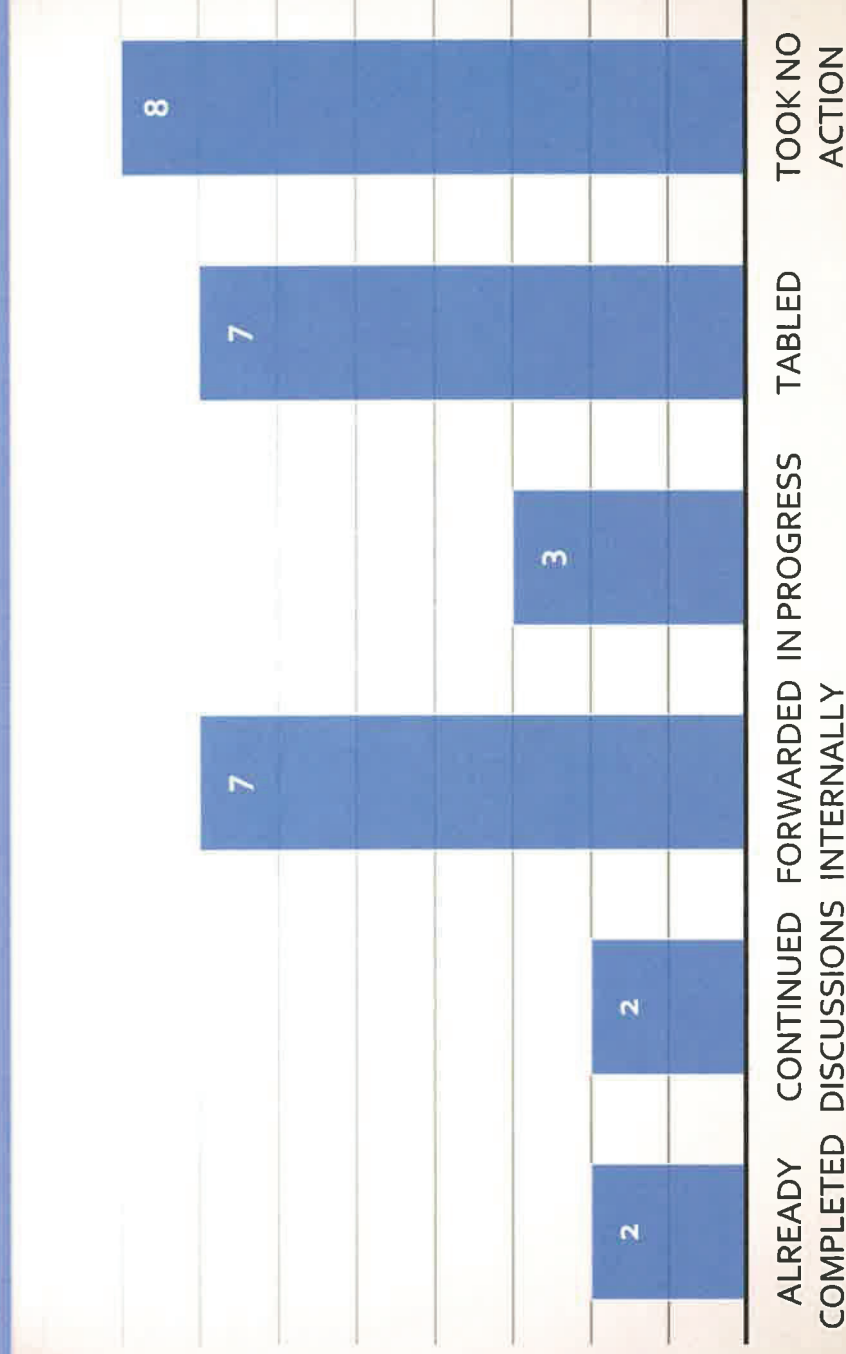
Total Agenda Items Not Forwarded = 36



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# PROPOSED CONFERENCE AGENDA ITEMS – NOT FORWARDED (2017)

Total Agenda Items Not Forwarded = 29

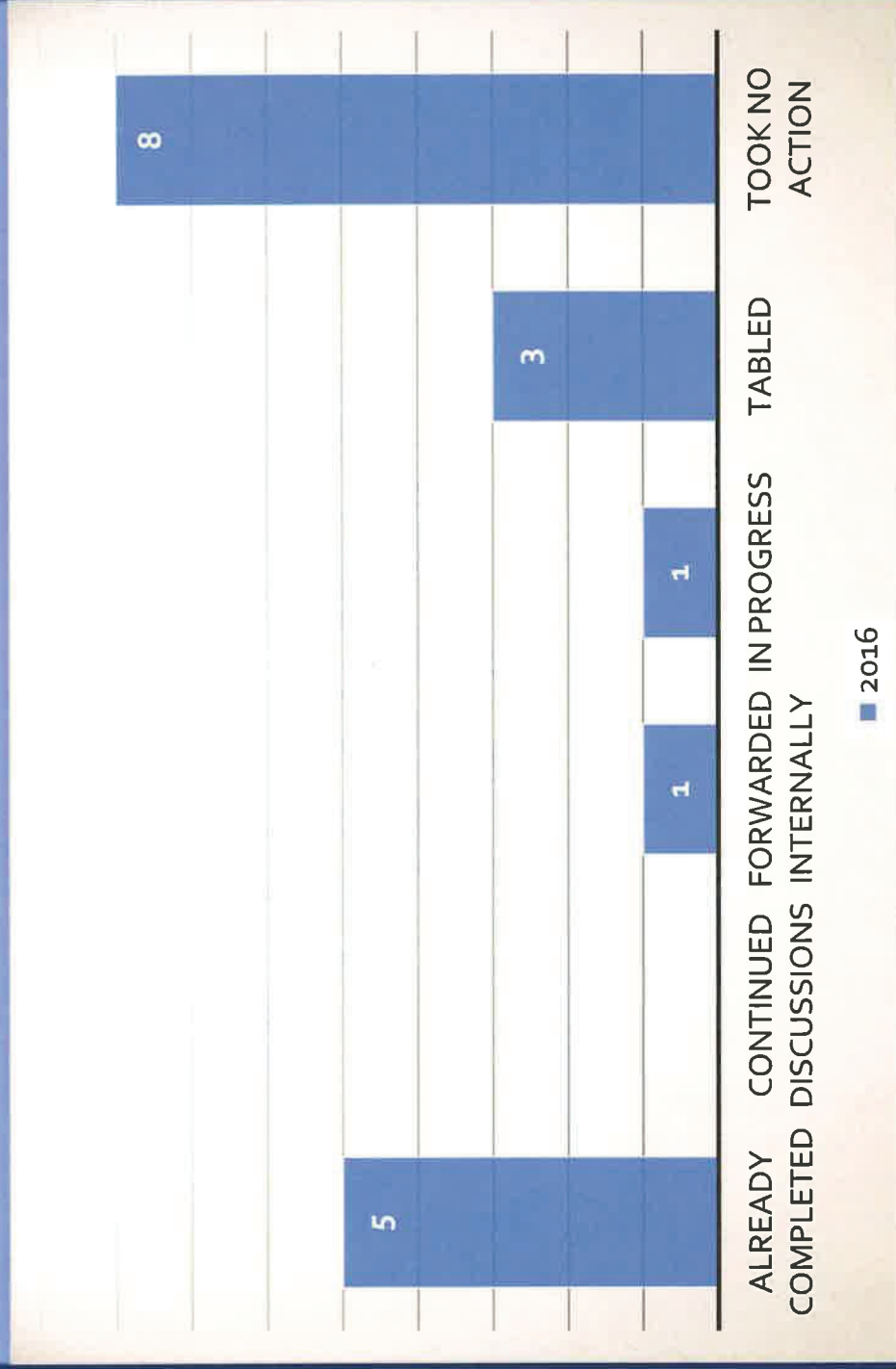


■ 2017

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# PROPOSED CONFERENCE AGENDA ITEMS – NOT FORWARDED (2016)

Total Agenda Items Not Forwarded = 19

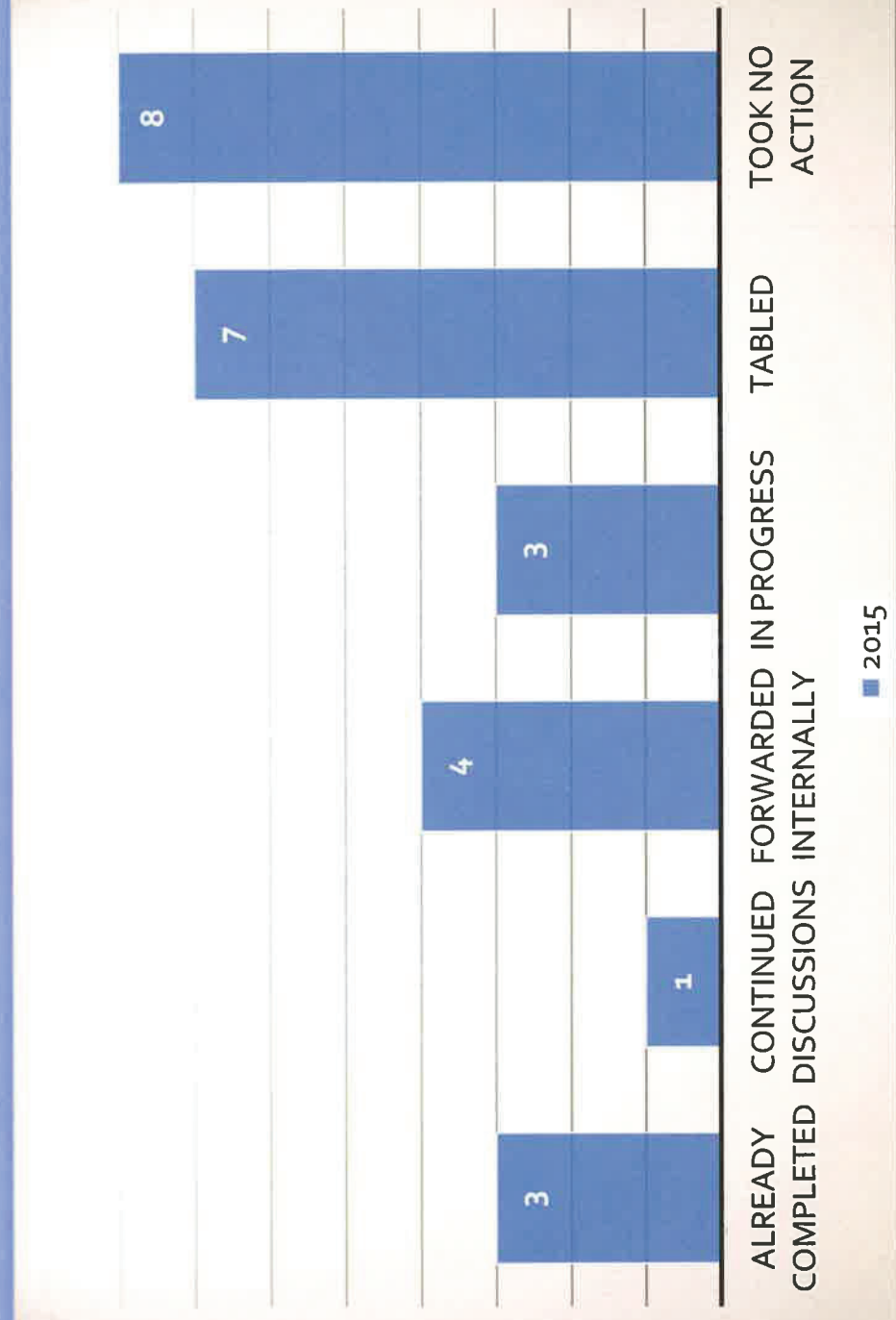


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# PROPOSED CONFERENCE AGENDA ITEMS – NOT FORWARDED (2015)

Total Agenda Items Not Forwarded = 31



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**CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background**  
**Proposed Items for the Agenda of the 2019 General Service Conference**

**POLICY/ADMISSIONS**  
**Item C**  
**Doc. 5**

**Here is the final list of items that were submitted for the 2019 Conference Agenda and their disposition.**

| Item | Date Received | Proposed Item                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Forwarded to                                              | Status                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|------|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1    | 10/24/17      | Create a list of questions to aid those interested in starting or improving their archives.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Trustees' Committee on Archives                           | Implemented: This item was considered by Trustees' Archives Committee (TAC) at the January 2018 meeting. TAC requested the G.S.O. Archivist to solicit sharing from local archives. At the July 2018 meeting, they asked for a draft list of questions to review. At the October 2018 meeting, TAC reviewed a draft and will be presented with a final copy for approval in January 2019.<br><br>The committee approved the new G.S.O. Archives material titled, "Archival Checklist: A quick guide for local A.A. Archivists" noting that it will be distributed as service material. |
| 2    | 10/26/17      | In the pamphlet named "Members Of The Clergy Ask About Alcoholics Anonymous", on page 11, under the subheading, "What are AA Meetings Like?" add the text from the "Blue Card" to define Closed and Open Meetings.                                                                                                                                                              | Trustees' Committee on C.P.C./Treatment & Accessibilities | Took No Action: The committee noted that the current language in the pamphlet adequately explains the difference between open and closed meetings.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 3    | 10/26/17      | That in pamphlet P-31 "Alcoholics Anonymous in Your Community" under the section titled "What can you expect from A.A.?", under subsection 3 the first sentence, "They may help arrange hospitalization.", be removed.                                                                                                                                                          | Trustees' Committee on C.P.C./Treatment & Accessibilities | Forwarded to Conference Committee on C.P.C.: The committee agreed to forward the request to consider removing text in the section "What can you expect from A.A.?" in the pamphlet "Alcoholics Anonymous in Your Community."                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 4    | 12/12/17      | Consider a request that the Guideline "Cooperation with Court, D.W.I. and Similar Programs" be revised and updated to reflect the changing quantities, populations, formats and impact of Sobriety Courts, Drug Courts, Treatment Courts, Mental Health Courts, Healing Courts and Veterans Courts on the meetings and groups that are willing to cooperate with such programs. | Trustees' Committee on C.P.C./Treatment & Accessibilities | Took No Action: The committee discussed potential alcoholics coming to A.A. through court referrals and requested that the staff secretary update the A.A. Guidelines on Cooperating with Court, D.W.I. and Similar Programs to better reflect what A.A. is and is not.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 5    | 3/16/18       | Consider adding a service item that lists the items from the pamphlet, "The A.A. Group...Where it all Begins" on page 39 outlining the things that A.A. does not do in a poster form.                                                                                                                                                                                           | Trustees' Committee on Literature                         | Took No Action: The committee agreed that "what A.A. does not do" is adequately addressed in current literature (i.e., the pamphlet "The A.A. Group" and flyer "Information on A.A.") and that there is no widely-expressed need from the Fellowship to provide the information in additional formats.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

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| Item | Date Received | Proposed Item                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Forwarded to                              | Status                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|------|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6    | 4/15/18       | That a modification be made to the Service Manual page S82: A footnote be added to S82, listing the titles of the books described on S82 as "The first four books written by Bill W."                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | A.A.W.S. Publishing Department            | Forwarded to G.S.O.'s Publishing Department: For consideration in the thorough evaluation, update, and redesign of the Service Manual recommended by the 2018 Conference.                                                                                                                                          |
| 7    | 4/22/18       | That the following paragraph be added after the listing of Duties in the chapter The Group and Its G.S.R. in the A.A. Service Manual Combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service (BM-31): "What I saw, and heard, and felt. "In the reports of the service activities in which I participate, I try to share what I saw, heard and felt. This way, having grown from my experience, I think I better inform members of my group by sharing my gratitude as well as my enthusiasm for service work."      | A.A.W.S. Publishing Department            | Forwarded to G.S.O.'s Publishing Department: For consideration in the thorough evaluation, update, and redesign of the Service Manual recommended by the 2018 Conference.                                                                                                                                          |
| 8    | 4/22/18       | That the following paragraph be added after the listing of Duties in the chapter The District and The D.C.M. in the A.A. Service Manual Combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service (BM-31): "What I saw, and heard, and felt. "In the reports of the service activities in which I participate, I try to share what I saw, heard and felt. This way, having grown from my experience, I think I better inform G.S.R. of my District by sharing my gratitude as well as my enthusiasm for service work." | A.A.W.S. Publishing Department            | Forwarded to G.S.O.'s Publishing Department: For consideration in the thorough evaluation, update, and redesign of the Service Manual recommended by the 2018 Conference.                                                                                                                                          |
| 9    | 5/4/18        | That the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous and the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous approve the development of a new public service announcement in video format that utilizes full-face actors (not members of AA).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Trustees' Committee on Public Information | Forwarded to Conference P.I.: The committee agreed to forward a request to approve the development of a new Public Service Announcement (PSA) in video format that utilizes full-face actors (not members of A.A.).                                                                                                |
| 10   | 3/4/18        | To add a paragraph to Chapter 29 in Living Sober extolling the positive experience of participation in general service meetings (including business/group conscience meetings).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Trustees' Committee on Literature         | Took No Action: The committee agreed that there is no widely expressed need from the Fellowship to revise Living Sober as proposed; and that the "positive experience of participation in general services meetings" may be best addressed in the new pamphlet on the Three Legacies, currently under development. |

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| Item | Date Received | Proposed Item                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Forwarded to                                          | Status                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|------|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 11   | 7/17/18       | The grid of proposed agenda items not forwarded to a Conference Committee be revised to include the rationale for the items not forwarded. In addition, a review of the revised grid be placed on the annual agenda of the Conference Committee on Agenda and included in the February 15 General Service Conference background material.                                                                                                                                                                          | Trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference | Forwarded to Conference Policy/Admissions: Item 1: The trustees' Committee agreed that no action be taken on the request for a revision of the grid of proposed items not forwarded to a Conference committee because the grid was updated to include the rationale.<br><br>Item 2: A proposed process for how a Conference committee could review, discuss and act on Proposed Agenda Items Not Forwarded to a Conference committee is under review.<br><br>The committee agreed to forward a final process for how a Conference committee could review, discuss and act on proposed agenda items not forwarded to a Conference committee. |
| 12   | 8/21/18       | That the wording of the last sentence in the section titled "How A.A. Members Maintain Sobriety" of the pamphlet "A.A. at a Glance" be changed 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." | Trustees' Committee on Public Information             | Forwarded to Conference P.I.: The Committee reviewed and agreed to forward a request to update text language in the flyer "A.A. at a Glance."                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

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# CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background

| Item | Date Received | Proposed Item                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Forwarded to                                          | Status                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 13   | 8/27/18       | That the Conference consider establishing a new Conference Committee on Cooperation with the Elder Community.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference | <p>Took No Action: The committee considered a proposed agenda item and took no action. The committee noted that the Accessibilities/Remote Communities Assignment currently shares collected experience and it was felt there is not a need to create a new Conference committee.</p> <p>The committee requested that the secretary forward a secondary request "that the General Service Office consider the need to develop a service piece and/or service material on CEC" to the trustees' Committee on C.P.C/Treatment and Accessibilities for consideration.</p> |
| 14   | 9/10/18       | To add the following wording concerning anonymity on social media to the discussion of the Eleventh Tradition in the pamphlet, "The Twelve Traditions Illustrated": 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." | Trustees' Committee on Literature                     | Forwarded to G.S.O.'s Publishing Department: The committee discussed the request for additional revisions to the pamphlet "The Twelve Traditions Illustrated" and requested the Publishing Department include the spirit of the proposed update in the revisions underway for the pamphlet.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 15   | 9/7/18        | That the Conference consider producing a plastic pamphlet rack, rather than the wire rack, as a way for members and local committees to better carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | A.A.W.S. Publishing Department                        | Forwarded to G.S.O.'s Publishing Department: This is not a policy item for the GSC. The Production Manager responded that the search is ongoing for a manufacturer of a good quality plastic literature rack that can meet our needs and is cost effective.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 16   | 9/20/18       | That work begins on the development of a fifth edition of the book Alcoholics Anonymous.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Trustees' Committee on Literature                     | Forwarded to Conference Literature: The committee agreed to forward requests to develop a Fifth Edition of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 17   | 9/23/18       | All Agenda Items for Censure or Reorganization Be Forwarded Directly to the Conference Committee on Trustees.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference | Took No Action: The committee agreed that it is important to follow our proposed agenda item process and initially submit any item to an appropriate trustees' Committee.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

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| Item | Date Received | Proposed Item                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Forwarded to                       | Status                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|------|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 18   | 9/24/18       | That the General Service Conference authorize the Grapevine Executive Editor/Publisher to hire and oversee a writer to research and draft for publication the story of the Grapevine (including LaVina) from inception until present with inclusion of a chapter in the spirit of "A Vision For You." | A.A. Grapevine                     | Under consideration: The AA Grapevine Board reviewed this request and will continue this discussion at their July 2019 board meeting.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 19   | 10/8/18       | That the Trustees Committee responsible for Report and Charter consider adding the Short form of the Twelve Traditions to the inside front cover of the AA Service Manual.                                                                                                                            | A.A.W.S. Publishing Department     | Forwarded to G.S.O.'s Publishing Department: For consideration in the thorough evaluation, update, and redesign of the Service Manual recommended by the 2018 Conference.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 20   | 10/8/18       | That the Trustees Committee responsible for Report and Charter consider adding the Short form of the Twelve Concepts of World Service to the inside back cover of the A.A. Service Manual.                                                                                                            | A.A.W.S. Publishing Department     | Forwarded to G.S.O.'s Publishing Department: For consideration in the thorough evaluation, update, and redesign of the Service Manual recommended by the 2018 Conference.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 21   | 10/15/18      | Consider translating the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous into plain language – at a fifth grade or similar reading level.                                                                                                                                                                              | Trustees' Committee on Literature  | Under consideration by trustees' committee: The committee reviewed and tabled the request for "translating the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous into plain language – at a fifth grade or similar reading level." The committee suggested that the General Service Board form a committee to gather information covering a variety of perspectives related to accessibility and other pertinent issues in order to fully evaluate the request. The committee will continue to review at the July 2019 meeting. |
| 22   | 10/17/18      | That conference corrections committee undertake a review of all corrections related literature in order to make the language more modern and inclusive.                                                                                                                                               | Trustees' Committee on Corrections | Forwarded to Conference Corrections: The committee agreed to forward a request for a review of all corrections-related literature in order to make the language more modern and inclusive.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 23   | 10/17/18      | A.A.W.S. design a simple pamphlet to help A.A. members and groups apply the Twelve Concepts for World Service at the group level.                                                                                                                                                                     | Trustees' Committee on Literature  | Took No Action: The committee considered a request to create a pamphlet to help members and groups apply the Twelve Concepts for World Service at the group level and took no action. The committee agreed that there was not a widely expressed need in the Fellowship.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

# CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background

| Item | Date Received | Proposed Item                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Forwarded to                                          | Status                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|------|---------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 24   | 10/22/18      | Remove the "Alcoholism at Large" page from the Grapevine.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | A.A. Grapevine                                        | Forwarded to Conference Grapevine: The AA Grapevine Board reviewed and agreed to forward a request to remove the "Alcoholism at Large" page from the Grapevine.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 25   | 10/23/18      | That the word "directly" be replaced by the word "inversely" in the Daily Reflection for March 3, in order that the clause at the end of the reflection reads: "until I could discard my expectations, and understand that my serenity was inversely proportional to them, I could not experience serenity and sound sobriety."                                                                                                                            | A.A.W.S. Publishing Department                        | Forwarded to G.S.O.'s Publishing Department: This is not a policy item for the GSC. The request was directed to G.S.O.'s Publishing Department as an editorial suggestion.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 26   | 10/23/18      | That A.A. prepare a pamphlet on Service Sponsorship.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Trustees' Committee on Literature                     | Took No Action: The committee considered a request to create a pamphlet on "service sponsorship" and took no action. The committee noted content on service sponsorship in the pamphlet "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship" and agreed that there was not a widely-expressed need in the Fellowship.                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 27   | 10/23/18      | Add to the Foreword of "Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions" the following statement, or something similar: A.A.'s Twelve Concepts 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. | Trustees' Committee on Literature                     | Forwarded to Conference Literature: The committee reviewed and agreed to forward the request to revise the Foreword to the book, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 28   | 10/23/18      | Set the publishing schedule of the Conference Final Report at the highest priority to ensure they will be delivered before August 31st, as they were in the past.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference | Took No Action: The committee took no action. It was reported by the Publishing Department that the principal reason for the delayed production of the 2018 Conference Final Report was the workload impact from the many projects generated by the 68th General Service Conference Advisory Actions. The committee was concerned about tying the Conference Final Report production to a specific date. Planning is underway to produce an early electronic "mini" report of conference actions for Conference members in 2019. |

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| Item | Date Received | Proposed Item                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Forwarded to                      | Status                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|------|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 29   | 10/27/18      | Consider an individualized workbook to accompany the Big Book.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Trustees' Committee on Literature | Under consideration by trustees' committee: The committee tabled a request to create an individualized workbook to accompany the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous. The committee suggested that this item also be considered by the proposed General Service Board for "translating the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous into plain language – at a fifth grade or similar reading level." The committee will continue to review at the July 2019 meeting.                                                             |
| 30   | 11/3/18       | Consider producing staple free pamphlets, such as, "Do You Think You're Different?", "This is AA: An Introduction to the AA Recovery Program", "The Twelve Steps Illustrated", and "Frequently Asked Questions About AA." As is currently done with "A Newcomer Asks."                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | A.A.W.S. Publishing Department    | Forwarded to G.S.O.'s Publishing Department: The A.A.W.S. Board, via the Publishing Department, is responsible for suggestions related to format changes to A.A. Literature.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 31   | 11/4/18       | The General Service Board develop a policy outlining the conditions under which the Boards see themselves as justified in bringing a lawsuit as a plaintiff without prior Conference consultation—including policies regarding what constitutes "a grave emergency" and what procedures constitute "consulting with the Conference"—with a draft policy or progress report being brought back for review and discussion by the Conference Committee on Trustees for the 70th General Service Conference. | Trustees' Committee on Nominating | Took No Action: The committee discussed a request that the General Service Board develop policy and procedures regarding litigation, and took no action. The committee agreed that a formalized policy might serve to impose constraints that would prevent the trustees from fulfilling their fiduciary responsibilities. The committee also noted a portion of the 2018 Conference Committee on Trustees report regarding the fiduciary responsibility of the General Service Board as it relates to litigation. |
| 32   | 11/7/18       | Consider the development of a contemporary and comprehensive new work book to study the Twelve Steps, Traditions, and Concepts.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Trustees' Committee on Literature | Under consideration by trustees' committee: The committee tabled a request to develop a contemporary and comprehensive new workbook to study the Twelve Steps, Traditions and Concepts. The committee requested the staff secretary provide the AI-Anon workbook "Reaching for Personal Freedom" as background for the July 2019 trustees' Literature Committee meeting.                                                                                                                                           |

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| Item | Date Received | Proposed Item                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Forwarded to                       | Status                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|------|---------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 33   | 11/7/18       | That Chairpeople of all General Service Board Trustees Committees, with the exception of Finance, be Trustees who are members of Alcoholics Anonymous.                                                                                   | Trustees' Committee on Nominating  | Took No Action: The committee took no action. The committee agreed that The Twelve Concepts for World Service provide the right and responsibility for each trustee committee to determine the best way to carry out their respective business.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 34   | 11/9/18       | Consider the development of a Literature Committee Workbook.                                                                                                                                                                             | Trustees' Committee on Literature  | Forwarded to Conference Literature: The committee agreed to forward the request to develop a Literature Committee Workbook.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 35   | 11/11/18      | That the General Service Conference advise the General Service Office to establish and help maintain a database of Correctional Facilities in each Service Area in the United States and Canada and the status of meetings held therein. | Trustees' Committee on Corrections | Forwarded to Conference Corrections: The committee agreed to forward a 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 for their consideration.                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 36   | 11/14/18      | That the book AA Comes of Age be printed in large type for the visually impaired members of the fellowship.                                                                                                                              | A.A.W.S. Publishing Department     | Forwarded to G.S.O.'s Publishing Department: The A.A.W.S., Inc. Board, via the Publishing Department, is responsible for suggestions related to format changes to A.A. Literature.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 37   | 11/14/18      | We ask for immediate removal [cease active use] of the Alcoholics Anonymous World Services YouTube Channel.                                                                                                                              | A.A. World Services                | Under consideration by trustees' committee: The A.A.W.S. board has agreed to forward the Proposed Agenda item for the removal of the A.A.W.S. YouTube channel, to the trustees' Committee on Public Information for consideration.<br><br>The committee discussed the request and tabled the item to the July 2019 meeting. The committee noted that the A.A.W.S. YouTube account is still in its infancy and that more information may be needed before determining its usefulness and effectiveness. |

# CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background

| Item | Date Received | Proposed Item                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Forwarded to                                              | Status                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 38   | 11/15/18      | A discussion topic be placed on the Conference Agenda for the Policy & Admissions committee pertaining to the process/procedure of approving qualified personnel from other service structures to observe the US/Canada General Service Conference.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference     | Forwarded to Conference Policy/Admissions: The committee agreed to forward a discussion topic pertaining to the process of approving qualified personnel from other service structures to observe the U.S. and Canada General Service Conference.                                                                                 |
| 39   | 11/29/18      | That the General Service Conference consider creating a 5th Edition of the book Alcoholics Anonymous in order to update the personal stories to better reflect our current membership.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Trustees' Committee on Literature                         | Forwarded to Conference Literature: The committee agreed to forward requests to develop a Fifth Edition of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous.                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 40   | 12/6/18       | Consider a suggestion to add "Nonalcoholics may attend open meetings as observers" to the end of the open meeting side of the Primary Purpose (blue) card.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Trustees' Committee on Literature                         | Forwarded to Conference Literature: The committee agreed to forward the suggestion to add "Nonalcoholics may attend open meetings as observers" to the end of the open meeting side of the Primary Purpose (blue) card.                                                                                                           |
| 41   | 12/3/18       | That the 2019 General Service Conference consider modifying the note on page S-103 of The A.A. Service Manual, to specify that the principle stated on page S-102 and S-103 of the Service Manual must be also applied to the official French and Spanish translations of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions provided by the G.S.O. Current language of Note 2: This applies to the original English version only. Proposed Change to Note 2: This applies to the original English version, as well as the official French and Spanish translations provided by the GSB only. | A.A.W.S. Publishing Department                            | Forwarded to G.S.O.'s Publishing Department: For consideration in the thorough evaluation, update, and redesign of the Service Manual recommended by the 2018 Conference.                                                                                                                                                         |
| 42   | 12/9/18       | Consider a change to the organization of the General Service Board by replacing four Class A trustees with four Class B general service trustees that are elected by the General Service Conference, with nominations not being limited by General Service Office roles.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Trustees' Committee on Nominating                         | Took No Action: The committee discussed a request for a change to the composition of the General Service Board as to the ratio of Class A and Class B trustees, and took no action. The committee noted that they are currently in the beginning phases of an exploration of General Service Board composition and effectiveness. |
| 43   | 12/9/18       | That LinkedIn be used only as a link to AA.org with no further content added to LinkedIn.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Trustees' Committee on C.P.C./Treatment & Accessibilities | Took No Action: The committee reviewed the agenda item and took no action. The committee felt that an introductory description would be more effective and would meet the goals of the 2018 Advisory Action to create a LinkedIn page.                                                                                            |

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| Item | Date Received | Proposed Item                                                                                                                                                                                          | Forwarded to                                          | Status                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|------|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 44   | 12/9/18       | Consider implementing new requirements to the procedures for regional trustee and trustee-at-large elections.                                                                                          | Trustees' Committee on Nominating                     | Took No Action: The committee discussed and took no action. The committee agreed that a policy dictating that regional and trustee-at-large candidates neither attend the General Service Conference opening dinner nor visit the General Service Office would not be enforceable.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 45   | 12/10/18      | Consider request that a staff assignment be created at the General Service Office for a Young People in A.A. (YPAA) Liaison.                                                                           | Trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference | Forwarded to A.A.W.S.: The General Manager and trustees' Committee on the GSC Chair agree that this proposed agenda item can go to the trustees' Conference Committee, but, it is ultimately not a Conference item: It is for management; management is responsible for the G.S.O. Staff assignments.<br><br>The committee discussed the proposed agenda item regarding a staff assignment for a Young People in A.A. (YPAA) Liaison. The committee determined suggestions related to the oversight of the General Service Office are the responsibility of A.A. World Services, Inc. and forwarded the proposed agenda item to the Board for consideration. |
| 46   | 12/10/18      | Consider that the book, Language of the Heart, be translated into a Spanish audiobook/audio format.                                                                                                    | A.A. Grapevine                                        | Under consideration: The AA Grapevine Board reviewed this request and referred it to their Ad hoc subcommittee on Book translations for further consideration.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 47   | 12/12/18      | Revise our "Process for Polling the General Service Conference between Annual Meetings" to include a process that allows for discussion between the voting members of the Conference, before the vote. | Trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference | Forwarded to Conference Policy/Admissions: The committee agreed to forward a proposed agenda item to revise our "Process for Polling the General Service Conference between Annual Meetings" to the Conference Policy and Admissions Committee for consideration.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

| Item | Date Received | Proposed Item                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Forwarded to                                          | Status                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 48   | 12/12/18      | That the Policy/Admissions committee develop a procedure to deal with special requests/agenda items. (i.e., request for GSB consultants to attend 68th GSC as observers)                                                                                                                                              | Trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference | Forwarded to Conference Policy/Admissions: The committee agreed to forward a proposed agenda item "That the Policy/Admissions committee develop a procedure to deal with special requests/agenda items," such as inviting General Service Board consultants to attend the General Service Conference as observers, to the Conference Policy and Admissions Committee for consideration. |
| 49   | 12/13/18      | That The A.A. Service Manual be updated to include the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands and St. Maarten on the Regional Map (pg. S69) and the Area Map (pg. S97) when it is reprinted.                                                                                                                      | A.A.W.S. Publishing Department                        | Forwarded to G.S.O.'s Publishing Department: For consideration in the thorough evaluation, update, and redesign of the Service Manual recommended by the 2018 Conference.                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 50   | 12/13/18      | Consider revising the A.A. Preamble to use gender neutral pronouns. For example, "Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of people who share their experience, strength and hope with each other..."                                                                                                                    | A.A. Grapevine                                        | Forwarded to A.A.W.S.: The AA Grapevine Board reviewed this request and took no action. Because the Preamble appears widely in Conferred-approved A.A. literature that's published by A.A.W.S., the AA Grapevine Board requested that the A.A.W.S. Board include the Preamble in their review of literature regarding inclusivity.                                                      |
| 51   | 12/14/18      | Consider a revision to the pamphlet, "If You Are a Professional" (P-46), page 4, changing the italicized paragraph as follows: From: "Proof of attendance at meetings. Sometimes a referral source asks for proof of attendance at A.A. meetings." To: "Sometimes proof of attendance at A.A. meetings is requested." | A.A.W.S. Publishing Department                        | Forwarded to G.S.O.'s Publishing Department: This editorial request has been forwarded to the A.A.W.S. Publishing Department.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 52   | 12/14/18      | Consider developing a Fifth Edition of the Big Book to aid new members with more relevant stories by our current members today.                                                                                                                                                                                       | Trustees' Committee on Literature                     | Forwarded to Conference Literature: The committee agreed to forward requests to develop a Fifth Edition of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 53   | 12/14/18      | Consider creating a Fifth Edition of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous, which would include a new concentrated section of stories comprised of individuals who got sober as young people, meaning under the age of 25.                                                                                                   | Trustees' Committee on Literature                     | Forwarded to Conference Literature: The committee agreed to forward requests to develop a Fifth Edition of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 54   | 12/14/18      | Consider removing the Conference-approval of the booklet, Living Sober and request A.A.W.S. cease printing the booklet.                                                                                                                                                                                               | Trustees' Committee on Literature                     | Took No Action: The committee considered a request to discontinue the booklet Living Sober and took no action. The committee agreed that there was not a widely-expressed need in the Fellowship.                                                                                                                                                                                       |

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| Item | Date Received | Proposed Item                                                                                                                                                        | Forwarded to                                          | Status                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|------|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 55   | 12/14/18      | Consider a suggestion that the General Service Conference should move to a midwestern city in the interest of financial prudence.                                    | Trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference | Took No Action: The committee considered the proposed agenda item and took no action. General Service Office management is performing ongoing site selection analysis and a report will be provided to the 2019 Conference Policy and Admissions Committee. The committee also felt there was not a widely expressed need supporting the request.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 56   | 12/14/18      | The General Service Conference consider ceasing the development of new literature and focus on making all our current literature accessible in all possible formats. | A.A. World Services                                   | Under consideration by trustees' committee: On January 24, 2019 the A.A. World Services Board reviewed the proposed agenda item and forwarded it to the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference.<br><br>The trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference met on January 26, 2019, and considered item. Due to the broad implications of this request the committee forwarded it to the trustees' Literature Committee<br><br>The trustees' Literature Committee plans to review at the July 2019 meeting. |
| 57   | 12/14/18      | Repeal the PI Delegate Committee and the General Service Conferences decision to approve the use of Google for Nonprofits.                                           | Trustees' Committee on Public Information             | Took No Action: The committee discussed a request "to repeal the P.I. Delegate Committee and the General Service Conference's decision to approve the use of Google for Non-profits" and took no action. The committee noted that information regarding implementation and usefulness of Google-for-Non-Profits may be too new to fully determine its value in carrying the message of A.A. to the public.                                                                                                                       |

| Item | Date Received | Proposed Item                                                                                                                                                | Forwarded to                                              | Status                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|------|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 58   | 12/14/18      | Reconsider the advisory action of the 68th General Service Conference regarding the adoption of the pamphlet "The 'God' Word."                               | Trustees' Committee on Literature                         | Took No Action: The committee took no action. The committee noted that it was important to allow time to assess the Fellowship's response to the pamphlet and that in four months over 38,000 copies of the pamphlet have been purchased since its release in October 2018. It was also noted that there was not a widely-expressed need in the Fellowship for discontinuation of the pamphlet. |
| 59   | 12/14/18      | Repeal the PI Delegate Committee and the General Service Conference's decision to approve the use of YouTube.                                                | Trustees' Committee on Public Information                 | Took No Action: The committee took no action. The committee noted that the A.A.W.S. account is still in its infancy and it may be too early to determine the usefulness and effectiveness of YouTube.                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 60   | 12/14/18      | Repeal the CPC Delegate Committee and the General Service Conference's decision to approve the use of LinkedIn.                                              | Trustees' Committee on C.P.C./Treatment & Accessibilities | Took No Action: The committee took no action. The committee noted the due diligence of the Conference process and agreed that sufficient time is required to implement the 2018 Advisory Action for a LinkedIn page.                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 61   | 12/14/18      | The General Service Conference consider the translation of the AA Grapevine Workbook to Spanish.                                                             | A.A. Grapevine                                            | Took No Action: This matter is currently under management's review and will be discussed further at a future AAGVB meeting.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 62   | 12/14/18      | Request that the General Service Conference consider the production of an audio format (preferably CD) of the Spanish language book El Lenguaje del Corazón. | A.A. Grapevine                                            | Under consideration: The AA Grapevine Board reviewed this request and referred it to their Ad hoc subcommittee on Book translations for further consideration.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |



| Item | Date Received | Proposed Item                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Forwarded to                                              | Status                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|------|---------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 63   | 12/15/18      | That A.A.W.S. and the 2019 General Service Conference consider postponing the launch of the new meeting guide app and conduct a full review of the possible implications of the app initiative for New York Inter-Group and all intergroups in the U.S. and Canada.                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | A.A. World Services                                       | <p>Took No Action: The A.A.W.S. Board requested that the following proposed agenda item be forwarded to the trustees' Committee on Public Information: "That A.A.W.S. and the 2019 General Service Conference consider postponing the launch of the new meeting guide app and conduct a full review of the possible implications of the app initiative for New York Intergroup and all intergroups in the U.S. and Canada."</p> <p>The trustees' Public Information Committee discussed the request and took no action. The committee noted that the Meeting Guide app has already been launched. The committee also noted that the Meeting Guide app developers are open to feedback from the Fellowship as this project continues.</p> |
| 64   | 12/15/18      | Consider that the current G.S.O. Archives policy that reads: "The G.S.O. Archives generally does not accept items on loan." Be changed to: "The G.S.O. Archives welcomes items on-loan that meet our policy for loaned items." This motion further recommends, in response to the change suggested, that the Archives Committee create a policy for accepting such "loaned" items.                                                                                                             | Trustees' Committee on Archives                           | <p>Took No Action: The committee took no action. The committee noted that accepting items on loans presents liability concerns for A.A.W.S., security issues, increased operational costs and other factors.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 65   | 12/15/18      | That the General Service Board amend existing literature and/or create a pamphlet that explains the origins and meaning of the application of the Responsibility Statement, including clarification that the Statement places responsibility upon members of Alcoholics Anonymous to make sure the hand of A.A. is always there for anyone who reaches out for help, but that individual members are encouraged to consider whether a request may put the individual member's welfare at risk. | Trustees' Committee on Literature                         | <p>Took No Action: The committee took no action. The committee agreed that there was not a widely-expressed need in the Fellowship.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 66   | 12/15/18      | Consider revising the "Bridging the Gap" pamphlets to be broad and inclusive.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Trustees' Committee on C.P.C./Treatment & Accessibilities | <p>Forwarded to Conference Treatment and Accessibilities: The committee noted the request to broaden the focus of the pamphlet to include local Bridging the Gap work for correctional facilities.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 67   | 12/11/18      | Reconsider the 66th GSC Advisory Action to delete two paragraphs, and add an endnote, from the Concept Eleven essay regarding "male/female" distinctions, which is the writing of our co-founder, Bill W., in the Twelve Concepts for World Service.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference     | <p>Took No Action: The committee took no action. The committee felt there was not a widely expressed need supporting the request.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

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**CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background**

| Item | Date Received | Proposed Item                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Forwarded to                      | Status                                                                                                                                |
|------|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 68   | 7/30/18       | Consider revising the pamphlet "The A.A. Group... Where It All Begins" to include the question "Do you feel safe coming to the group? Are the group's members treated with respect?" in the Group Inventory section on page 29. | Trustees' Committee on Literature | Forwarded to Conference Literature: The committee reviewed and agreed to forward the request to revise the pamphlet "The A.A. Group." |

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**Final Report**  
**2016 Subcommittee on the Agenda Item Selection Process**

**Members:** Bill N., Chair; Carole B., Richard B., Josh E., Peter Luongo<sup>+</sup>, Homer M., Bob W., Mary Clare L., Secretary.

**Scope:** Respond to the 2016 Conference Advisory Action that “The General Service Board develop a new policy and a plan that enhances the General Service Conference agenda review and selection process, providing the area delegate members of the Conference a role in the vetting and selection of proposed agenda items through the Conference process, to be brought to the 2017 General Service Conference.”

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The subcommittee of the whole of the trustees’ Committee on the General Service Conference on the Agenda Item Selection Process met on the evening of October 28, 2016 at the Hilton Rye Town Hotel.

The committee discussed the 2016 Conference Advisory Action that “The General Service Board develop a new policy and a plan that enhances the General Service Conference agenda review and selection process, providing the area delegate members of the Conference a role in the vetting and selection of proposed agenda items through the Conference process, to be brought to the 2017 General Service Conference.”

The committee agreed that there was a need to increase communication and feedback between the committees of General Service Board and the committees of the General Service Conference.

As they discussed ways to move forward, the committee agreed on the following points:

- The Board heard the will of the Conference in the Advisory Action about providing the area delegate members an enhanced role in the vetting and selection of proposed agenda items. The Board agrees that additional consultation with those members will improve communication, trust and cooperation in the process of selection Conference committee agenda items.
- In keeping with the Concept III, the final responsibility for selection of Conference Agenda Items appropriately lies with the trustees’ of the General Service Board;

<sup>+</sup>Nonalcoholic

“the Trustees of the General Service Board (operation of course within the provisions of their own Chart and Bylaws) should be able at all times to decide when they will act fully on their own responsibility and when they will ask the Conference for its guidance, its approval of a recommendation, or for its actual decision and direction.” (*The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service*, p. 13)

- Following review by the General Service Board, trustees’ committees or service corporation boards (A.A. World Services and AA Grapevine) may forward Agenda Items to Conference committees for their consideration.
- No single Conference committee has authority to select agenda items for all Conference committees.

The committee discussed measures that have already been put into place to enhance communication regarding Conference Agenda Items. For over 20 years, the General Service Board has welcomed the chairpersons of Conference committees and the delegate chairperson at the quarterly Board Weekend prior to the General Service Conference.

At their August 2014 meeting, the Board approved a recommendation stating:

“Delegate chairpersons are invited to sit with the trustee chairperson at the meeting of their corresponding trustees’ committee and participate in the meeting. The trustees’ committees welcome input from the delegate chair of their corresponding Conference committee; however, they are not voting members of the corresponding trustees’ committee.

“Delegate chairpersons of other Conference committees are welcome to attend meetings of trustees’ committees that are of interest, along with other non-committee members, with participation at the discretion of the trustees’ Committee chair.”

Following the 2016 General Service Conference, the trustees acted to continue to improve communication between area delegates and the trustees’ committees. They approved a recommendation that there be regular communication between the chairs of each trustees’ Committee and their corresponding Conference committee chair, and between the AAGV board and the chair of the Conference Committee on the Grapevine. Starting in 2016, trustees’ committee chairs have spoken via conference call to Conference committee chairs both before and after board weekend, giving the chairs an opportunity to voice their views regarding potential Agenda Items.

In addition, the Board recommended that the 2014 policy regarding Conference committee chairs be amended to state that:

All Conference committee chairs will be given a complete set of background for their corresponding Trustee Committee meeting at the January Board

## CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background

Weekend (with confidential information removed, i.e. Nominating resumes or works in progress) and that this background be sent to them prior to the Board Weekend when background is available for Trustee committee members. This applies to the Chair of the Conference Committee on the AA Grapevine for his/her attendance at the GV board meeting where she/he will have a complete set of background, except for confidential information, and this will be sent out prior to the Conference as well.

The subcommittee, in addition to noting these actions already taken to give area delegates a voice in the selection process, considered an additional role for the area delegate members of the Conference. Before the January board weekend, the entire Conference committee could have a conference call with the trustees' committee chair and staff secretary to review items submitted as agenda items and to talk about items still being considered by the trustees' committee. This way, Conference committee members would get a verbal report on the disposition of items submitted to the trustees' committee, and could share regarding those items. This would allow all Conference committee members to offer feedback on proposed Agenda items. Their feedback could be brought to the trustees' committee meeting as background for the discussion.

Each year the trustees' committee provides a report to the General Service Conference, which is discussed with the Conference committee at the Joint meeting in April. This report would include a description of each of the items, fully explaining the status of each item. For those items that were not forwarded to the General Service Conference, the rationale of the trustees' committee for not forwarding it would be included.

###

**Report on the Implementation and Effectiveness  
of the Conference Agenda Process  
Including Sharing from the 2018 Conference Committee Chairs**

The 2016 Conference recommended that “The General Service Board develop a new policy and a plan that enhances the General Service Conference agenda review and selection process, providing the area delegate members of the Conference a role in the vetting and selection of proposed agenda items through the Conference process, to be brought to the 2017 General Service Conference.”

During the 2017 General Service Conference the Conference Agenda Committee discussed a report from the trustees’ Committee on the General Service Conference on the Conference Agenda Process. Committee members expressed appreciation for the additional communication and larger role for area delegate members of the Conference in the selection of Agenda Items. The committee requested that information on the implementation and effectiveness of the plan be gathered from the 2018 Conference committee chairs and included in a report for the 2018 Conference Agenda Committee.

This report includes sharing gathered from the 2018 Conference committee chairs through a questionnaire. The report contains two attachments: the “2016 Trustees’ Committee on the General Service Conference Report on the Agenda Item Selection Process”: and a piece called “Frequently Asked Questions on Group Conscience Consideration for Proposed Conference Agenda Items.”

**QUESTIONNAIRE SUMMARY**

In early January 2018, the following anonymous questionnaire was provided to the 13 Conference committee chairs and the delegate Conference chair. Eleven people out of 14 responded to the questionnaire.

Below are the questions and responses.

**1. Did the chair of your corresponding trustees’ committee/board contact you prior to their meetings?**

YES – 8 responded yes, and 3 offered these comments:

- Our conversation covered items before the trustees committee which related to my Committee
- Hon. Ivan Lemelle<sup>+</sup> kept Peggy M. and myself very well-informed
- It has been very helpful to hear what is being discussed prior & post meetings. It is also nice to be asked for input and shared experience on topics being discussed and/or considered.

<sup>+</sup>Nonalcoholic

NO – 2 responded no, and 1 offered this comment:

- Only one phone call after one of the quarterly board meetings, but no other contact

NO ANSWER – 1 did not answer yes or no, but offered this comment:

- The Delegate Chair did I don't remember if the Trustees Chair did. Same with my Secondary Committee. However I did have correspondence with the new chair in my secondary committee

**2. Did the chair of your corresponding trustees' committee/board follow up with you after their meetings?**

YES – 8 responded yes, and 3 offered these comments:

- Once.
- We shared thoughts on how things went and where they might possibly be headed
- It has been very informative and enlightening to hear both sides of the discussions from the board meetings.

NO – 2 responded no, and offered these comments:

- Progress was revealed by agenda and background for each subseq quarterly meeting
- I don't think so

**3. Were you able to share about potential Conference agenda items with the chair during these conversations?**

YES – 8 responded yes, and 5 offered these comments:

- In a general way.
- I did go to the Dashboard prior to the calls to see what was there. plus re-read the latest board minutes.
- Not knowing if an idea should be brought before the committee for discussion and getting input and additional history from Joel has been very helpful.
- We didn't actually speak, our communication was by email.
- Very few decisions were made about agenda items for our committee. I know other committees made decisions, though I'm unsure what role the delegate chair played in them.

NO – 2 responded no.

NO ANSWER – 1 did not answer yes or no, but offered this comment:

- No, I didn't



**4. How valuable did you find these conversations?**

VERY VALUABLE – 6 responded “very valuable,” and 2 offered these comments:

- Being able to have this connection with the Trustee is very valuable in making me feel a part of this process
- These calls have helped in the aspect that I feel we are "a part of the pre & post conference experience".
- Good to be in the communications loop.

SOMEWHAT VALUABLE – 2 responded “somewhat valuable,” and offered these comments:

- The calls could be much more useful if done regularly and proactively.
- More helpful than valuable.

NO RATING – 3 did not offer a rating, and 1 offered this comment:

- When I did have a conversation with the new chair for my secondary committee it was nice....but necessary, I don't know, I found out everything I needed through the draft minutes and my Regional Trustee communications.

**5. Did you communicate about your calls with the corresponding chair with the other members of your committee?**

YES – 5 responded yes, and 4 offered these comments:

- Rotation was the only concern, as half would be out of the loop. I will be communicating with the committee following the January board weekend
- No calls to my corresponding committee chair - several to GSO Jeff Wine
- Early on after the end of conference we discussed one item pertaining to Policy & Admissions. However we have not discussed things since. I didn't think we were allowed until 60 days before the GSC.
- I provided the committee with the written updates that the chair shared with me.

NO – 6 responded no, and 4 offered these comments:

- If I had had a call more recently, I would have had fresh content to include in a conference call closer to the GSC.
- My committee really just began on January 1st.
- I don't really understand this question.
- Until last month the committee was incomplete.

**6. Overall, how satisfied are you with this process for providing input into the Conference Agenda process?**

All 11 respondents replied, and offered these comments:

- Other than an item that came out of our committee last year and was sent to the Trustees Committee on Nominating, we have had no other opportunity to provide input.
- I have had little input on the process.
- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- I am satisfied with the way its currently set up. Anything that can be done to get more Delegate involvement will always be appreciated.
- Reasonably satisfied. I think it would be helpful for clearer communication encouraging Committee Delegate Chairs to make telephone calls/follow-up after board weekends re progress.
- I am a panel 67...so maybe this is why I'm feeling like i missed something???
- Overall, I feel it is a good thing. As a Delegate I feel more involved and have been able to provide sharing from the committee as well as my area. We have the opportunity to be united in our efforts and aware of the process that takes place.
- I'm not sure I felt I had any input in the conference agenda process. Hearing about what the trustees committee was working on, didn't give me any sense of providing input.
- It seems the delegates could be more hands on. They currently are allowed peeks at the process, but, outside of my phone conversations with the Trustee Chair, I don't feel I've really contributed yet.
- Very good.

## **7. What suggestions for improvement to this process do you have?**

9 respondents replied, and offered these comments:

- Make it a part of the annual agenda setting process to have a phone call sometime between the Dec 15 deadline and the Feb 15 distribution which includes the Conference Committee Chair, the Trustee Chair, and the committee staff secretary for the committee to discuss the potential agenda items.
- Keep up the good work
- None at this time.
- I would like to see a more clearly spelled out process for Delegate Chairs and Trustees to follow, so all Committee Chairs and Committee Members are able to be informed. Not sure how that is set up? Perhaps it can be discussed in January.
- Reasonably satisfied. I think it would be helpful for clearer communication encouraging Committee Delegate Chairs to make telephone calls/follow-up after board weekends re progress.
- Provide guidelines for Delegates on how and what they can communicate with their conference committee members and when.
- I don't believe I was every invited to offer my thoughts on the selection of agenda items. So I guess I'd encourage that that be a direct invitation from the chair.
- This survey needs to be done after the January board meeting. That will be when I feel I will be able to contribute the most, but have no idea how that will actually go.
- None at this time.

### **Frequently Asked Questions on Group Conscience Consideration for Proposed Conference Agenda Items**

This overview is general and includes many but not necessarily all of the possible routes a proposed agenda item follows in the trustee, G.S.O. and Grapevine review process. There is no “one size fits all” procedure and, on a case by case basis over time, there may occasionally be inconsistencies. The trustees, corporate directors and staff bring together years of experience in A.A. service in making decisions about the appropriate process or disposition of proposed Conference agenda items.

Sources of agenda items are described in *The A.A. Service Manual* on page S53 of the current edition as “...individual A.A. members, groups, delegates, trustees, area assemblies, area committee members, and directors and staff members of A.A.W.S. and the Grapevine.”

#### **Routing of proposals**

- Q. Are all proposed Conference agenda items sent to the Conference Coordinator?
- A. No. Items are often sent to other G.S.O staff members who are secretaries to trustees’ committees or directly to the Grapevine. Also, there may be on-going projects in trustees’ committees that are not forwarded through the Conference Coordinator.
- Q. Does G.S.O. keep a master list of all proposed items submitted for possible Conference consideration?
- A. In keeping with a 2016 Advisory Action, a list of agenda items proposed submitted to G.S.O. has been posted on the Dashboard for Conference member reference.
- Q. What happens when a proposed Conference agenda item arrives at the Conference Coordinator’s desk?
- A. The Conference Coordinator acknowledges receipt of the proposed agenda item and lets the sender know which of the following options is most appropriate and, if necessary, an explanation of why and how the proposed agenda item is being directed

Revised Feb. 2017

## CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background

### 1. Forwarding to a Trustees' Committee via a G.S.O. Staff Member or Department Head:

- If the subject of the proposal is related to a staff committee assignment, e.g. CPC, Literature, etc., or Department, i.e. Archives, Finance, etc., the item will usually be forwarded to the appropriate trustees' committee and the sender will also be notified of any actions taken.

### 2. Forwarding to G.S.O.'s Publications Director or Group Services Staff person:

- If the suggestion is related to service material, the Literature Catalog, Publications Department procedures, etc. it is usually forwarded to G.S.O.'s Publication Director or Group Services staff person for gathering of experience or background material prior to consideration/review by A.A. World Services, Inc.

### 3. Forwarding to A.A. World Services, Inc.:\*

The following topics are the responsibility of the A.A. W.S., Inc. Board:

- Suggestions related to the general oversight of the G.S.O.
- Suggestions for format changes to A.A. literature, literature pricing policies, matters concerning the literature catalog, shipping and invoicing practices.
- Any matters related to the G.S.O. A.A. Website

### 4. Forwarding to Chair of the General Service Board;

- Matters related to Board Decisions/Procedures or to the general oversight of G.S.O and the A.A. Grapevine are forwarded to the Chair of the General Service Board; the chair may answer directly or route the matter to a trustees' committee, another board, the full board, or they might be forwarded to the G.S.O. General Manager – a decision on where an item of this nature goes depends on the particular issue addressed.

### 5. Forwarding to the A.A. Grapevine Corporate Board/Grapevine Executive Editor:\*

- Matters relating in any way to the Grapevine or La Viña are forwarded to the Executive Editor for disposition and an explanation of how the proposed agenda item will be handled.

**\*Note:** The A.A.W.S. and Grapevine Boards can forward proposed items directly to a Conference Committee if they wish Conference guidance, advice or direction.

## CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background

- Q. What happens when it is unclear what committee should address a proposed item or where an item should be routed?
- A. When it is unclear where a proposed item belongs, it is most frequently forwarded to the trustees' Committee on the Conference for direction.
- Q. When might a staff member assume direct responsibility for responding to a proposal?
- A. The staff member is responsible for following up on items not being forwarded for consideration. The following are examples of instances when items have not been forwarded for consideration:
1. When the matter proposed is not suitable for Conference consideration or is clearly an outside issue; for example, a proposed item from a number of years ago asked that for environmental reasons the Conference discuss banning Styrofoam cups from A.A. meetings.
  2. When there has not been a widely expressed need emanating from the Fellowship regarding a proposal, a staff member may respond after consultation with the chair of the appropriate trustees' committee and with other G.S.O. staff with the suggestion that wider, local sharing take place prior to the proposed item moving forward. Such a response is not a rejection of the item – it is encouragement for further discussion. The sender may choose to follow this suggestion or not, and is free to resubmit the item. Example: a district proposed that the word “disease” be removed from A.A. pamphlets. There was an area assembly taking place prior to the deadline for agenda items to come to G.S.O. and the staff member suggested that the matter be discussed at this assembly; this occurred and the issue failed to achieve substantial unanimity and the district declined to have the item moved forward for further consideration.
  3. When Advisory Actions related to the proposed item already exist, the staff person may respond to the sender with this information – again, this is not a rejection, but a clarification that the matter proposed has been addressed by at least one previous Conference. The sender is free to resubmit the item. Example: an individual member requested that a 4<sup>th</sup> Step workbook be developed. A staff member forwarded research as to how this matter was addressed by previous Conferences.
  4. When a proposal comes in that is so singular in nature or peculiar that it is not appropriate to pass it along to a trustees' committee, the staff member will let the sender know that their letter will be kept on file for future reference – this does not happen often. Example: an individual member wanted a pamphlet developed to explain the difference between “friendship” and “fellowship.” This

## CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background

is a singular proposal and the sender was asked to seek wider discussion on the matter and notified that their letter would be kept on file for future reference if further interest in the development of such a pamphlet was expressed.

Q. Can the G.S.O. staff pass along agenda items directly to a Conference committee?

A. Before being placed on the agenda of a Conference committee, each item is reviewed by a trustees' committee. Items for Conference committees without a corresponding trustees' committee are frequently reviewed by either the trustees' Literature Committee or the trustees' Committee on the Conference. There are times when the service committees, Cooperation With the Professional Community, Corrections, Public Information and Treatment and Accessibilities, have very light agendas for an upcoming Conference. Occasionally, in the past, Conference committee secretaries have added one or two discussion agenda items to flesh out the agendas – this has often proven beneficial because the topics get discussed at many pre-Conference events. The policy now is that one or two discussion topics may be added only if, after consultation with the trustees' and Conference chairs of the particular committee, they deem the discussion topics appropriate and useful.

### **Trustees' Committees**

Q. Prior to the trustees' committee meeting, do the committee members receive background related to the item so they can make an informed decision?

A. Yes. Members of the trustees' committees receive extensive background material and subcommittee reports several weeks before their quarterly meetings. If background was not provided with the original agenda submission, the staff secretary may write to the sender and ask that pertinent background be supplied. In addition, the staff secretary will gather pertinent background from G.S.O. resources.

Q. Do the trustees thoroughly discuss each proposed item?

A. Yes, they do. Occasionally, they have studied the background and thought about the issue in advance of their quarterly meeting, and they will find themselves in general agreement to either move the item forward to a Conference Committee or not or to send the item in another direction in which case there may not be a lengthy discussion.

Q. What options does a trustees' committee have in disposing of a proposed Conference agenda item it is considering?

A. Here are some options:

- The committee can agree to forward the item to a Conference committee for consideration.



## CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background

- The committee can approve implementation of the suggestion, and, when appropriate, choose not to seek Conference ratification of this decision. Example: three areas requested that a trustees' committee be assigned or formed to oversee the annual revision of The A.A. Service Manual. The committee agreed this was a good idea but one that needed to be addressed by the Chair of the General Service Board. It was forwarded to the Chair and after further consultation, it was decided to place oversight of this document with the trustees' Literature Committee.
- The committee can take no action on the item which means that, for any number of reasons, they do not feel Conference or further trustees' consideration is warranted at this time. The committee secretary is often asked to explain to the sender the reasons the committee made this decision. Often suggestions like the suggestion to publish the Fourth Edition of the Big Book are considered over many years before the concept is accepted by the trustees, and, eventually, the Conference.
- The committee can forward the item to another committee, to A.A.W.S. or the Grapevine Board, to G.S.O. or to the General Service Board if it believes more information is needed before making a decision, or if it believes that the item would be more appropriately handled by another group conscience.
- The committee can form a subcommittee to examine the matter more fully before making a decision.
- The committee can table the matter until its next committee meeting.

Q. Do the trustees' committees give more weight to an area's agenda submission than to other's submissions?

A. There is no absolute "yes" or "no" to this question. Every effort is made to act fairly and on principle on all items submitted. The trustees' most important consideration is the subject matter. The procedures outlined above have been in place for many years, over all have been accepted by the Fellowship and are consistent with the Conference Charter and Concepts. The committee members must determine if their informed group conscience feels the proposed agenda submission should be placed on the Conference agenda. Having said that, the trustees recognize that a proposal that has been put forward by an area assembly has been widely discussed, has received substantial unanimity at an area assembly and, therefore, has the overall support of groups who attended and voted at the area assembly.

Q. Shouldn't an area's submission take precedence over everyone else's proposals?

A. Based on the guidance in the Concepts, the Conference Charter and the A.A. Service Manual, the trustees' committees and the General Service Board are charged with

## **CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background**

taking each proposal primarily on its merits not its source. Nowhere is it stated that, in terms of proposing Conference agenda items, an area is more important than an individual A.A. member, group, district or anyone else eligible to submit items for consideration. As human beings, though, the trustees' committee members cannot but note, for example, that an item is coming from an area assembly, a past delegate or a trustee and, possibly, have some tendency to consider an item from these sources a bit differently. The procedure is not an exact science but, again, every effort is made to act fairly and on principle, to seek God's will for us and have the courage to carry it out in order to safeguard, support and serve the Conference process.

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## Conference

**From:** Area Delegate  
**Sent:** Monday, July 16, 2018 11:06 PM  
**To:** Conference  
**Cc:** Area Alternate Delegate; Area Secretary; Area Chair; Area Treasurer; Richard P; Cathy B; Roxane R  
**Subject:** 69th GSC agenda proposal  
**Attachments:** A64\_Approved\_69th\_GSC\_Agenda\_Proposal.pdf; Proposal Example-Proposed Agenda Items Not Forwarded to Conference.pdf

Rick,

I hope all is well at the General Service Office. I'm writing tonight in regards to a recent vote taken by Area 64. On July 15, at our 2018 3rd Qtr Assembly, our Area 64 body voted with substantial unanimity (106 in favor & 7 in opposition) to submit the following proposal for the 69th General Service Conference agenda:

**"The grid of proposed agenda items not forwarded to a Conference Committee be revised to include the rationale for the items not forwarded. In addition, a review of the revised grid be placed on the annual agenda of the Conference Committee on Agenda and included in the February 15 General Service Conference background material"**

Attached is background for this proposal, as well as, a draft sample of the proposed grid.

Love & Service

Jon P.

Panel 68 / Area 64 Delegate

## AREA 64, TENNESSEE

**PROPOSAL** regarding the agenda item selection process and providing area delegate members of the Conference an enhanced role in the vetting and selection of agenda items.

### BACKGROUND

#### **2016 General Service Conference Advisory Action (Floor Action):**

- *“The General Service Board develop a new policy and a plan that enhances the General Service Conference agenda review and selection process, providing the area delegate members of the Conference a role in the vetting and selection of proposed agenda items through the Conference process.”*

#### **2017 Committee Consideration by the Conference Agenda Committee:**

- *“appreciation was noted for the additional communication and larger role for delegates in the selection of agenda items, with a request that information be gathered from 2018 Conference committee chairs **and an enhanced role for delegates continue to be explored**”*

#### **2018 Committee Consideration by the Conference Agenda Committee:**

- *The committee **requested the trustees’ committee create a process for area delegate review of proposed agenda items that were not forwarded to a Conference committee and bring a report to the 2019 Conference Committee on Agenda.***

**The 2016 Subcommittee on the Agenda Item Selection Process provided a report which was included in the 2017 and 2018 GSC Background Compilations. In this report, the Subcommittee states:**

- *The Board heard the will of the Conference in the Advisory Action about providing the area delegate members an enhanced role in the vetting and selection of proposed agenda items. The Board agrees that additional consultation with those members will improve communication, trust and cooperation in the process of selection of Conference committee agenda items.*
- *In keeping with the Concept III, the final responsibility for selection of Conference Agenda Items appropriately lies with the trustees’ of the General Service Board; “the Trustees of the General Service Board (operation of course within the provisions of their own Charter and Bylaws) should be able at all times to decide when they will act fully on their own responsibility and when they will ask the Conference for its guidance, its approval of a recommendation, or for its actual decision and direction.” (The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service, p. 13)*

- *Each year the trustees' committee provides a report to the General Service Conference, which is discussed with the Conference committee at the Joint meeting in April. This report would include a description of each of the items, fully explaining the status of each item. For those items that were not forwarded to the General Service Conference, **the rationale of the trustees' committee for not forwarding it would be included.***

## PROPOSAL

In the spirit of trust and cooperation indicative of the “spiritual handshake” between the General Service Conference Delegates and the GSO Staff and Service Boards, and in accordance with the wishes of the Fellowship expressed through the 2016 Advisory Action of the General Service Conference, we of Area 64, Tennessee hereby propose the following to enhance the role of the area delegate members of the Conference in the vetting and selection of proposed agenda items through the Conference process:

***The grid of proposed agenda items not forwarded to a Conference Committee be revised to include the rationale for the items not forwarded. In addition, a review of the revised grid be placed on the annual agenda of the Conference Committee on Agenda and included in the February 15 General Service Conference background material.***

**This measure will serve to:**

- Provide the area delegate members of the Conference an enhanced role in the vetting and selection of agenda items through the Conference process
- Provide area delegate members of the Conference and the Fellowship an opportunity to more completely review these items prior to the Conference
- Provide area delegate members of the Conference with an opportunity to consult with their respective Conference committees to determine whether to address and/or request additional background on any of the items not forwarded to the General Service Conference
- Provide area delegate members of the Conference with an opportunity to consult with their areas to bring those viewpoints and opinions to the Conference
- Provide for greater transparency and accountability in the selection of agenda items
- Maintain the right of the trustees of the General Service Board *“to decide when they will act fully on their own responsibility and when they will ask the Conference for its guidance, its approval of a recommendation, or for its actual decision and direction.”*
- Improve communication, trust and cooperation in the process of selection of Conference committee agenda items

To: Staff Secretary, Trustees Committee on the Conference, Rich P. , Chair,  
with copies to Albin Z., Greg T.

From: Michele Grinberg, in capacity as Class A Trustee<sup>+</sup>

Date: July 10, 2018

RE: Proposal to amend agenda process

Attached please find a proposal to create a two year process for proposed agenda items that allows for input from the Conference through the conference agenda committee.

My hope is that this proposed agenda item will engender a broad and thorough discussion of the existing process that may result in an improved process.

<sup>+</sup>nonalcoholic



## CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background

Proposed Agenda Item on modifying agenda process

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### **Proposal Background:**

Currently: proposed agenda items are due in Dec. Agenda items are received and forwarded to what seems to be the most appropriate trustees' committee. This task is initially undertaken by staff. Sometimes a committee reviews and decides an item is not within their scope and forwards that item to a different committee.

All items that come in get posted to the grid with a brief tracking of when received & where they go (once assigned to a committee whose scope appears to cover the item).

### **Processing of agenda items broken into 3 types:**

**Type A.** Agenda items that are mature for conference consideration are forwarded to conference following committee recommendation and board vote. Background is prepared by staff to go with the agenda item. Background is usually self-evident or material has been developed in the committee. These items move forward within one calendar year = "Year 1."

**Type B.** Agenda items that are not mature still sometimes get forwarded to conference based on desire and vote of the committee ['let the conference wrestle with it.']; thus leaving it entirely to staff to figure out the background and with a lack of a developed group conscience beyond moving the item forward. "Year 1."

**Type C.** Agenda items that are considered in committee and the decision is to not forward to conference. Reason for that vote is provided to submitter. C items can be further broken down into two categories:

- C.1 "no action taken" items, which is the decision of the committee in Year 1; and,
  - C.2 "should not be forwarded" to conference for a stated reason in Year 1.
- 

### **How might we process Agenda items Type B differently?**

I suggest, a sort of 'stay' instead of the current process. Item will be reconsidered by the appropriate trustees' committee in year 2. Staff charged with some research. Trustees' committee reviews and decides for the second and final time. The Item must then become an A or C for Year 2.

### **How might we process Agenda items Type C. 1.?**

Send them to the Conference Agenda Committee [CAC] for discussion in April of Year 1 and ask for further instructions to be sent back to the Trustees committee for Year 2. The instructions could be:

- (1) agree that we take no action
  - (2) request for Board reconsideration in light of factors raised by Conference Agenda Committee (CAC).
- Thus, the item comes back in year 2 to the trustees for follow-up with instructions/recommendations from CAC. The item will then be reconsidered by trustees in year 2. The board will either decide to take no action or will forward something to conference for their consideration in Year 2.

Trustees send a report to the CAC at the year 2 conference for each C1 agenda item and what happened.

# CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background

The 2 year process happens only once. If item does not move after the 2 reviews, it is dead until some other area or group of members submits in a subsequent year. The item then becomes a “new item.”

### How might we process Agenda items Type C.2.?

Send the items to the CAC in Year 1, for discussion, determination that (1) the item should not go to conference beyond the CAC; or (2) disagree with Board's determination and send back to Trustees with further instructions and/or recommendations.

Year 2— item is further studied by the trustees. Trustees send a report to the CAC at the following Year 2 conference. The report may state that item has not been forwarded to conference following the 2 rounds of review with explanation; or that the item has now been sent through trustees committee and forwarded by the board to be considered by the conference committee.

The 2-year process happens only once. If item does not move after the 2 reviews, it is dead until some other area or group of members submits with new information in a subsequent year.

\*\*\*

**Respectfully submitted for consideration,  
Michele Grinberg  
Class A trustee  
July 10, 2018**

## 2019 Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions

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

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### Background notes:

From the August 1, 2015 trustees' Committee on the GSC report of the subcommittee on General Service Conference Observers:

#### History & Background

From the mid-1950's the General Service Conference (G.S.C.) has welcomed A.A. members from other countries as guest observers at the General Service Conference. The Archives Department reports that there is no record of any previous request from any other Twelve Step Fellowship to observe the General Service Conference, including the Al-Anon Family Groups.

#### Current Procedure:

Requests to observe the General Service Conference are received by the Conference secretary and reviewed by the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference which then makes a recommendation to the General Service Board. Following the General Service Board's approval of a request from guest observer(s) to attend the General Service Conference, the international guest observers along with the corresponding entity are notified.

In accordance with its Scope and Procedure, the Conference Policy/Admissions Committee has been responsible for reviewing all requests for access to the Annual Meeting of the General Service Conference and making recommendations to the entire Conference. The current Scope of the Conference Policy/Admissions Committee states:

*Admissions function: Is responsible for reviewing all requests for admissions to the Annual Meeting of the General Service Conference.*

Therefore, the item is then added to the agenda of the Conference Policy/Admissions Committee. The Conference Policy/Admissions is scheduled to meet on Sunday before the Opening Session of the Conference for the purpose of approving (by vote) the admittance of the guest observers to the Conference. The

## CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background

committee then makes a recommendation to the Conference body at the Opening Session.

From the October 27, 2012 trustees' Committee on the GSC "Report on Role of Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions in Granting International Observers Admission to the General Service Conference":

2012 Policy/Admissions Additional Committee Consideration:

*The committee requested that the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference review the role of the Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions in granting international observers admission to the General Service Conference, taking into account the concerns expressed by the Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions, and provide a report to the 2013 Conference Committee. The Conference committee agreed that their recommendation for approval of observers seems redundant, and this approval could appear to be a "rubber stamp" of the trustees' action, as cautioned against in Concept VII.*

Conclusion:

The historical role of the Policy/Admissions committee in this procedure dates since 1956 and is an important one. The trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference views the role of the Policy/Admissions in this process as one of formality and done simply to comply with convention. The committee acknowledges that while this practice may be viewed by some as being "redundant" or a "rubber stamp," the proceedings of the Conference and the formal approval of those in attendance during its deliberations is appropriately handled with the current procedure and is a matter of course. The committee noted that until 2012, there have been no expressed concerns on the role of the Conference committee or the procedure.

From 2013 Additional Committee Consideration of the Conference Policy/Admissions Committee:

The committee discussed the report of the Trustees' Committee on Conference regarding the role of the Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions in granting international observers admission to the General Service Conference. The committee agreed that no change to the current practice is necessary.

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### Background:

1. Request from an area to discuss approval process of GSC observer invitations

**From:** [noreply@aa.org](mailto:noreply@aa.org)  
**To:** [Conference](#)  
**Subject:** Proposed agenda item for Policy & Admissions  
**Date:** Thursday, November 15, 2018 11:17:34 AM

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Here is your copy of a message sent via an aa.org webform to the Conference Coordinator at G.S.O.

**Name:** David R

**Location:** Area 25 Kansas

**Phone:**

**Email:**

**Subject:** Proposed agenda item for Policy & Admissions

**Message:** Re: Discussion topic for Policy & Admissions Greetings Last year, Policy & Admissions discussed a question concerning direct invitations to other service structures to observe the US/Canada General Service Conference. During that discussion, we also briefly discussed the process that has been used to approve observers. We wondered if the current process is the best, as it leaves applicants waiting until the opening session of the Conference to learn for certain that they've been approved. What we didn't explore was the pros and cons of the current process, and possible alternative methods. For example, might this be an appropriate use of the new polling process? I would like to ask that a discussion topic be placed on the Conference Agenda for the Policy & Admissions committee pertaining to the process/procedure of approving qualified personnel from other service structures to observe the US/Canada General Service Conference. Thank you for all that you do for A.A.! In Unity  
& Service David R. Delegate, Area 25, Kansas Panel 68 Policy & Admissions

**2019 Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions**

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

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**Background notes:**

**2018 Advisory Action**

*It was recommended that:*

Two consultants from the firm Impact Collaborative be admitted to the 68th General Service Conference on Thursday, April 26 and Friday, April 27, 2018 as observers. [Note: This was a special request from the chair of the General Service Board for approval of two representatives from the firm Impact Collaborative contracted to conduct a communications audit initiated by the General Service Board.]

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**Background:**

1. Request to “develop a procedure to deal with special requests/agenda items”
2. Other examples of special requests/agenda items



**CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background**

**POLICY/ADMISSIONS  
Item E  
Doc.1**

December 12, 2018

Hi Patrick,

Hope all is well with you and everyone at the Office, I am submitting an agenda item for consideration at the 69 General Service Conference.

Proposed Agenda item:

That the Policy/Admissions committee develop a procedure to deal with special requests/ agenda item.

Background:

On February 19<sup>th</sup>/2018 the Policy/Admissions Committee received a request from Michelle Grinberg, Chair of the General Service Board,<sup>+</sup> to allow two employees of Impact Collaborative to attend the GSC as observers. A few Delegates on the Policy/Admissions felt that this request sidestepped the Agenda item selection process.

**MEMO**

**Date:** February 19, 2018  
**To:** Eva S., Secretary, Conference Policy and Admissions Committee  
**From:** Michele Grinberg, chair of the General Service Board<sup>+</sup>  
**Subject:** Request for Conference observers - Communications consultants

---

This memorandum is to forward a request from the chair of the General Service Board, on behalf of the Board, to the 2018 Conference Policy and Admissions Committee.

On January 26, 2018, the trustees and directors heard a presentation from the Impact Collaborative consultants on their preliminary findings as a result of their "communications audit," called for by the General Service Board's Strategic Plan. Information on the preliminary findings and methodology used will be reported to the Conference by the board chair.

In that context, and to assist the consultants in analyzing how communication occurs during Conference, it is requested that two consultants, of the firm Impact Collaborative be invited to attend the 2018 General Service Conference on Thursday, April 26 and Friday, April 27 as observers.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Thank you.

<sup>+</sup>Nonalcoholic

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## CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background

Thanks in Advance

Tim M.

P67 Delegate

Area 82 NS/NL

Policy/Admissions

PS. It was a pleasure to meet and serve with you.

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# Report of the Meeting of The Ad Hoc Committee on Chips/Medallions

POLICY/ADMISSIONS  
Item E  
Doc. 2

Tuesday afternoon the Conference listened to the report of the Ad Hoc Committee, which was read by the delegate chairperson. After lengthy discussion on the Conference floor Tuesday and Thursday, Conference members adopted committee recommendations A and B, resulting in Advisory Actions 2 and 3 (see p. 13). Recommendations C and D were not accepted. Recommendation E was withdrawn by the committee, given the fact that C and D were not adopted by the Conference.

Late Friday afternoon, during a final Sharing Session, the Chips and Medallions subject came up again. Following more floor discussion, general service trustee Jean Smith made the following statement to the Conference:

*The A.A.W.S. Board will immediately begin a thorough review of its policies regarding our marks, will do everything possible to avoid initiating litigation, and will prepare a revised policy statement to be ready for next year's Conference.*

The Ad Hoc Committee on Chips/Medallions met throughout the weekend of February 12-14, 1993, in Chicago. The committee was drawn from the hat in December and is composed of one delegate from each region plus the delegate chairperson, who chairs the committee. The committee secretary from G.S.O. joined us at our request.

From the outset, the committee members were of one mind about how to proceed. Although we had a legal opinion available, we felt that the questions posed were spiritual in nature, and that the framework of the discussion should be centered on the Steps, the Traditions and the Concepts. Over the course of the weekend, members of the committee realized that the issues involved in the study concerning medallions and logos were spiritual in nature.

After general sharing, we took each Tradition (Long Form) and the Warranties as the basis for our discussion on the protection of our trademarks and service marks relative to production of items such as sobriety chips/medallions. We felt that sharing in this manner deepened our understanding of the Traditions and Warranties involved.

We began to see that the issue is "What is best for A.A. as a whole," and not "Does the Fellowship want A.A. sobriety chips/medallions?" or "Can A.A. produce sobriety chips/medallions?" The committee did not focus on the use of sobriety chips/medallions—groups and individuals are free to use them if they wish. The question is whether it is best for A.A. as a whole to have a sobriety chip/medallion with the A.A. name on it authorized and/or issued by an A.A. entity.

Some of the comments made during the Traditions part of the discussion included:

*The First Tradition*—At the heart of the matter is unity—or the lack thereof. Pride and/or fear will destroy our unity.

*The Second Tradition*—Therein lies our solution. Where is our ultimate authority and where is our center? Is it internal or external—principles arising from a power greater than people, or values of the world? We must keep in mind that this is also the place where Bill W. points out that "...the good is sometimes the enemy of the best."

*The Third Tradition*—We were reminded that we are a self-correcting Fellowship. We cannot be all things to all people. The committee needed to root itself in the principles of Alcoholics Anonymous. We felt that it is time for the whole Fellowship to get back to the simplicity and basis of our message. On one side of the coin is a loving God as we understand Him, and on the other side is John Barleycorn.

*The Fourth Tradition* makes it clear that we must separate the spiritual from the material. Keeping in mind that any action we

take could affect A.A. as a whole...the Traditions work as a whole... all of them must be honored. From page 105 in *A.A. Comes of Age*, "...When all the chips are down, we must conform to God's will or perish."

*The Fifth Tradition*—The Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, *A.A. Comes of Age*, and "The Twelve Concepts for World Service"—are the basic message, the core message of A.A. Everything else is commentary on the basic message: all literature published, comments and sharing at meetings, even the Grapevine, is a sort of national commentary—could chips/medallions be another form of commentary, another "form" of a pamphlet?

*The Sixth Tradition* calls on us to "divide the spiritual from the material." Money is not a valid consideration in the question of whether or not litigation should be brought against misusers of our logo since A.A. is not in the business of making money. Similarly, the fear that others would be making money off our logo does not hurt the Fellowship on a fundamental level. How do we let go of this tiger we have by the tail? ... We are at the tip of the iceberg of litigation right now. We are at the place where the trustees were when they were offered that \$10,000. We went many, many years without lawsuits. To continue on this path threatens to keep our focus on money and property instead of allowing our view to widen spiritually.

*The Seventh Tradition*—reminds us "Experience has often warned us that nothing can so surely destroy our spiritual heritage as futile disputes over property, money and authority."

*The Eleventh Tradition*—explicitly warns against the sensationalism that follows litigation. It is essentially negative attention and puts the Fellowship at risk.

*The Twelfth Tradition*—Humility is the key, working from the internal to the external, from the smaller to the larger, from "I" to "We," in a spirit of humility and trust. What course of action will keep us on the path of spirituality? If we treat trademark abuses like we do anonymity breaks, would that serve to preserve us in spiritual health? We trust God every day for our lives...isn't trusting realistic?

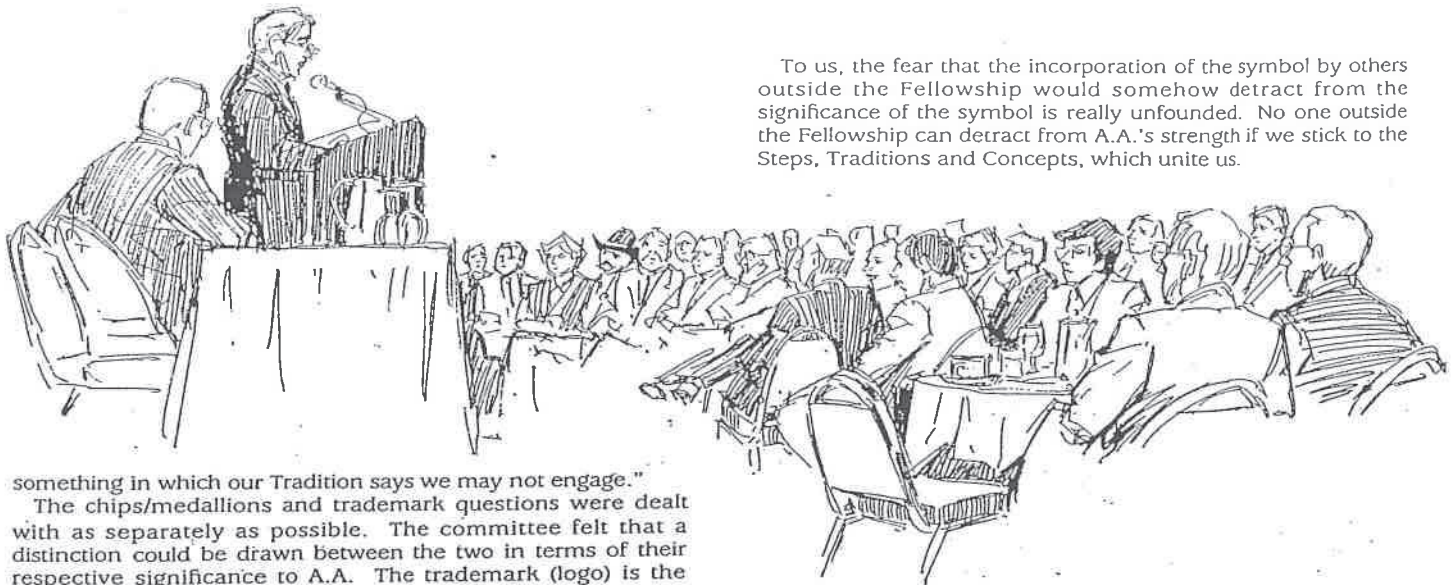
The committee spent a great length of time in the discussion of the Warranties. Warranty Five states:

"Practically all societies and governments feel it necessary to inflict personal punishment upon individual members for violations of their beliefs, principles or laws. Because of its special situation, Alcoholics Anonymous finds this practice unnecessary. When we of A.A. fail to follow sound spiritual principles, alcohol cuts us down. Therefore, no humanly administered system of penalties is needed. This unique condition is an enormous advantage to us all, one on which we can fully rely and one which we should never abandon by a resort to the methods of personal attack and punishment..."

"In case the A.A. name should be misapplied...it would of course be the duty of our General Service Conference to press for the discontinuance of such a practice—always short, however, of public quarreling about the matter....It was recognized that a public lawsuit is a public controversy.







To us, the fear that the incorporation of the symbol by others outside the Fellowship would somehow detract from the significance of the symbol is really unfounded. No one outside the Fellowship can detract from A.A.'s strength if we stick to the Steps, Traditions and Concepts, which unite us.

something in which our Tradition says we may not engage."

The chips/medallions and trademark questions were dealt with as separately as possible. The committee felt that a distinction could be drawn between the two in terms of their respective significance to A.A. The trademark (logo) is the embodiment of the A.A. name. The significance of its shape is described in *A.A. Comes of Age*, page 139: "The circle stands for the whole world of A.A., and the triangle stands for A.A.'s Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity, and Service....The priests and seers of antiquity regarded the circle enclosing the triangle as a means of warding off spirits of evil, and A.A.'s circle and triangle of Recovery, Unity, and Service has certainly meant all of that to us and much more."

Medallions, on the other hand, are not universally considered an embodiment of the Fellowship as such. Many stories are told about the role that the coins play in an individual's continuing sobriety; the coins act as symbolic recognition of the length of sobriety. They are not the sobriety itself and any attempt to make medallions more than a symbol may lead perilously towards ego-inflation, self-glorification, rather than ego-deflation (see Tradition Twelve).

The committee felt that the desire to protect the unique meaning of A.A.'s symbol is at the foundation of litigation, as well as the fear of the trivialization of the mark. But despite the vehemence with which we feel "ownership" of the symbol, we suspect that the belief that we (or anyone) can "possess" the symbol is a fallacy.

It actually works against the foundation of the Steps that lead us to sobriety. Ownership necessarily involves control and to argue over that control through litigation takes the focus away from the fact that we are ultimately powerless. We can own the meaning of the symbol, and if someone uses the graphic, our meaning will not be diminished, as long as we keep the principles it represents in sight.

The committee finally questioned the goals of litigation, what would actually be gained from a lawsuit. We suspect that the harm done internally as a result of litigation would be far worse than the harm others could do to our "property" from the outside. At the base of this approach is the trust that is the foundation of A.A. It is our trust that A.A. principles will work to protect our name, just as our trust in God is the foundation of our program and of our lives. Warranty Five says that we can "...confidently trust A.A. opinion, public opinion, and God Himself to take care of Alcoholics Anonymous..."

Concept Seven states, "[The] Charter itself is not a legal document...it relies instead upon the force of tradition...for its final effectiveness."

The registered trademarks, service marks and logos are symbols of our spiritual Fellowship, Alcoholics Anonymous, and should be treated as such.

The General Service Conference is a living entity. From the group conscience will eventually emerge an expression of the will of a loving Power greater than ourselves proven to be firmly linked to the Traditions and Warranties, keeping us safe for as long as we are needed.

The committee recommends that:

a) In agreement with the consensus of the 1958 General Service Conference, the use of sobriety chips/medallions is a matter for local autonomy and not one on which the Conference should record a definite position in behalf of the movement.

b) It is not appropriate for A.A.W.S. Inc., or Grapevine, Inc., to produce or license the production of sobriety chips/medallions.

c) The Conference find that the initiative of litigation involving trademarks and service marks is a violation of Warranty Five.

d) The General Service Board take the steps necessary to bring all policies and practices into conformity with the spirit of the Warranties and the report and recommendations of the 1993 Ad Hoc Committee on Chips/Medallions.

e) The General Service Board develop a new policy statement on the "Use of A.A.'s Trademarks and Logos" (*A.A. Service Manual*, p.S103) that reflects the spirit of the committee's report and recommendations, and report back to the 44th General Service Conference on the policy and its implementation.

The committee requests that the complete report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chips/Medallions be printed in the *Final Report* of the 43rd General Service Conference.

The committee also requests that all Conference members receive copies of the new policy statement on or before February 15, 1994 along with a copy of the 1993 Ad Hoc Committee's report and recommendations.

Elaine , Alberta/Northwest Territories  
Conference delegate chairperson



2012

## ■ Reports from the General Service Board, and A.A.W.S. and Grapevine Corporate Boards

### GENERAL SERVICE BOARD

**Trustees' report:** Greetings and welcome to the 62nd General Service Conference, especially to those who are attending their first Conference and to our guest observer from India. I know we are all here to do the "business" of A.A., but I have always viewed the General Service Conference as a spiritual adventure — at once exciting and a lot of hard work, but also uplifting as we seek to reach an informed group conscience for A.A. in the U.S. and Canada. And, while we have a lot of business on our agenda for this week, some of which relates to A.A.'s growing presence on the Internet — a presence that has created some challenges for us as a Fellowship, particularly in terms of anonymity — I believe that a higher power will be ever present as we address that "business."

Therefore, it is appropriate that our theme for this year's Conference is "Anonymity — Our Spiritual Responsibility in the Digital Age." Bill reminds us in an article in the A.A. Grapevine of January 1955 that not only is anonymity "the greatest protection our society can ever have," but that "the spiritual substance of anonymity is sacrifice." More than ever, A.A.'s exposure to the world at large via the Internet has expanded tremendously. The Internet is both a marvel for helping to carry our message and

informing the public at large about A.A. and a challenge in terms of adhering to our principles — especially that of anonymity. It is well then that at this time in A.A.'s history and at this Conference we reexamine our principle of anonymity in the light of the electronic age.

Over the past year, our General Service Board has welcomed some new members: Class B trustees I Gary Clayton, Barbara, and Nancy. Additionally, Rod Pacific Regional Trustee, joined A.A.W.S. as a new director. Michele Grinberg, Class A trustee, and Donald joined the A.A. Grapevine Corporate Board as directors.

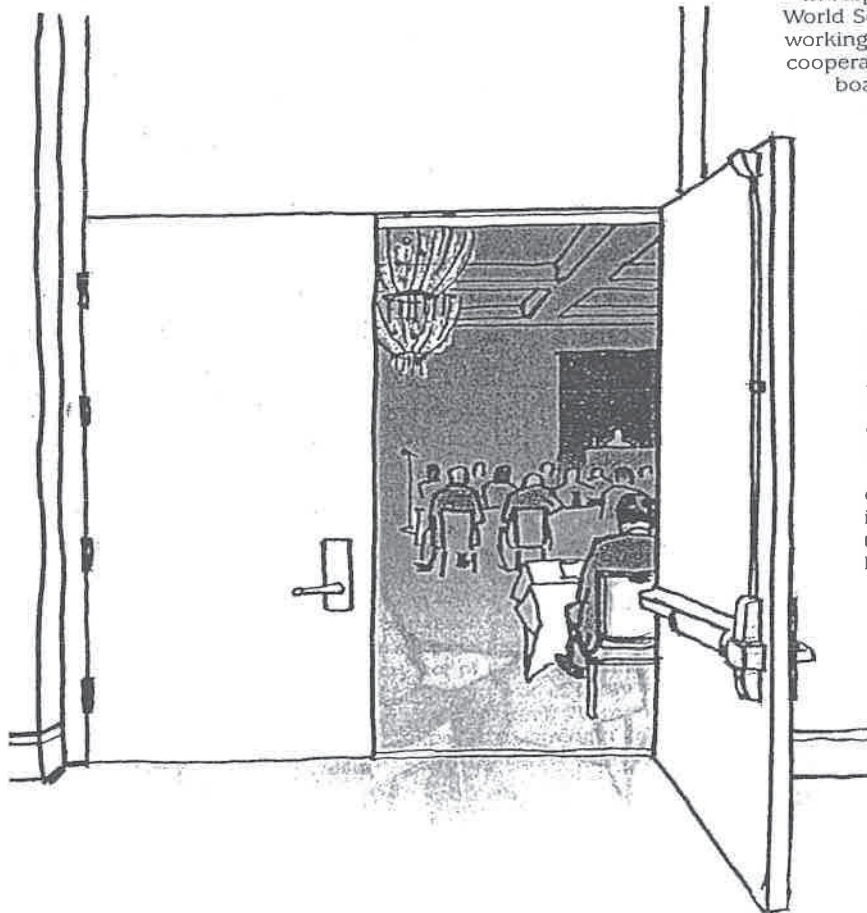
We also have a new staff member at G.S.O. Tracey joined the G.S.O. family in August. Tracey is on the Corrections desk responding to the multitude of inmates who write to the office. She now has two General Service Board meetings under her belt — her first trials by fire, and she has done very well. I hope you will take a moment to welcome Tracey during the Conference week.

One of the most significant projects undertaken this year has been the production of our own digital apps to provide the Fellowship with e-book versions of the Big Book and *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*. This was launched in December and is proving to be popular. The Grapevine, Inc. also entered the digital field with its e-book publication of *The Language of the Heart*. We are hopeful that this method of distributing A.A. literature will grow.

In response to last year's Advisory Action regarding A.A. World Services, Inc. and A.A. Grapevine, Inc., I have been working with an ad hoc committee seeking ways to enhance cooperation and efficiency between the two corporate boards. As a result of this effort, the Grapevine has moved its offices from the 10th floor of the Interchurch Center to a smaller, more economical space on the 12th floor, which will result in considerable savings in the coming years. Much of the Grapevine's shipping, mail room and copy center operations are now provided by A.A.W.S. along with its on-site sales, which now occur at G.S.O. We are presently looking at ways to coordinate our e-book sales and exploring the possibility of having Grapevine licensing and translations matters coordinated by A.A.W.S. As the ad hoc committee continues its work going forward, I want to express my appreciation for the work of Ami, executive editor/publisher of the A.A. Grapevine, and Phyllis, G.S.O. general manager, for their cooperative efforts during this transition period.

The General Service Board has met four times since our last Conference. Aside from the members meeting of the board at the Conference last year, the trustees held three quarterly meetings at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in New York.

One of the most important actions we of the General Service Board undertook this year was taking our inventory. It was suggested in a previous inventory done a number of years ago that the board take its inventory every three years or so and the time had come for us to take this action. We added an extra day and a half to the 2011 October Board meeting for this and then followed up with a weekend meeting in January of this year in Atlanta. We were assisted by a consultant, Gregg Talley, whose name you may recognize, as his firm, Talley Management Group, has





served the Fellowship as our International Conventions consultant since 1990. The Inventory Planning Committee, chaired by Michele Grinberg, provided us with pertinent topics and questions that laid the ground work for us to get the process well underway.

The major concern arising from the inventory revolved around the Board's use of time. It was felt that too much time was spent on what could be termed as "management" issues and not enough spent on larger, strategic issues facing the Fellowship and the Board. The follow-up committee will be looking at the Board's structure and schedule to develop time to further discuss the varied and significant concerns identified in our inventory.

Since the 61st General Service Conference, the board has hosted Regional Forums in Sturbridge, Massachusetts; Davenport, Iowa; Wichita, Kansas; and Miamisburg, Ohio. An "Additional" Forum was held in Woodland Hills, California. Also, there were two local Forums, one held in Kennewick, Washington and the other, a two-for-one Local Forum, in Great Falls and Miles City, Montana. All were well attended by enthusiastic members interested in participating in A.A.'s Three Legacies.

Financially, G.S.O. continues to find ways to prudently use the A.A. dollar and cut costs in these challenging economic times. You will hear a full financial report from our treasurer, Terry Bedient.

Don J and Barb our trustees-at-large, were our delegates to the REDELA (the Meeting of the Americas) in San Salvador, El Salvador. In addition to the REDELA, our trustees and staff traveled abroad to share our experience with other countries, including Germany, England, South Africa, and India where the Asia-Oceania Zonal meeting was held. I attended a seminar on *The Harmful Use of Alcohol* at the World Health Organization in Geneva, Switzerland, and was also privileged to attend the 21st Native American Indian A.A. Convention in Las Vegas, Nevada.

In the upcoming year, in October, we will be hosting the World Service Meeting in Rye, New York, and A.A. continues to expand internationally. This past year we learned that members in Iran had formed a small General Service Board and a G.S.O. We are told they are now working on developing a Conference structure.

Currently, the Big Book has been translated into 64 languages with several pending translations in various stages of preparation — a few of these pending items include Bambara, a dialect spoken in Mali, K'iche' for the Mayan-speaking population in Guatemala and Belize, and Haitian Creole.

I'd like to share excerpts from three recent letters written to the Publications Department from international folks:

The first is from a member in Cook Island in the Pacific about the Maori Big Book translation: *"We are already using the Chapter 5 translated content in our meetings, both in town and in the prison. It has been VERY well received by the local members."*

And from a Peace Corps volunteer in Gulu, Uganda/East Africa: *"Thank you so much for the literature you sent for the prisoners at the Uganda Government Prison-Gulu. They are so excited about receiving it. They have set up a Lit Committee and have a process outlined so that people can have maximum access while still exerting some accountability."*

And the last, from Zimbabwe, a member writes: *"Oh! My goodness — the box of A.A. literature has just arrived. What a fantastic beginning to my sober day. I collected the box from the post office this morning, and all the contents are in perfect condition. Our newer members are going to be so grateful to obtain a Daily Reflections — they haven't been able to get one of their own. They have been borrowing from older members, but, as you know, it is so nice to have one of your own. I don't know how to thank you all — I'm over the top with gratitude. Please thank all the members concerned. Our small fellowship is doing very well and it is growing ever so slowly, but surely."*

A.A. is truly an international community and the need for A.A.

and translations of its publications is apparent. The sharing of experience, strength and hope invigorates us all. I hope you share with the members and groups in your areas how their service participation and Seventh Tradition contributions impact A.A. around the world.

Finally, as you know from my letter to you earlier this year, much of which I will repeat at this time, at the 2012 January Board weekend the General Service Board passed the following motion which, following past precedent, I am bringing forward from the GSB to the Conference. The motion reads as follows:

"The General Service Conference supports the General Service Board's development of a plan to restructure the current Alcoholics Anonymous Grapevine, Inc. corporate and governance structure, while retaining the Grapevine's independent editorial voice. The plan may, among other things, address the separate corporate existence of Alcoholics Anonymous Grapevine, Inc., as well as issues of governance and operations. The plan will be designed to increase unity, better reach and connect the Grapevine to the broader Fellowship while addressing financial stability. Any plan developed will be submitted to the 63rd General Service Conference, in 2013, for approval prior to implementation."

Most of you here today are familiar with the issues involved, but to recap here is a brief overview of some of the challenges and concerns regarding the A.A. Grapevine, Inc. that the Board has been discussing:

- The universal migration in the publishing industry from print to electronic magazine publications;
- The General Service Board's fiduciary responsibility to the Fellowship in further authorizations to the A.A. Grapevine's use of the Reserve Fund to meet operational needs. (Drawdowns from the Reserve Fund since 1995 total \$1,447,299. In 2010 alone, the drawdown was \$588,000. This exceeds the \$573,200 that in its good years the Grapevine contributed to the Reserve Fund);
- The A.A. Grapevine's projections for 2013 and 2014 estimate further drawdowns totaling \$498,169 unless policies and operations can be changed;
- The increasing focus on A.A. Grapevine's overall welfare has led to a growing sense of disunity in the Fellowship that has proven to be a distraction in fulfilling our primary purpose.

The A.A. Grapevine is an important resource for carrying the A.A. message. Your General Service Board seeks only to find the best solutions for our future. As part of the recent inventory we reviewed ongoing discussions and concerns regarding the A.A. Grapevine, dating back to 1989. We concluded that the problems were complex and would require serious and thorough study before any changes were made. It is important to note here that no change is being proposed at this Conference.

As you know, the scope of the General Service Board would allow it to proceed with the development of a plan on its own, but initiating such a plan would have the potential for historic significance, so we are bringing the Board's motion to the Conference. This matter will be addressed after the Conference Committee Reports.

And so, as Conference week is upon us once again, we begin our work. Let us resolutely continue reaffirming our commitment to carrying A.A.'s lifesaving message. The General Service Conference is a precious gift passed on to us by our forbearers and, as the inheritors of their legacy, it is our responsibility to be sure the hand of A.A. is always there for the still-suffering alcoholic reaching out for help anywhere in the world.

As this week unfolds, may a loving God bless you and guide you in your endeavors.

Ward Ewing, D.D., chairman



Intergroup Services," following item 7 on the election of trustees: (Report and Charter)

"Some areas find that a liaison between central office/intergroup and the area committee is very helpful. In some areas the liaison has a vote, in others the liaison has a voice but no vote.

"There is more information regarding working together available through the General Service Office and in the pamphlets 'The A.A. Group' and 'Self-supporting Through Our Own Contributions,' as well as in the Guidelines on Central Offices and Intergroups."

The following be deleted: (Report and Charter)

"In areas where there are central offices providing the services mentioned previously, general service committees do not attempt to duplicate these services; but in those areas where there is little or no central office activity, the general service committee has frequently undertaken to provide many of these services."

**1992** It was recommended that:

A feasibility study be undertaken by the General Service Board of all possible methods by which sobriety chips/medallions may be made available to the A.A. Fellowship; and that: (Floor Action)

- The study culminate in a report to an ad hoc committee of 1993 Conference delegates.
- The report presented to the ad hoc committee also be mailed to all 1993 Conference members by March 15, 1993.
- The ad hoc committee be charged with bringing forward a recommendation to the 1993 Conference reporting conclusions.

**1993** It was recommended that:

The General Service Office review the current practice of mailing-label distribution and devise a new policy that will encompass the principle of anonymity. (Floor Action)

In agreement with the consensus of the 1958 General Service Conference, the use of sobriety chips/medallions is a matter for local autonomy and not one on which the Conference should record a definite position in behalf of the movement. (Floor Action)

It is not appropriate for A.A.W.S., Inc. or the A.A. Grapevine, Inc. to produce or license the production of sobriety chips/medallions. (Floor Action)

**1994** It was recommended that:

The last paragraph and all following material on page S103 in the 1993-94 edition of *The A.A. Service Manual* in the section "Use of A.A.'s Trademarks and Logos" be deleted as it is no longer applicable. (Report and Charter)

On page S104 in the 1993-94 edition of *The A.A. Service Manual*, the sentences "Include the registered trademark symbol ®" and "A fourth symbol (shown on page S103) is confined to Conference-approved literature only, and may not be used" be deleted as they are no longer applicable. (Report and Charter)

On page S129 in the 1993-94 edition of *The A.A. Service Manual* the portion of the following sentence—which is no longer applicable—in bold, stricken through type be deleted and the italicized print be substituted as follows: (Report and Charter)

*"This process takes time—months—but the results are worth the effort. When the pamphlet or book is finally com-*

*pleted, it is entitled to [carry the "Conference-approved" seal, having fully earned it] bear the designation, "This is A.A. General Service Conference-approved Literature."*

[Circle/Triangle Design With Words "General Service Conference" is Deleted]

**1995** It was recommended that:

After a thorough examination of the issues and information available and acknowledging that there may have been problems with communication at many service levels in the past, it was the sense of the committee that there has been improvement and, therefore, in the interest of maintaining A.A. unity and finding there was not sufficient cause, the committee unanimously recommended that the proposal to censure the General Service Board be dismissed. (Trustees)

**1996** It was recommended that:

The suggested guidelines developed by the trustees' Nominating Committee for changing regional boundaries be accepted, and a reference regarding the existence of these guidelines be added to *The A.A. Service Manual* following the section pertaining to Procedures for Requesting Change of Region in Chapter IX. (Trustees)

**1999** It was recommended that:

The General Service Conference supports the General Service Board policy which states, "Whenever a discount or subsidy is that which would be offered to any other organization of similar size requiring a purchased service or product of similar character and magnitude, e.g., convention rates at hotels, it may be accepted. Whenever a discount or subsidy is partly or in total offered because we are Alcoholics Anonymous, it must be declined." (Finance)

**2003** It was recommended that:

The trial period for use of laptops at the General Service Conference be extended through the 54th Conference. (Floor Action)

**2011** It was recommended that:

The 61st General Service Conference express its appreciation and gratitude for the French-language magazine "La Vigne," and the value it has for French-speaking members of Alcoholics Anonymous and the respect "La Vigne" has shown for the Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous. (Floor Action)

**2012** It was recommended that:

The following Motion was made on behalf of the General Service Board:

"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."

Note: The Motion was placed on the agenda of the Conference Committee on Policy/Admission, which took no action.

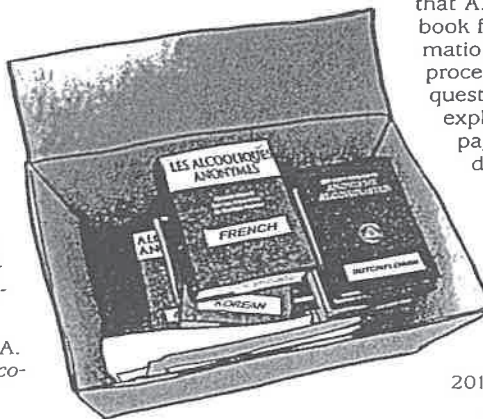
- The committee requested that groups that do not have a GvR or RLV consider incorporating these duties into the duties of the GSR.
- The committee requested that the AA Grapevine Board look into the feasibility of producing one book in ASL format.
- The committee requested that the AA Grapevine Board provide a report to the 2013 Conference Committee on the Grapevine as background, on the cost of reformatting Grapevine magazine from its current design to black/white interior, non-glossy, minimal photos and increase the font size.

### INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS/ REGIONAL FORUMS<sup>1</sup>

- The committee discussed and reviewed the 2025 International Convention Site-Selection Procedures.
- The committee discussed ways to encourage interest in Regional Forums and shared some experiences that have helped increase member participation in recent Regional Forums in their regions. These included:
  - Delegate and Area officers' participation helped increase interest in Regional Forums.
  - Online Regional Forum registration/information on [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org) is convenient and easily accessible.
  - One Area started workshops on Regional Forums at local service events to provide information and create enthusiasm.
  - One host committee extended committee membership to other Areas in the region and to members from different cities throughout their own Areas.
  - One committee member suggested including an article in the Grapevine with the Regional Forum schedule or from a member about their Regional Forum experience.
  - It helps to let members know you don't have to be in General Service to attend and enjoy a Regional Forum.
  - One Area took ownership of their Regional Forum hospitality committee to create enthusiasm and generate greater participation.
  - Talk and continue to talk about Regional Forums and explain what Regional Forums are all about.
  - When there are travel challenges look for creative/alternative ways to travel.
  - Suggest combining a trip to a Regional Forum with your vacation plans.

### LITERATURE

- The committee reviewed the progress report from the trustees' Committee on Literature on the development of literature which focuses on spirituality that includes stories from atheists and agnostics who are sober in Alcoholics Anonymous. The committee forwarded to the trustees' Committee on Literature, as requested, input and suggestions, and requested a draft pamphlet or progress report be brought back to the 2013 Conference Committee on Literature.
- The committee discussed a request to add text from the dust jacket of the Third Edition of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, to the dust jacket of the Fourth Edition of the Big Book and took no action.
- The committee considered a request to add the "A.A. Preamble" to the front inside pages of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, and took no action.



### POLICY/ADMISSIONS

- The committee considered modifying the procedure for the submission of Concept V minority appeals to the General Service Conference and took no action. They agreed that the policy approved by the 2011 General Service Conference sufficiently provides a process for the "Right-of Appeal" as described in Concept V — the procedure allows for a "well-heard minority" to be a "chief protection against an uninformed, misinformed, hasty or angry majority," and it makes the "best possible use of minority feeling and opinion."
- The committee requested that the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference review the role of the Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions in granting international observers admission to the General Service Conference, taking into account the concerns expressed by the Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions, and provide a report to the 2013 Conference Committee. The Conference committee agreed that their recommendation for approval of observers seems redundant, and this approval could appear to be a "rubber stamp" of the trustees' action, as cautioned against in Concept VII.
- The committee requested that the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference review the "Guidelines for Electronic Device Users at the General Service Conference" on an ongoing basis and forward any updates to the Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions for their review.

### PUBLIC INFORMATION

- The committee reviewed the report of the Comprehensive Media Plan Subcommittee from the trustees' Public Information Committee, and expressed their support for the continued development of the media plan.
- Following lengthy and thoughtful discussion related to adding language referring to current media to Tradition Eleven, the committee concluded that the spirit and principle of anonymity at the public level is conveyed adequately in the Long Form of Tradition Eleven. Recognizing that suggested changes to Tradition Eleven have come to the Conference several times, the committee requested the trustees' Public Information Committee gather Area sharing on the effectiveness of the language of the Short Form of Tradition Eleven in addressing the needs of the Fellowship today and report back to the 2013 Conference Committee on Public Information.
- The committee considered favorably the suggestion from the trustees' Public Information Committee that A.A. establish a presence on Facebook for the purpose of providing information about A.A. to the public. Before proceeding, however, the committee requested that the General Service Board explore all aspects of this social media page and, if feasible within our Traditions, provide the 2013 Conference Committee on Public Information an implementation plan that addresses the implications of such a page, including sample content and estimates for implementation cost and maintenance.
- The committee reviewed the 2011 Annual Report from the trustees'

**2019 Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions**

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

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**Background notes:**

From 2018 Advisory Action of the Conference Policy/Admissions Committee:

It was recommended that the “Process for Polling the General Service Conference between Annual Meetings” be approved.

Note: The document outlining this process resides with the Conference assignment at G.S.O. and forwarded to the trustees’ Conference Committee for implementation.

The General Service Office used the new process, on July 9, 2018, to conduct a Conference poll regarding changing dates of the 2019 General Service Conference.

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**Background:**

1. Request from multiple delegates requesting revision to the “Process for Polling the General Service Conference between Annual Meetings” with proposal and potential implementation suggestion.
2. “Process for Polling the General Service Conference Between Annual Meetings”
3. Poll communication sent by General Service Office – Monday, July 9, 2018



**CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background**

**POLICY/ADMISSIONS  
Item F  
Doc.1**

December 12, 2018

Patrick C, Conference Coordinator  
General Service Office  
P.O. Box 459  
New York, NY 10115

Dear Patrick,

In the poll that was undertaken in July 2018, some of us in the West Central Region voted with the majority (to change the 2019 Conference to May), as our respective Areas had no conflict with the changing of dates. Others voted in the minority. Many of us reached out for input in our Areas and then made the best possible guess with the information that we had. But, something felt uncomfortable once the process was completed. It felt as if a crucial step had been missing, but we weren't immediately sure what it was.

Then it occurred! We had gotten accustomed to having a discussion that helped twofold: to come to peace with the way that we cast our vote, and to comfortably accept the final group conscience. A full discussion may or may not have changed the way that any of us voted, but we didn't feel fully at ease with the process in obtaining our decisions.

There was an unofficial attempt by one of the Delegates to get a conversation going via email with all of the members of the Conference at the time of the poll, but it was not officially part of the polling process. As a result, some of the conversation came after others had voted. The ability to arrive at an informed group conscience, by way of discussion, is one of the many aspects of our Fellowship that we have truly come to value. It would have been very helpful if we could have heard about the impact of any date change from the other voting members of the Conference.

This topic was brought up and discussed in a Regional conference call and we decided to go ahead with writing this proposal for submission to the 69th General Service Conference. We have a procedural suggestion as well, but have left it out of the proposal so that the Policy & Admissions Committee may explore all potential options pertaining to the implementation.

Sincerely,

Erika H, Area 41 Nebraska, Panel 68 Delegate  
Kathi C, Area 76 Wyoming, Panel 68 Delegate  
Curt K, Area 36 Southern Minnesota, Panel 67 Delegate  
Christine G, Area 35 Northern Minnesota, Panel 68 Delegate  
Anthony F, Area 63 South Dakota, Panel 68 Delegate  
Scott M, Area 52 North Dakota, Panel 67 Delegate  
Gerry R, Area 40 Montana, Panel 67 Delegate  
Rick W, Area 24 Iowa, Panel 67 Delegate

**CONFIDENTIAL:** This is background for the 69th General Service Conference, and as such may be a confidential A.A. document. Distribution is limited to A.A. members. Placement of this material in a location accessible to the public, including aspects of the Internet, such as Web sites available to the public, may breach the confidentiality of the material and the anonymity of members, since it may contain members' full names and addresses.

Attachments:

Agenda Item Proposal

Potential Implementation Suggestion

Current Process for Polling the General Service Conference between Annual Meetings

# Submitted by:

## West Central Region Delegates

**Contact Name: Erika H, A41 P68**

**Email :**

### **69th General Service Conference Proposal:**

- Revise our "Process for Polling the General Service Conference between Annual Meetings" to include a process that allows for discussion between the voting members of the Conference, before the vote.

### **Intent/Purpose:**

- Our Conference Charter (Article 12 and A Resolution) and Concepts (Concept 12, Warranty 4) state "that all important decisions be reached by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity". Concept 12, Warranty 4 also goes on to express "This principle further guarantees that all matters of importance, time permitting, will be extensively debated, and that such debates will continue until a really heavy majority can support every critical decision that we are called upon to make in the Conference." Understandably, situations arise in which email and/or phone polling is necessary, but that doesn't mean that the members of the Conference can't have some sort of conversation beforehand to aid in developing an informed group conscience.

### **Current Practice:**

- "Process for Polling the General Service Conference between Annual Meetings" that was passed at the 68th General Service Conference.



**POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION SUGGESTION:**

Having the emailed poll announcement also have the potential to “reply all” (or a link to a threaded email, etc.) so that the voting membership of the Conference can voice their thoughts in one mass email chain, if they so choose. It would be highly encouraged that the Conference members only share once or twice in that period. The discussion period would be from the opening day of the poll until the 7th day, with no voting taking place until after that 7 day time period. The next 7 days would be the voting period. For example:

Proposed voting procedures:

| Timeline for Polling Conference Between Meetings              |              |               |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Action                                                        | Day          | Time*         |
| <i>Poll emailed and discussion opens</i>                      | <i>Day 1</i> | <i>2 p.m.</i> |
| <i>Discussion closes and voting opens</i>                     | <i>Day 7</i> | <i>2 p.m.</i> |
| Voting closes                                                 | Day 14       | 2 p.m.        |
| Email notification of poll results sent to Conference members | Day 14       | 5 p.m.        |

Current voting procedures:

| Timeline for Polling Conference Between Meetings              |        |        |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------|--------|
| Action                                                        | Day    | Time*  |
| Poll emailed and voting opens                                 | Day 1  | 2 p.m. |
| Voting closes                                                 | Day 14 | 2 p.m. |
| Email notification of poll results sent to Conference members | Day 14 | 5 p.m. |

## Process for Polling the General Service Conference between Annual Meetings

### Introduction

This process was developed to provide clear and consistent guidance for polling the members of the General Service Conference between Annual Conference Meetings.

It describes the circumstances under which such a poll might be taken, and lays out the procedures for conducting the poll. The process strives as much as possible to conform to the principles and procedures laid out in “How the Conference Operates.”<sup>1</sup>

The process was developed to accord with both the General Service Conference Charter, A Resolution, and the Bylaws of the General Service Board.<sup>2</sup> The development of this process takes into account the experience from two previous polls of Conference members, one undertaken by the General Service Board and one by the trustees’ Committee on the General Service Conference.

### Circumstances for Polling

Here are the situations where this process may be used:

#### *Aid of the General Service Board or its Related Services*

The Conference may render advisory opinions at any time by a mail or telephone poll in aid of the General Service Board or its related services. (Article 9 of the Current General Service Conference Charter)

#### *Great Emergency*

In a great emergency, the General Service Board or one of its related services would first consult the Conference before taking any action liable to greatly affect A.A. as a whole. (Current General Service Conference Charter, Article 10)

#### *Action Involving a Matter of Principle or Basic Policy*

Whenever in the judgment of one-third of the member trustees present at a meeting a decision to take any action involves a matter of principle or basic policy and in the judgment of at least one-third of the member trustees a delay in arriving at a decision will not adversely affect the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, the matter shall be submitted to a mail vote of Conference delegates. (G.S.B. Bylaws, “Meetings, Notice and Vote”)

#### *G.S.B. Bylaws Amendment*

The Board is expected, although not legally required, to submit any amendment or amendments of the Certificate of Incorporation and of these bylaws to Conference delegates, either by mail or at the annual meeting of the Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous. (G.S.B. Bylaws, “Amendment”)

<sup>1</sup> See “How the Conference Operates.”

## CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background

- <sup>2</sup> See "Excerpts Regarding Polling from the General Service Conference Charter, from 'A Resolution,' and from the General Service Board Bylaws."

### Polling Process

#### *Initiation of a Poll*

The Conference Charter and the General Service Board bylaws state that a poll may be taken in support of the General Service Board or its related services. The poll should be approved by the General Service Board, although it may be conducted by a committee or service corporation.

#### *Quorum*

The Current Conference Charter states that for Conference business, "A quorum shall consist of two-thirds of all the Conference members registered." (*The A.A. Service Manual*, Appendix C, Article 4). For the purpose of determining a quorum for polling between conferences, abstentions *will* be counted. Abstentions will *not* be counted in the vote totals. The responsibility to vote is incumbent on each Conference member.

#### *Clarity of Motion*

It is the responsibility of the board or committee undertaking the poll to ensure that the motion is stated clearly, and that any background included with the poll will be appropriate and complete. So that voters can be clear on what they are voting for, the expected result of the passage of the motion ought to be outlined, as well as the expected result of the failure of the motion.

#### *Poll Delivery*

Notice of the poll determination will be emailed to all Conference delegates. To help guarantee the availability of each Conference member to participate, anyone whose email bounces back will be contacted by telephone.

#### *Voting Process*

Conference members may vote by email or by phone. All responses will be made to the email address and phone provided in the original poll. Conference members will be sent a voting form by email.

To vote by email, Conference members mark an "X" next to their choice, and return it to the email address indicated. The poll document will include a space to indicate yes or no. To vote by phone, Conference members may call the number provided and leave a message with their name, service position and vote.

#### *Timing*

In keeping with the G.S.B. Bylaws, Conference members will be given two weeks<sup>4</sup> from the time the poll is emailed to respond with their vote. Dates for all votes and motions will be included with the poll, using a form similar to the "Timeline for Polling Conference Between Meetings." All times listed are Eastern Time.

The original poll will be emailed by 2 p.m., and voting will open that day and remain open for two weeks.

## CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background

Voting will close at 2 p.m. two weeks after the poll was emailed. By 5 p.m. on the day the poll results are due, Conference members will be notified of the results by email. A request for any minority opinion will be included with the poll results.

### *Minority Opinion*

Minority opinion is due by 2 p.m. two days after the poll results have been emailed. The minority voice may be submitted to the same email or phone number to which poll results were submitted.

By 5 p.m. on the day that the minority opinion is due, a document with the compiled minority opinion will be distributed to Conference members.

### *Motion to reconsider*

A motion to reconsider can only be made from someone on the prevailing side. To move to reconsider, a member may email or call the number provided and leave a message with their name, service position and the motion.

The motion to reconsider is due by 2 p.m. two days after the minority opinion is distributed.

If a motion to reconsider is received by the deadline, a notification will be sent to Conference members, and a request for a "second" will be sought. The notification will be sent by 5 p.m. on the deadline date. A "second" of the motion to reconsider is due by 2 p.m. two days after the motion is distributed.

If no second is received by the deadline, the vote stands. If a "second" is received, a voting form with the motion to reconsider will be emailed to Conference members. The voting form will be sent at the latest by 5 p.m. of the deadline for the "second" of the motion to reconsider.

The vote on reconsideration is due by 2 p.m. two days after the motion to reconsider is emailed.

By 5 p.m. on the day the vote on reconsideration is due, Conference members are notified of the results of the vote.

If the vote to reconsider passes, a new poll is generated. If the vote to reconsider fails, the vote stands.

<sup>4</sup> See "Excerpts Regarding Polling from the General Service Conference Charter, from 'A Resolution,' and from the General Service Board Bylaws."

**CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background**

| Timeline for Polling Conference Between Meetings                                             |        |        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|--------|
| Action                                                                                       | Day    | Time*  |
| Poll emailed and voting opens                                                                | Day 1  | 2 p.m. |
| Voting closes                                                                                | Day 14 | 2 p.m. |
| Email notification of poll results sent to Conference members                                | Day 14 | 5 p.m. |
| Minority opinion due                                                                         | Day 16 | 2 p.m. |
| Minority opinion distributed to Conference members                                           | Day 16 | 5 p.m. |
| Motion to reconsider due                                                                     | Day 18 | 2 p.m. |
| If received, motion to reconsider is distributed to Conference Members, and second is sought | Day 18 | 5 p.m. |
| Second of motion to reconsider due                                                           | Day 20 | 2 p.m. |
| If second is received, motion to reconsider is distributed to Conference members             | Day 20 | 5 p.m. |
| Voting closes on motion to reconsider                                                        | Day 22 | 2 p.m. |
| Email notification of reconsideration results sent to Conference members                     | Day 22 | 5 p.m. |
| If reconsideration passes, a new poll is initiated with the same timeline cycle              | Day 1  | 2 p.m. |
|                                                                                              |        |        |
| * All times are Eastern Time                                                                 |        |        |

**SAMPLE CONFERENCE POLL VOTE SHEET**

It is recommended that:

[MOTION TEXT]

If the motion passes, the expected result is:

[EXECTED RESULT]

If the motion fails, the expected result is

[EXPECTED RESULT]

**Put an "X" before your choice and return this form by email to [EMAIL ADDRESS]:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_\_\_ Abstain

**OR**

**Call in your vote to [PHONE NUMBER], stating your name, service positon and vote.**

The [BOARD OR COMMITTEE] sincerely thanks you for your participation in this process.



## CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background

### Excerpts Regarding Polling from the General Service Conference Charter, from "A Resolution," and from the General Service Board Bylaws\*

#### **General Service Conference Charter, Article 9.**

The General Service Conference Meetings: The Conference will meet yearly in the City of New York, unless otherwise agreed upon. Special meetings may be called should there be a grave emergency. The Conference may also render advisory opinions at any time by a mail or telephone poll in aid of the General Service Board or its related services.

#### **General Service Conference Charter, Article 10**

Except in a great emergency, neither the General Service Board nor any of its related services ought ever take any action liable to greatly affect A.A. as a whole, without first consulting the Conference. It is nevertheless understood that the board shall at all times reserve the right to decide which of its actions or decisions may require the approval of the Conference.

#### **A Resolution (from Appendix C in the Service Manual)**

AND IT IS UNDERSTOOD: That neither the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous nor the warranties of Article XII of the Conference Charter shall ever be changed or amended by the General Service Conference except by first asking the consent of the registered A.A. groups of the world. [This would include all A.A. groups known to the general service offices around the world.]<sup>12</sup> These groups shall be suitably notified of any proposal for change and shall be allowed no less than six months for consideration thereof. And before any such Conference action can be taken, there must first be received in writing within the time allotted the consent of at least three-quarters of all those registered groups who respond to such proposal.

#### **G.S.B. Bylaws, "Trustees"**

No person shall become a member trustee of the General Service Board until all Conference delegates have been polled by mail or at an annual meeting of the Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous, as the Board of Trustees may determine.

#### **G.S.B. Bylaws, "Meetings, Notice and Vote"**

Whenever in the judgment of one-third of the member trustees present at a meeting a decision to take any action involves a matter of principle or basic policy and in the judgment of at least one-third of the member trustees a delay in arriving at a decision will not adversely affect the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, the matter shall be submitted to a mail vote of Conference delegates, and if a majority of the Conference delegates votes against the taking of such action, then the Board of Trustees will be expected to refrain from deciding to take such action.

Whenever a mail vote is taken of Conference delegates, at least two weeks' notice shall be given, and the vote shall be determined in keeping with an analysis of such vote by the chair and secretary, or in their absence, by a vice-chair and assistant secretary, at the end of such two-week period. An announcement of the result of such vote shall thereupon be mailed by the secretary or assistant secretary to Conference delegates and to member trustees.

#### **G.S.B. Bylaws, "Amendment"**

In keeping with the spirit and principles of the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, the Board is expected, although not legally required, to submit any amendment or amendments of the Certificate of Incorporation and of these bylaws to Conference delegates, either by mail or at the annual meeting of the Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous as the Board of Trustees may determine, and if a majority of such delegates disapproves of such amendment or amendments, the member trustees are expected to refrain from proceeding therewith, except when such amendment or amendments are otherwise required by law.

\* These documents can be found in the Appendices to *The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service*.

**From:** [Staffcoord](#)  
**To:** [Staffcoord](#)  
**Cc:** [MGSO-Greg T](#)  
**Subject:** From the General Service Office - Monday, July 9, 2018 - CONFERENCE POLL REGARDING DATES OF THE 2019 GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE  
**Date:** Monday, July 09, 2018 3:49:40 PM  
**Attachments:** [2019 GSC dates-Background 7.9.18.pdf](#)  
[Polling Procedures.pdf](#)  
[2018-04 CC P&A Comp-Scope-Procedure.pdf](#)  
**Importance:** High

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Dear General Service Conference members:

The General Service Office has discovered a mistake with our signed 2019 hotel Conference dates. Our current contract is for April 21-27, 2019. The approved Conference dates, as voted on during the 2016 Conference, are April 28-May 4, 2019. The urgency of this matter was discussed last week with the Conference Committee on Policy and Admissions, along with the trustees' Committee on the Conference. It was recommended that all Conference members be polled as soon as possible.

Following discussion, including the necessity of altering some post-Conference assemblies and our continued attempt at being mindful of major holidays, it was recommended that:

The dates of the 2019 Conference be moved to the first week available to hold our Conference,

**May 19-May 25, 2019.**

If the motion passes, the expected result will be to incur no additional charges or penalties and would allow more time for translations. (If we must otherwise walk away from our hotel contract, there will be a penalty of \$142,000.)

If the motion fails, Conference members would need to agree to change the dates of Conference to April 21-April 27. Again, without additional charges or penalties but falling on major holidays. (Note that in this case, the dates would need approval by polling the General Service Conference).

Attached you will also find the following documents for your reference: 2019 Conference dates background; Polling Procedures (copy of the procedures that were approved as an Advisory Action by the 2018 General Service Conference and forwarded to the trustees' Conference Committee for implementation); Composition, Scope and Procedures of the Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions.

#### CONFERENCE POLL VOTING SHEET

It is recommended that:

The dates of the 2019 Conference be moved to the first week available to hold our Conference, **May 19-May 25, 2019.**

Please put an **"X"** before your choice and return this form by email to: [staffcoord@aa.org](mailto:staffcoord@aa.org).

☐ Yes

☐ No

OR call in your vote to (212) 870-3124, stating your name, service position and vote. Additional comments (if any):

The trustees' Committee on the Conference sincerely thanks you for your participation in this process.

CONFIDENTIAL: This is background for the 69th General Service Conference, and as such may be a confidential A.A. document. Distribution is limited to A.A. members. Placement of this material in a location accessible to the public, including aspects of the Internet, such as Web sites available to the public, may breach the confidentiality of the material and the anonymity of members, since it may contain members' full names and addresses.

## 2019 Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions

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

---

### Background notes:

At their July 2017 meeting, at the request of a trustee, the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference began discussion of a return to the practice of considering a simple majority vote of the Conference a suggestion to the General Service Board, A.A.W.S. or AA Grapevine.

The idea of a simple majority vote of the Conference being a strong suggestion to the General Service Board does not appear in the Conference Charter. Bill references this idea in Concept V saying "More often they [the G.S.B.] go along with a simple majority of the Delegates, especially when prompt action on less critical matters is clearly needed. But the choice is always theirs whether to veto a simple majority or to act with it. Here again is a recognition of the constructive value of a trusted minority." (The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts, p. 22) This idea is reiterated in two places in the Service Manual, in the introduction "A.A.'s Legacy of Service" (p. 11), in the section on the General Service Conference (p. 57). The idea is also expressed in the introduction to the Conference Charter in *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age* (p. 295).

We do not have history of whether or how this was implemented before 1986. In 1986 the Conference recommended that:

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. (Report and Charter)

There is limited information about how the General Service Board handled these "strong suggestions." Historical examples of how this was recorded are included in background.

The first appearances of this situation was two "strong suggestions" recorded in the 1989 *Final Conference Report*. The last was recorded in 1995. It has not been a practice for many years to record the count on each vote at the General Service Conference.

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### Background:

1. Literature references to a simple majority vote
2. Examples of strong suggestions
3. Excerpts from 1986 Conference Report and Charter Committee agenda, committee report and relevant background documents
4. 2-11-19 email from Archivist

**References to a Simple Majority Vote of the General Service Conference  
Being a Strong Suggestion to the General Service Board**

*Current Conference Charter [No mention of simple majority in Conference Charter]*

It will be understood, as a matter of tradition, that a two-thirds vote of Conference members voting shall be considered binding upon the General Service Board and its related corporate services, provided the total vote constitutes at least a Conference quorum. But no such vote ought to impair the legal rights of the General Service Board and the service corporations to conduct routine business and make ordinary contracts relating thereto. (*The A.A. Service Manual*, p. S104)

*The A.A. Service Manual*

But when these delegates met in conference, what would they do? We thought they would want to have real authority. So, in the charter drawn for the Conference itself, it was provided that the delegates could issue flat directions to the trustees on a two-thirds vote. And even a simple majority vote would constitute a mighty strong suggestion. ("A.A.'s Legacy of Service," p. 11)

The Conference, through ample discussion, always strives for substantial unanimity. Before a vote is taken, plenty of time is allotted for full discussion, including questions about the background of a recommendation and the committee's reasons for coming to its conclusions. In order to become an Advisory Action, a recommendation must be approved by "substantial unanimity"—defined as a two-thirds majority. A simple majority vote of the Conference shall be considered a suggestion to the General Service Board and to G.S.O. or the Grapevine. (Chapter Seven, "The Annual Conference Meeting," P. 57)

*Concept V Essay*

This same kind of consideration for the minority position can be found in the Charter provision that no Conference vote can be considered binding on the Trustees of the General Service Board unless it equals two-thirds of a Conference quorum. This gives the Trustees a power of veto in cases where the majority is not great. By reason of this provision the Trustees, if they wish, can insist on further debate and so check any tendency to haste or emotionalism. In practice the Trustees seldom exercise this option. More often they go along with a simple majority of the Delegates, especially when prompt action on less critical matters is clearly needed. But the choice is always theirs whether to veto a simple majority or to act with it. Here again is a recognition of the constructive value of a trusted minority. (p. 22)

*Concept XII Essay*

In passing it should be noted that the Conference will sometimes have to decide, with respect to a particular question, what the requirements of substantial unanimity are going to be—whether a two-thirds, three-quarters, or even a greater majority, will be required to settle a particular question. Such an advance agreement can, of course, be had on a simple majority vote. (p. 67, also see entire essay section on Warranty 4 Essay, pp. 66-67)

*Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*

Traditionally, though not legally, a two-thirds vote of a quorum of the Conference will be considered binding upon the trustees or any element of the board's corporate services. But a simple majority vote of the Conference will be a suggestion only to the General Service Board. (p. 295)

Here is a history of votes of the General Service Conference from 1989 to 1995 that achieved a majority, but not a 2/3 substantial unanimity, and were “strong suggestions” to the General Service Board. The relevant pages from the *Final Conference Report* are attached.

In 1989, the first “strong suggestion” was about the text of a treatment film. The second “strong suggestion” in 1989 was to separate the sections describing trustees-at-large and general service trustees. While Archives was not able to track how these “strong suggestions” were dealt with, we do know that the second was not adopted. The Service Manual reflecting actions of the 1989 Conference did not include the change from the “strong suggestion.”



## 1989 Final Conference Report

58 In order to economize financially the Eastern and Western U.S. Directories be combined.

59 The listing of clubs be deleted from the A.A. Directories.

60 The *Final Report* for G.S.R.s be sent to the delegate, with the quantity to be determined by each delegate.

61 The *Final Report* be translated into French and Spanish.

62 Reinstating of perforated, removable pages for the roster section of the *Final Report* not be done.

63 General Service Conference committee items discussed, but no action taken or recommendation made, not be included in the *Final Report*.

### TREATMENT FACILITIES

It was recommended that:

64 A fifteen-minute film be produced for A.A. members carrying the message into treatment facilities and be presented to the 1990 General Service Conference.

**Note:** Although the following item did not receive the necessary two-thirds vote to become a Conference recommendation, it did receive a substantial majority and is therefore a strong suggestion for the board's consideration:

"Suggested that in the proposed film for treatment facilities the Louis B. segment of the script be deleted because of implied endorsement of Narcotics Anonymous."

### TRUSTEES

It was recommended that:

65 The following slate of officers and trustees be elected at the annual meeting of the General Service Board in April 1989 (see page 00; the Conference and board approved the slate approved by the trustees' Nominating Committee).



66 The following slate of directors for the A.A.W.S. Board be elected (see page 00; slate of directors approved).

67 The following slate of directors for the Grapevine Board be elected (see page 00; slate of directors approved).

68 An effort be made to rectify contradictions and inconsistencies between *The A.A. Service Manual* and legal charters and corporate by-laws.

**Note:** Although the following item did not receive the necessary two-thirds vote to become a Conference recommendation, it did receive a substantial majority and is therefore a strong suggestion for the board's consideration.

The following revised text be approved for substitution and inclusion in *The A.A. Service Manual*:

There Are . . .  
Two Trustees-at-large

The trustees-at-large (2) serve as members of the trustees' International Committee and other trustees' committees or as directors of the corporate boards. They may fill in for regional trustees, as needed and/or requested.

The trustees-at-large – one from the U.S. and one from Canada – serve as the World Service Meeting delegates representing the U.S. and Canada. World Service Meeting delegates participate in two World Service Meetings which are held once every two years, the meeting place alternating between New York City and a location outside the U.S. and Canada. World Service Meeting delegates should have the same qualifications as any trustee, and also have time both to attend the World Service Meetings and to present and carry out any decisions reached at these meetings.

The trustees at large are requested to attend all Regional Forums in their own country and be available on a rotational basis to participate on Forum programs.

The trustees-at-large are also available for other A.A. service activities as requested by areas or regions and additional activities as may be requested by the board of trustees.

There Are . . .  
Four General Service Trustees

General service trustees are active on one or more of the service corporate boards and must be available, not only every quarter, but any week and, sometimes, any day, for the solution of problems on which G.S.O. or Grapevine staff members need help. Because of this requirement, all general service trustees originally came from New York City or its commuting area and were sometimes known as "in-town trustees." The current practice of selecting general service trustees for both the A.A.W.S. and Grapevine corporate boards will continue, but these positions are no longer restricted to residents of New York City or its vicinity.

While there are no "specialists" in A.A. – only recovered drunks – it has been possible to choose, for general service trusteeships, men and women with the kind of business or professional acumen that is particularly applicable to the problems at hand, whether their backgrounds are in publishing, public relations, or administration. This brings up the question of what qualifications count most in the selection of a trustee . . .



**The A.A. Service Manual, 1989-1990**  
**Reflecting Actions of the 1989 General Service Conference**

es the trustee nominee.  
has two-thirds, names

ference is then elected  
members following the

## Trustees

area reasonably close  
der to be available for  
same way as regional  
worked well over the  
ee directors of the two  
Grapevine, Inc. They  
the two corporate boards  
ervice Board the opera-  
e awareness of all the

corporate boards, their  
five boards, and it has  
candidate to represent

served for at least one  
mitted to the trustees'  
tees' Nominating Com-  
ard in April following  
roval, if any.

e of the nominee to the  
ince is then presented  
in the report of the

d one (1) from Canada,

he trustee is scheduled  
f the vacancy and will  
l trustee openings. The  
as listed on page S116)  
candidates (U.S. and  
r both regional trustee

Resumes of all candidates will be reviewed for eligibility by the trustees' Nominating Committee. Prior to the election meeting, each region will caucus (possibly at regional lunches) during the General Service Conference, with the regional trustee acting as chairperson of the session. Using Third Legacy procedure, the number of candidates from the region will be reduced to one for each region in the U.S. and two for each region in Canada. A maximum of six candidates for trustee-at-large — U.S. and a maximum of four for trustees-at-large — Canada will be presented to the voting members of the Conference for election. The names of the candidates will be given to the secretary of the trustees' Nominating Committee following the regional lunches.

The Third Legacy procedure as employed in the nomination of regional trustees will be used at the Conference to select one nominee for each vacancy, with the delegates from either the United States or Canada and the members of the trustees' Nominating Committee participating in the voting.

## There are . . . Four General Service Trustees and Two Trustees-at-Large

General service trustees are active on one or more of the service corporation boards and must be available, not only every quarter, but any week and sometimes any day for the solution of problems on which G.S.O. or Grapevine staff members need help. Because of this requirement, all originally came from New York City or its commuting area and were sometimes known as "in-town trustees." With today's faster transportation, a general service trustee may live either in the metropolitan area or within a convenient traveling distance from the city.

In 1970 another class of A.A. trustee was instituted, successively known as "general service trustee-at-large," "general service trustee — U.S./Canada," and now simply "trustee-at-large." One (1) of these trustees comes from the United States and one (1) from Canada. They bring to the problems of a growing movement the kind of experience and training that can prove most useful.

While there are no "specialists" in A.A. — only recovered drunks — it has been possible to choose for general service and at-large trusteeships men and women with the kind of business or professional acumen that is particularly applicable to the problems at hand, whether their backgrounds are in publishing, public relations, or administration. This brings up the question of what qualifications count most in the selection of a trustee. . .

## Trustee Qualifications

A.A. has been fortunate over the years in having so many competent trustees — both nonalcoholic and A.A. — that it has been possible to set up a "track record."

S119

## CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background

A second 1993 recommendation that got a majority vote but not 2/3 was about Grapevine special items. A similar recommendation got a majority vote but not 2/3 in 1994. In the 1995 Final Conference Report, the notes for the A.A. Grapevine Budget noted the “strong suggestion” and shared that the Grapevine Board had voted to go ahead with production of the 1996 Wall Calendar and Pocket Planner.

CONFIDENTIAL: This is background for the General Service Conference, and as such may be a confidential A.A. document. Distribution is limited to A.A. members. Placement of this material in a location accessible to the public, including aspects of the Internet, such as Web sites available to the public, may breach the confidentiality of the material and the anonymity of members, since it may contain members' full names and addresses.

## 1993 Final Conference Report

### FINANCE

- The committee decided not to reaffirm past Actions of 1986 concerning self-support. The committee strongly suggests that the Seventh Tradition is each member's responsibility, and has recommended a new pamphlet be prepared.
- The committee discussed a proposal concerning creation of a "self-support program and position" and determined that it was inadvisable.

### GRAPEVINE

- The committee discussed the Grapevine's history of self-support and wanted to reestablish focus on the magazine and to affirm the desire that the magazine be self-supporting through subscription income only.
- The committee discussed and considered in all its deliberations the results of the questionnaire distributed to delegates by the Conference Grapevine Committee.
- The committee discussed the proposal from the Grapevine Corporate Board that the magazine be taped quarterly, but took no action.
- The committee endorsed the Grapevine Corporate Board's proposal for new materials to be produced: in 1994, an A.A. history tape or tapes of Grapevine articles; in 1995, a book of cartoons/humor taken from the magazine.
- The committee discussed a concern expressed by an area about advertising special items in the Grapevine, and its consensus was that including information and order forms for materials derived from the Grapevine is consistent with the intent of the Grapevine's founders and A.A.'s Twelve Traditions.
- By consensus, the committee felt that it is not necessary to add the words "Pass Me On" to the cover of the Grapevine.
- The committee discussed a suggestion that the Responsibility Declaration be moved to another space in the magazine; the committee agreed with the suggestion and referred it to the editors and the Editorial Advisory Board for decision.

Strong suggestion of the Conference (recommendation where the vote was less than  $\frac{2}{3}$ , but more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  in favor):

- That, because the Wall Calendars and Pocket Planners do not seem to adhere to the Grapevine's primary purpose, these items be phased out after production and distribution of the 1994 Calendar and Pocket Planner; the committee also recognized that since the Grapevine should be self-supporting through magazine income, the financial impact of this loss must be made up by increased subscriptions, and urged all delegates to work toward this end.

Committee recommendations *not adopted* by Conference:

- That the "About Alcoholism" section (the gray pages) in the Grapevine be reinstated, with the disclaimer.
- That the words "Our meeting in print" be removed from the cover of the Grapevine.

### INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

- The committee discussed a request that the badges and the program for the 1995 International Convention not identify people by title, such as Doctor, Sister and so on, the committee agreed that people should use whatever names they wish to use, both on their badges and in the program, as long as anonymity is observed.



### LITERATURE

- The committee discussed the trustees' subcommittee report on "minorities" and suggested that we continue to emphasize our commonality and discourage use of the term "minorities" whenever possible.
- The committee discussed the trustees' subcommittee report on Literature Review and made the strong suggestion that no new specialty pamphlets be produced for at least two years in order to reflect on how our singleness of purpose is affected by the use of specialty pamphlets. Further, the committee suggested that the Literature Review Subcommittee continue and forward their suggested revisions to the 1994 Conference Literature Committee.
- The committee, at this time, would like to extend their deep sense of gratitude to the members of the trustees' Literature Review Subcommittee for a superb job on the monumental task they undertook in reviewing all A.A. literature.
- The committee considered proposed changes in the pamphlet "Twelve Traditions Illustrated" and referred the pamphlet to the trustees' Literature Subcommittee for further study.
- The committee considered proposed changes to "The A.A. Group" pamphlet and decided none were needed at this time.
- The committee considered proposed changes to the pamphlet titled "G.S.R." and suggested that the pamphlet be revised and updated by the Literature Review Subcommittee.
- The committee considered a request for district and area literature committee "guidelines" and suggested that the trustees' Literature Committee develop literature committee guidelines comprised of shared experience from the Fellowship.
- The committee discussed proposed changes to the booklet *Living Sober* and decided that none were needed.
- The committee discussed suggested update to the flyer "A Message to Teenagers" and referred the flyer to the trustees' Public Information Committee where the pamphlet originated.
- The committee discussed a request for a simplified version of the Big Book and determined that there is not sufficient expressed need.



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mation to the general manager and board of trustees. Further, we believe the information goes a long way in helping explain to the Fellowship where the money goes and we will keep striving to make it more meaningful.

- The committee reviewed a letter and the trustees' Finance Committee's reply concerning proposal to split G.S.O., and took no action.

### GRAPEVINE

- The committee reaffirmed 1992 Conference Advisory Action #23:

"In order to achieve some uniformity of procedure and to gain desired Conference input to Grapevine special items, yet not to compromise the Grapevine Board's 'right of decision' to manage the fiscal affairs of the Grapevine, let it be proposed that:

"Based on the positive model of mutual Conference and Board involvement in the production of *The Language of the Heart*, the Grapevine Corporate Board offer to the Conference Grapevine Committee on an ongoing basis, a general list of proposed special items at least two years in advance of possible production, in order that the Conference could offer any guidance or register any disapproval they might have. Having so presented the conceptual basis of these special items to the Conference Committee, final approval for the completed items would rest with the Grapevine Corporate Board."

- The committee discussed a suggestion to cease production of all special items that do not contain articles taken directly from the magazine, and took no action.
- The committee discussed the feasibility of discontinuing Grapevine special items that no longer seem useful and review the Grapevine Corporate Board's preliminary guidelines for discontinuance of items. The committee encouraged the process of establishing guidelines for the future and suggested the board consider informing the Conference Grapevine Committee prior to any final discontinuance of magazine-related items.
- The committee endorsed the Grapevine Corporate Board's proposal for producing an undated, generic Grapevine in 1996, and suggested that the Grapevine Corporate Board also consider producing it in Spanish.

Strong suggestion of the Conference (recommendation where the vote was less than 2/3, but more than 1/2 in favor):

- That, because the Wall Calendars and Pocket Planners do not seem to adhere to the Grapevine's primary purpose, these items be discontinued after production and distribution of the 1995 edition of the Calendar and Pocket Planner. Based on recent experience, the financial impact on the 1995 budget could be an estimated net loss of \$35,000 to \$40,000.

### INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

- The committee suggested that area/state/provincial convention committees be lovingly requested to consider not planning conventions six weeks before or after the 1995 International Convention, since attendance at local events during the period might be adversely affected.

### LITERATURE

- The committee discussed a request from an area to produce a

pocket-sized edition of the Big Book stories and have it packaged with the pocket-sized edition of the first 164 pages, and suggested there did not seem to be an expressed need for this book at the present time.

- The committee discussed the Literature Review Subcommittee report and suggested that the committee continue to convene when necessary.

- The committee reviewed suggested changes to the pamphlet "Twelve Traditions Illustrated" and suggested that, in light of new requests for additional changes, the pamphlet be sent back to the Trustees' Literature Committee for further deliberation.

- The committee reviewed a draft of A.A. Guidelines for Literature Committees and accepted same as written.

- The committee reviewed requests for a 4th Edition of the Big Book and suggested a letter be sent to all delegates seeking Fellowship input on the desirability of a 4th Edition.

- The committee discussed feedback from a letter sent to delegates regarding production of a book with stories from the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Editions of the Big Book, and determined no expressed need existed at the present time.

- The committee reviewed all correspondence regarding the 1993 Conference Advisory Action #19, i.e., "A.A.W.S. produce a pocket-sized version of the Big Book with all front matter (Preface, and various Forewords, Doctor's Opinion). Basic text, Dr. Bob's Story and Appendices," and concluded that the proper Conference process was followed in regard to the book and that an expressed need for the book had been demonstrated.

- The committee discussed a request to print a pocket edition of the Big Book with stories and suggested that an expressed need was not exhibited at the present time.

- The committee discussed a request from an area to publish a pamphlet of the Twelve Steps only and returned it to the trustees' Literature Committee for further research, at the urging of the area that originally submitted the idea.

- The committee discussed a request to consider publication of a booklet on "service" and determined that the need for material on service is addressed in the A.A. *Service Manual* and also in the piece which has been included in the pamphlet "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship."





## 1995 Final Conference Report

\$14,500 compared to budget on magazine production), magazine gross profit was \$3,100 below budget. Gross profit on related materials was also below budget by about \$40,000.

A seeming paradox is the fact that in a year showing such a net loss, the board can forward \$26,000 as a contribution to the General Service Board Reserve Fund. According to past practice, interest income from the Grapevine unfulfilled subscription liability account (\$75,000) stays in the Reserve Fund. If needed, a portion of it (\$48,740) is moved into the liability account to bring it to the required level. The remainder (\$26,260) is a contribution to the Reserve Fund proper.

**1995 Budget:** The board had a real struggle over the budget this year. Faced with an average circulation that was about 2,000 below the 1994 budget, along with dramatically rising costs (almost 40 percent on the price of paper, and a 19.1 percent increase in second class nonprofit postage rates), directors were forced to seriously consider a price increase on the magazine. After several preliminary discussions, the board asked management to bring alternate budgets to the January meeting: one with a price increase, and one without. We had a long discussion. None of the directors was happy about raising the price, even less so about accepting the resulting drop in circulation (meaning that the Grapevine could carry the message to fewer alcoholics). But in the end, in keeping with our fiduciary responsibilities, the board approved, with substantial unanimity, a budget that included a price increase on the magazine effective May 1 (the July Issue), and showed a net loss of \$44,680.

The budget story ended differently in the Finance Committee, where members of that committee considered the Grapevine's situation in relation to the General Service Board Reserve Fund as a whole. Finance Committee members discussed the inevitable decline in circulation, and voted to accept the alternate budget, without a price increase, showing a deficit of \$109,000. Recognizing that this action represents deferring a price increase, not avoiding it indefinitely—costs will continue to rise, not decrease—the Finance Committee believed that in a year when the Reserve Fund is exceeding the maximum this was an appropriate use of Reserve Fund monies.

**Related Materials:** Two new cassette tapes on A.A. history, "History Lights the Way" and "What We Were Like," were produced in April, and proved to be extremely popular, selling a total of 8,200 by the end of the year.

In October, the board voted to go ahead with production of the 1996 Wall Calendar and Pocket Planner. The topic had been raised at the June planning committee meeting, immediately after the Conference's second "strong suggestion" in a row, and the board's vote, like that of Conference members, was split. By October, it was clear that circulation had not risen over the course of the year, and directors voted unanimously to continue production of these two items.

The board voted in June (subject to the approval of the Conference Grapevine Committee) to cancel production of a humor book slated for production in 1995. This decision was based on the lack of quality material for such a book, and on continuing requests from members to cut back on production of materials other than the magazine.

A board committee has been working on guidelines for discontinuing related materials, and has established six criteria to help make these decisions when appropriate.

**Grapevine Resources in Spanish:** In response to the 1993 Conference Action asking the board to "continue to explore different ways of carrying the message to the Spanish community through Grapevine materials," a Spanish translation of *The Language of the Heart* was undertaken. It has now been completed, and the book will come off press early in May for introduction.

## GRAPEVINE CIRCULATION — GEOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN

|                                        | CIRCULATION |            | INCREASE/<br>DECREASE |
|----------------------------------------|-------------|------------|-----------------------|
|                                        | APRIL 1995  | APRIL 1994 |                       |
| UNITED STATES                          |             |            |                       |
| Alabama                                | 1,329       | 1,273      | 56                    |
| Alaska                                 | 487         | 522        | — 35                  |
| Arizona                                | 1,722       | 1,549      | 173                   |
| Arkansas                               | 695         | 707        | — 12                  |
| California                             | 12,147      | 11,363     | 784                   |
| Colorado                               | 1,551       | 1,568      | — 17                  |
| Connecticut                            | 2,008       | 1,947      | 59                    |
| Delaware                               | 415         | 423        | — 8                   |
| District of Columbia                   | 278         | 279        | — 1                   |
| Florida                                | 6,001       | 5,787      | 214                   |
| Georgia                                | 2,884       | 2,678      | 206                   |
| Hawaii                                 | 420         | 395        | 25                    |
| Idaho                                  | 584         | 545        | 39                    |
| Illinois                               | 5,210       | 5,220      | — 10                  |
| Indiana                                | 1,893       | 1,731      | 162                   |
| Iowa                                   | 1,572       | 1,486      | 86                    |
| Kansas                                 | 1,528       | 1,511      | 17                    |
| Kentucky                               | 1,112       | 1,073      | 39                    |
| Louisiana                              | 1,136       | 1,146      | — 10                  |
| Maine                                  | 852         | 862        | — 10                  |
| Maryland                               | 1,814       | 1,915      | — 101                 |
| Massachusetts                          | 3,831       | 3,848      | — 17                  |
| Michigan                               | 3,519       | 3,440      | 79                    |
| Minnesota                              | 3,112       | 3,115      | — 3                   |
| Mississippi                            | 797         | 718        | 79                    |
| Missouri                               | 2,164       | 2,131      | 33                    |
| Montana                                | 681         | 659        | 22                    |
| Nebraska                               | 1,407       | 1,393      | 14                    |
| Nevada                                 | 656         | 620        | 36                    |
| New Hampshire                          | 707         | 674        | 33                    |
| New Jersey                             | 3,531       | 3,473      | 58                    |
| New Mexico                             | 689         | 614        | 75                    |
| New York                               | 7,829       | 7,809      | 20                    |
| North Carolina                         | 2,848       | 2,726      | 122                   |
| North Dakota                           | 508         | 489        | 19                    |
| Ohio                                   | 3,388       | 3,541      | — 153                 |
| Oklahoma                               | 1,432       | 1,410      | 22                    |
| Oregon                                 | 1,254       | 1,303      | — 49                  |
| Pennsylvania                           | 4,959       | 4,780      | 179                   |
| Rhode Island                           | 493         | 536        | — 43                  |
| South Carolina                         | 1,239       | 1,191      | 48                    |
| South Dakota                           | 524         | 466        | 58                    |
| Tennessee                              | 1,561       | 1,520      | 41                    |
| Texas                                  | 5,363       | 5,109      | 254                   |
| Utah                                   | 598         | 560        | 38                    |
| Vermont                                | 421         | 406        | 15                    |
| Virginia                               | 2,664       | 2,507      | 157                   |
| Washington                             | 3,432       | 3,388      | 44                    |
| West Virginia                          | 532         | 514        | 18                    |
| Wisconsin                              | 2,870       | 2,699      | 171                   |
| Wyoming                                | 334         | 344        | — 10                  |
| Puerto Rico                            | 85          | 72         | 13                    |
| U.S. Possessions                       | 81          | 79         | 2                     |
| Total                                  | 109,145     | 106,114    | 3,031                 |
| CANADA                                 |             |            |                       |
| Alberta                                | 1,328       | 1,221      | 107                   |
| British Columbia/Yukon                 | 1,747       | 1,668      | 79                    |
| Manitoba                               | 534         | 556        | — 22                  |
| New Brunswick/<br>Prince Edward Island | 559         | 532        | 27                    |
| Nova Scotia/<br>Newfoundland/Labrador  | 870         | 830        | 40                    |
| Ontario                                | 4,175       | 4,027      | 148                   |
| Quebec                                 | 420         | 446        | — 26                  |
| Saskatchewan                           | 782         | 842        | — 60                  |
| Total                                  | 10,415      | 10,122     | 293                   |
| FOREIGN                                |             |            |                       |
|                                        | 1,650       | 1,507      | 143                   |
| Grand Total                            | 121,210     | 117,743    | 3,467                 |

## CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background

In 1993, a recommendation that got a majority vote but not 2/3 concerned limiting the length of service of chairs of trustees' committees. This was addressed in the Report to the Conference of the trustees' committee on Nominating in the following year's Final Conference Report. They implemented the suggestion, except for the Finance Committee.

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## 1993 Final Conference Report

purpose, if the groups aren't prepared to welcome them unconditionally, they may not return. Sponsorship is important in helping to smooth the way.

- After considering how A.A. treatment facilities work might be expanded to include shelters and other residential facilities, the committee felt that in their areas all facilities that needed a meeting had one, whether under the auspices of the treatment facilities committee or another service committee. Further, if the meetings didn't flourish, A.A. volunteers could take people from the facility to local meetings, if permissible.

- In discussing ways that treatment facilities committees could keep members aware of the usefulness of A.A. tools, i.e., the Treatment Facilities Workbook, films, literature and the A.A. Grapevine, in their service work, it was generally felt that sponsoring new committee members and keeping them up-to-date on new things was vital. Some said they hold workshops at meetings, conferences and assemblies. If committee chairpersons are thoroughly familiar with the service material, they are better able to share with others. It was suggested that articles on how to effectively utilize A.A. tools be shared in the "Treatment Facilities Newsletter." While it is true that many A.A. groups aren't familiar with the films, service committees find them invaluable for presentations and an excellent introduction to discussion.

Treatment facilities workshops may include professional administrators and staff. Open informational exchange can serve to strengthen communications among us.

It was suggested that all service committees stay current on the activities and materials of other committees.

### TRUSTEES

- The committee reviewed the resumes of candidates for East Central and Southeast regional trustees and resumes of candidates for trustee-at-large/U.S. and unanimously approved all candidates as eligible for election during the April 1993 General Service Conference.

- The committee discussed a request from an area delegate that the position of chairperson of the General Service Board not be restricted to a Class A trustee (page S109-110, 1992-1993 edition of *The A.A. Service Manual*). The committee suggested that the position of chairperson of the General Service Board not be restricted to a Class A trustee, and that the trustees' Nominating Committee look at the procedure necessary to implement this and report back to the 1994 Conference Committee on Trustees.

- The committee reviewed trustees' Nominating Committee Procedure No. 6—"Procedures for Election of Class A Trustees"—to find ways for the Conference Committee on Trustees to become more involved in the process (pages S114-115, 1992-93 edition of *The A.A. Service Manual*). The committee suggested that item #6 of Nominating Procedure No. 6 be amended to read: "After approval by the Board of Trustees, the applicant's name is presented to the Conference Committee on Trustees and to the General Service Conference for disapproval, if any." (This amended wording is to be added to the next edition of *The A.A. Service Manual*.)

- The committee discussed the development of guidelines for forming new regions and referred this to the trustees' Nominating Committee for further study. The Conference Committee on Trustees requested that the trustees' Nominating Committee report back on this subject and that it be placed on the

agenda of the 1994 Conference Committee on Trustees.

- The committee reviewed and discussed brief biographies of Class A trustees, as shown in *Final Conference Reports* from 1982-1992, with regard to balanced trusteeship (Concept VI, page 26, 1992-93 edition of *The A.A. Service Manual* combined with *Twelve Concepts for World Service*). The committee discussed their thoughts on balanced trusteeship for Class A trustees and suggested that—when considering applicants for the upcoming Class A trustee vacancies in 1994 and 1995—the trustees' Nominating Committee look at "friends of A.A." with spiritual and corporate backgrounds.

- The committee discussed and reviewed whether or not to add "four years' area committee experience" to the requirements for applicants for appointed committee member and nontrustee director vacancies. The committee strongly suggested that, when appointed committee member and nontrustee director vacancies occur, experience in the A.A. service structure be considered.

- The committee reviewed and discussed its Composition, Scope and Procedure and whether or not to add any information to it. The committee suggested adding nontrustee directors and appointed committee members to the "Scope" section of its Composition, Scope and Procedure.

- The committee referred to the trustees' Nominating Committee, for further study, the agenda item about deciding the method of Conference approval of trustees' slate, officers of General Service Board and directors of corporate boards. The committee requested that the trustees' Nominating Committee report back to the committee on this subject and that it be placed on the agenda of the 1994 Conference Committee on Trustees.

Strong suggestion of the Conference (recommendation where the vote was less than  $\frac{2}{3}$ , but more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  in favor):

- Due to the importance the committee places on the principle of rotation and—in order to apply this principle to all levels of service—the committee recommended that no trustee should serve as chairperson of the same trustees' committee for more than two years during his/her term of service on the General Service Board.

Committee recommendation not adopted by the Conference:

- That appointed committee members and nontrustee directors be subject to the same rule as delegates in the one-year rotation policy currently in practice, and that this one-year rotation policy continue.



### 1994 Final Conference Report Trustees' Nominating Committee Report

to Class A trustees who were serving during the 1993 Conference, and referred this back to the 1994 Conference Committee for approval.

- The Conference Committee recommended that the chairperson of the General Service Board serve for no more than four years.

The committee proposed an amendment to the by-laws in accordance with the recommendation. The amendment was approved by the General Service Board in October and will be included in the next printing of *The A.A. Service Manual*.

- The Conference Committee suggested that the position of chairperson of the General Service Board not be restricted to a Class A trustee, and that the trustees' Nominating Committee look at the procedure necessary to implement this and report back to the 1994 Conference.

A report on the procedures to elect a Class B (alcoholic) trustee as chairperson of the General Service Board was accepted and it was recommended that this report be forwarded to the Conference Committee on Trustees for consideration.

- The Conference Committee requested that the trustees' Nominating Committee report back on the development of guidelines for forming new regions and that this subject be placed on the agenda of the 1994 Conference Committee on Trustees.

A report was prepared regarding a procedure for the formation of new regions and/or making alterations to the regional map. The report was accepted with the recommendation that it be forwarded to the Conference Committee on Trustees for their review.

- The Conference Committee suggested that — when considering applicants for the upcoming Class A trustee vacancies in 1994 and 1995 — the trustees' Nominating Committee look at "friends of A.A." with spiritual and corporate backgrounds.

With a focus on spiritual and corporate backgrounds, the Nominating Committee reviewed the resumes of "friends of A.A." for the Class A trustee vacancy in 1994 and developed a list of nine candidates from which the committee recommended that three be invited by the chair of the General Service Board to attend the January 1994 board weekend. Following the board weekend, when the three "friends of A.A." were interviewed, the committee recommended that Peter Roach serve as Class A trustee.

- The Conference Committee strongly suggested that, when appointed committee member and nontrustee director vacancies occur, experience in the A.A. service structure be considered.

The Nominating Procedures were revised. The statement, "Experience in A.A. service structure is desirable" now appears in the Procedures for Nominating Corporate Board Directors (Procedure No. 2) and on the resume forms for nontrustee directors and appointed committee members. The same statement with the phrase "if applicable" is included in Procedures for Finding Appointed Committee Members (Procedure No. 3).

- The Conference Committee requested that the trustees' Nominating Committee report back to the committee on the method of Conference approval of trustees' slate, officers of the General Service Board and directors of corporate boards and that it be placed on the agenda of the 1994 Conference Committee on Trustees.

A study was made of the method of Conference approval of trustees' slate, officers of the General Service Board and directors of the corporate boards. A report was presented and accepted and it was recommended that the report be passed on to the Conference Committee on Trustees.

- The Conference Committee recommended that no trustee

should serve as chairperson of the same trustees' committee for more than two years during his/her term of service on the General Service Board. (This recommendation received less than 2/3 of the Conference votes, but with more than 1/2 in favor it was considered a strong suggestion of the Conference.)

The Nominating Committee concluded that implementing this suggestion should not cause a problem with any trustees' committee except the Finance and Budgetary Committee where it could result in the possible loss of management control and audit issues — besides the loss of continuity. Therefore, after much deliberation and further discussion with the chair of the Conference Committee, it was the sense of the committee that the strong suggestion from the Conference Committee not apply to the chairmanship of the trustees' Finance and Budgetary Committee.

- The Conference Committee suggested that item #6 of Nominating Procedure No. 6 (Now No. 5) be amended to read: "After approval by the Board of Trustees, the applicant's name is presented to the Conference Committee on Trustees and to the General Service Conference for disapproval, if any." (This amended wording is to be added to the next edition of *The A.A. Service Manual*.)

The addition was made to *The A.A. Service Manual*. The Nominating Procedure was not amended because it was the sense of the Procedures Subcommittee that the issue would be more appropriately addressed in the consideration of the method of Conference approval of the General Service Board slate.

The report from the Procedures Subcommittee was presented and the Nominating Procedures were accepted, as revised, for presentation to the General Service Board with the recommendation that the Procedures be accepted.

The Search Subcommittee presented a report containing historical information on the balance of professional backgrounds/areas of expertise of past Class A trustees. In addition, a breakdown of professional backgrounds/areas of expertise was provided for the currently-sitting Class A trustees.

The committee discussed the reduction of nontrustee directors terms from four (4) years to two (2) years to increase the pool of potential applicants for general service trustee vacancies. It was recommended to the General Service Board that the term of nontrustee directors be two (2) years and this be referred to the Conference Committee on Trustees for consideration.

However, this motion was defeated by the General Service Board. It was moved that the report from the January meeting of the trustees' Nominating Committee be forwarded to the A.A.W.S. and Grapevine Corporate Boards and the Conference Committee on Trustees with the minutes of the January 31, 1994 meeting of the General Service Board attached, in order to solicit and obtain their input. The matter is on the Conference Committee on Trustees Agenda for discussion.

The committee reviewed a proposal for a change in the voting procedure for regional trustees and suggested that additional background information on this subject be provided to the Conference Committee on Trustees — including sample voting sheets illustrating the actual numbers of Conference members who will be voting in each regional election if the proposed change is implemented.

The committee reviewed and approved as eligible for election all candidates for regional trustees from Eastern Canada and Pacific U.S.

## CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background

The last recorded votes that received majority but not 2/3 were noted in the 1995 Final Conference Report, and there were three of them. One was about the principles to be used for traveling C.P.C. exhibits. One was about reaffirming a 1986 Advisory Action regarding floor actions introduced in the waning hours of the Conference. The third was about reaffirming a 1987 Advisory Action declining to create of a Conference Archives Committee.

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### Additional Committee Considerations That Did Not Result in Recommendations

*Advisory Action 40 of the 1990 General Service Conference states: "Items discussed, but no action taken or recommendation made, as well as committee recommendations which are not adopted, be included in a separate section of the Final Conference Report." Those committee recommendations which are not adopted (less than 2/3 of the total Conference votes in favor), but which received at least a simple majority of the votes, are considered "strong suggestions" of the Conference. All items, listed by committee, are as follows:*

#### AGENDA

- A letter to the committee chairperson regarding Seccion Mexico was discussed and found to be outside the scope of this committee.
- The committee discussed whether there is a need for a specific place in the Conference Agenda to discuss the needs and current challenges of the A.A. groups in the U.S. and Canada and unanimously agreed that this is an issue for areas, districts and groups.
- The committee discussed the submission of floor actions at the General Service Conference and unanimously agreed to ask the 1996 Policy/Admissions Committee to consider that the submission of all floor actions be withheld until after the voting on committee reports.

#### COOPERATION WITH THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY

- The committee discussed the suggestion for a thorough review of all C.P.C. literature and service material to insure that duplication is avoided and that A.A.'s primary purpose is clearly stated.

The committee requests that the trustees' C.P.C. Committee begin a thorough review of all C.P.C. literature and service material, and send a progress report as background to the 1996 Conference C.P.C. Committee. The goals of the literature review would be to:

- a) Encourage that A.A.'s single purpose is foremost.
  - b) Make suggestions for eliminating unnecessary duplication and redundancy.
  - c) Look for opportunities to simplify and clarify C.P.C. information.
  - d) Explore the possibility of combining two or more existing pieces.
  - e) Review titles of existing C.P.C. information and suggest changes as appropriate.
- The committee recognized with appreciation the preliminary work and suggestions on the "Alcoholics Anonymous and Employee Assistance Programs" leaflet by the trustees' C.P.C. Committee, and urged that the ideas presented be considered in the thorough review of all C.P.C. literature to be undertaken by the trustees' C.P.C. Committee.
  - After thorough discussion on the suggestion that a video be developed for internal A.A. use to encourage participation in C.P.C. service work and to provide suggestions for making presentations to professional groups, the Committee decided to take no action because of the availability of less expensive

methods to encourage A.A. members to participate in C.P.C. service work.

- The committee felt that the literature review underway and the publication of the new C.P.C. Workbook respond to the need for specifics on presentations to professional groups.

- The committee discussed these two questions: 1) Are we doing enough to carry the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers inside and outside of the Fellowship?; and, 2) Are we meeting the needs of those we serve, or have we become self-serving?

- The committee concluded that these were wonderful inventory questions that inspired a thoughtful exchange of ideas. The concerns raised by these questions guided us in our deliberations of other Agenda items.

Strong suggestion of the Conference (recommendation where the vote was less than 2/3, but more than 1/2 in favor):

- After reviewing the history of the guidelines for traveling C.P.C. exhibits, that the trustees' C.P.C. Committee continue to follow these principles:

a) The C.P.C. exhibit continue to be sent, upon invitation and within budgetary constraints, to such national conventions of professional organizations that may be reasonably presumed to have a significant concern with alcoholics.

b) The list of exhibits at professional conventions be reviewed by the trustees' C.P.C. Committee at least twice a year

c) Local committees be encouraged to exhibit at local or regional professional conventions, and that such exhibits be supported at the most appropriate local level, i.e., district, intergroup, area.

d) The C.P.C. staff person continue to facilitate such requests, bearing in mind the principles of attraction, cooperation and self-support.

#### CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

- The committee voted not to proceed with studying the feasibility of an audio cassette to encourage A.A. members to get involved in carrying the message to members inside the walls. It was felt that such a cassette was not needed at this time.

- The committee decided that it was not desirable or feasible to have a firm policy that G.S.O. send a Big Book to every inmate who requested one. It was felt that this should be left more to the autonomy of area and local Correctional Facilities committees.

- The committee accepted a report of the trustees' Correctional Facilities Committee on proposed minor editorial changes in the Correctional Facilities Workbook. The staff was asked to work with Publications to make the requested changes in the next printing of the C.F. Workbook.

- The committee discussed a suggestion to add to the workbook more guidelines for taking meetings into juvenile detention centers. The committee reviewed a report from area correctional facilities chairs and agreed with a majority of area chairs responding that separate guidelines were not desirable at this time.

- The committee asked the trustees' Correctional Facilities Committee to study ways to get more A.A. members involved in the Correctional Correspondence Service, noting that G.S.O. usually has a list of male inmates waiting for correspondence, and that most area committees are not at this time set up to provide Correspondence Services.



## 1995 Final Conference Report

Has the Conference become too important to some and unimportant to many? If so, how can we bring our focus and involvement into balance?

Do we have a sufficient number of A.A. groups desiring to participate in the Conference to afford a reliable cross section of A.A. opinion to ensure that the Conference continues to be the actual and effective conscience for our whole society, or has the Conference become a minority voice?

The committee recognizes these questions as legitimate and feels that a short report of our discussion would be inadequate. We further recognize the need for continuing discussion at all levels and request that this sharing proceed and that reports of that sharing be sent to the Policy/Admissions Committee.

- The committee requests that the trustees' Committee on the Conference include the 1995 recommendation regarding floor actions in the Conference Kit which goes to all Conference members each January.

- The committee requests that the trustees' Committee on the Conference provide space on the agenda for an Archives presentation on alternating years.

Strong suggestions of the Conference (recommendation where the vote was less than 2/3, but more than 1/2 in favor):

- The Conference reaffirm the 1986 recommendations regarding floor actions:

"With regard to proposing Floor Actions in the final hours of the Conference the 1968 recommendation, which was as follows, be reaffirmed:

"That when questions of importance for the Conference could not be sent to the areas in advance, consideration be given to an oral presentation early in the Conference sessions, with discussions and voting to be taken at a later date during the Conference."

And that the 1986 recommendation, as follows, be reaffirmed:

"That when matters of great significance having a long term effect on the Fellowship or of substantial expense are presented to the floor in the waning hour of the Conference, such matters be referred to the appropriate committee at the next Conference in order for the group conscience to be as informed as possible."

- The 1987 Conference Action be reaffirmed as follows:

"While the committee recognizes the need for and encourages the development of area Archives and Archives committees, with the resulting benefit to General Service and the Fellowship as a whole, a Conference Archives Committee should not be formed at this time because the needs of local Archives committees are being well served by the trustees' Archives Committee and the General Service Office Archivist."

### PUBLIC INFORMATION

- The committee discussed as it relates to Public Information whether we are doing enough to carry the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers inside and outside A.A., and felt that though we are doing well, we can always do better by informing the membership of the tools and the methods available for public information. One delegate described the skit presented in their area to show members how to do public information talks/presentations to schools and others. This skit will be sent

to the General Service Office to aid in preparing an article in the P.I. section of Box 4-5-9.

- The committee discussed whether we are meeting the needs of those we serve, or if we have become self-serving and definitely agreed that we are not self-serving as long as we keep our egos in check, keep an open mind and that decisions can be reached to meet the needs of those we serve.

- The committee reviewed the Public Information Workbook and were enthusiastic about the new and concise format and made no changes. One suggestion was to include the guide letters separately in the folder for those committees who might not have access to a typewriter/word processor, but the committee felt that these letters are guides/examples and should have some local personalization before they are sent out.

### REPORT AND CHARTER

- The committee discussed the suggestion to review the entire manuscript of the *Twelve Concepts for World Service in The A.A. Service Manual* (1994-1995 edition), reaffirm the Twelve Concepts, and amend current practices to reflect these principles. After reviewing the manuscript of the Twelve Concepts, the committee felt it is not necessary to reaffirm them. As far as amending current practices, it was felt this was outside the defined scope of this committee.

- After reviewing the section in *The A.A. Service Manual* (1994-1995 edition) entitled "Past Delegates Can Be Helpful" to determine if there is a need to update, expand, or relocate the position of this text to reflect current activities and practices, the committee felt that no changes are necessary at this time.

- The committee reviewed the wording for the method of Conference approval of the trustees' slate, officers of the General Service Board and directors of corporate boards used throughout the "Current Conference Charter" (page S31), Bylaws of the General Service Board (page S106) and *The A.A. Service Manual* (1994-1995 edition) for consistency with Article 10 of the "Original Conference Charter—1955" (page S26), and found no inconsistencies.

- After reviewing Article Two, paragraph four of the "Current Conference Charter" (page S31) in *The A.A. Service Manual* (1994-1995 edition), the committee did not find it contrary to the spirit of Warranty Six, Concept XII, or in conflict with Tradition Four (Long Form) and Warranties Three, Four and Five.

- The committee considered the suggestion that the term "ex-alcoholic" as it appears in the Bylaws of the General Service Board be replaced with another term. The committee felt that since the term "ex-alcoholic" is adequately defined in the Bylaws of the General Service Board on pages S109-110 of *The A.A. Service Manual* (1994-1995 edition), no change is necessary.

- The committee considered whether the section "Conference Language" in *The A.A. Service Manual* (1994-1995 edition) should be placed before the Conference Charter, and felt no change was necessary.

- The committee considered whether the definition of an A.A. group in *The A.A. Service Manual* (1994-1995 edition) should be placed before that of the G.S.R., and felt no change was necessary.

- The committee considered whether the definition of a district in *The A.A. Service Manual* (1994-1995 edition) should be placed before that of the D.C.M., and felt no change was necessary.

- The committee considered whether the section in Personal

EXCERPTS FROM AGENDA

CONFERENCE REPORT AND CHARTER COMMITTEE

Monday, April 21, 1986 - 4:00 – 5:30 p.m.

Beekman Room – Second Floor

Tuesday, April 22, 1986 – 10:00 a.m. – Noon

C. Discussion Topics – “The A.A. Service Manual”

1. Discuss the 1985 Conference recommendation regarding the definition of a quorum described in the Conference Charter which reads: “The committee recommended that the definition of a quorum at the General Service Conference described in the Conference Charter on page 24 of ‘The A.A. service manual’ is adequately defined and should not be changed.

- D. Consider the suggestion to incorporate into future Conference Reports all committee recommendations on which no action was taken by the Conference.

## CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background

### EXCERPTS FROM COMMITTEE REPORT 1986

#### CONFERENCE REPORT AND CHARTER COMMITTEE

Hotel Roosevelt, 45<sup>th</sup> Street and Madison Avenue  
April 21-23, 1986

The conference Report Charter Committee met three times and considered the flowing agenda items:

A. Discussion Topics - "The A.A. Service Manual."

1. Discuss the 1985 Conference recommendation regarding the definition of a quorum described in the Conference Charter which reads: "The committee recommended that the definition of a quorum at the General Service Conference described in the Conference Charter on page 23 of the 'A.A. Service Manual' is adequately defined and should not be changed."

The committee reaffirmed the definition of a quorum as adequate. However, the committee recommended that Article 4 of the Conference Charter, on page 24, paragraph 2 of the Service Manual should read:

"A quorum shall consist of two-thirds of all of the Conference members registered.

"It will be understood, as a matter of tradition, that a two-thirds vote of Conference members voting shall be considered binding upon the General Service Board and its related corporate services."

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Further, for purposes of consistency, the committee recommended that the second sentence of the first paragraph under "Meaning of the Conference Charter" on page 23 of the Service Manual be changed to read:

"It provides, for example, that a majority vote of the Conference shall be considered a suggestion to the board of trustees and G.S.O., but that a two-thirds vote of the Conference members voting shall be absolutely binding upon the board, regardless of legal considerations."

- B. Consider the suggestion to incorporate into future Conference Reports all committee recommendations on which no action was taken by the Conference.

The committee recommended that all recommendations on which no Conference action is taken should become part of the History and Highlights of Actions of each Conference Committee.

## **CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background**

The committee further recommended that if a committee recommendation does not receive two-thirds vote required to become a Conference Advisory Action, but has a majority of votes, it automatically become a suggestion and be duly noted in the Conference Report.



**CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background**

The University of Rhode Island  
College of Continuing Education  
199 Promenade Street  
Providence, RI 02908-5090  
(401) 277-3800

Providence, RI  
02906

February 17, 1986

Dear Lois,

I write to you today to address your “\_\_\_\_\_” as staff member who will work with the Conference Policy and Admissions Committee. When our delegate gave me a copy of the January 1986 version of the preliminary agenda I did not notice mention of as item I had requested action on in a summer 1985 letter to John.

The item is also one you and I discussed very briefly on the phone one day – namely a suggestion that the Final Conference Report ought to include action that are not advisory actions. Because the manual says that items passed by majority votes ought to be regarded as suggestions to the Board and to G.S.O., such suggestions ought to be included in the final record of Conference business. Indeed these might add a section \_\_\_\_\_entitled “Other Conference Actions” which could contain a number of like majority vote, motions made and referred to Conference or board committees, subjects about which one was “considerable discussions” (obviously a judgement call that might be shared by the Conference Coordinator, the Conference Chair and the delegate chairperson.

I recognize that this expands the Conference Report. It seems to me, however, that in our AA service work we are always better off offering “too much” information rather than running even a tiny risk of saying “too little.”

I would very much appreciate the above suggestions being referred through the appropriate decision making channels. The action has been taken, I would appreciate learning the outcomes.

As always, my very warmest wishes to you.

Love,

Richard

## CONFIDENTIAL: 69th General Service Conference Background

Excerpts from Summer 1985 letter  
Richard to GMGSO John B

2) Long after I had given my delegate's reports here in Rhode Island I happened to notice that p. 22 of The A.A. Service Manual tells us that a majority vote of the Conference shall be considered a suggestion to the Board and to G.S.O. (might we assume that it is a suggestion to the Fellowship as well?) Though this point is clear, my experience is that majority votes of the Conference are not a part of any distributed record. If this is the case, I would suggest that the final Conference Report ought to include a section on majority votes or "suggestions" and that these votes and the issues they are about ought to be reported both in the Early Bird and the regular post Conference Box 4-5-9. I am, of course, remembering the 81-38 vote on Conference approved literature. Surely this strong of a suggestion ought to be somewhere besides the Archives. Surely other majority votes ought to be included in the report that is distributed to the Fellowship. I submit this as a proposal to change the way we report the Conference.

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General Service Assembly  
Mid-Southern California Area  
P.O. Box 6222, Long Beach, California 90806

August 26, 1985

Mr. John, General Manager  
P.O. Box 459  
New York, NY 10163

Dear John,

The purpose of this letter is to address my thinking on the voting procedures at the Conference and how I arrived at this position.

All my references will be from the 1984-85 edition of the Service Manual/12 Concepts.

Bernard Smith (page 33) explains that the Conference may not be needed for us in A.A. today but is needed to insure that A.A. will be here for generations of alcoholics to come. On page 22, I find the Conference Charter described as "a body of principles and relationships through which A.A. can function", and also "that they are thoroughly practical and are likely to survive all future strain". This tells me the Conference Charter is designed not only for today's calm but also to survive any future storms. One example is used. Voting! Out of all the examples that might have been used, voting was chosen. It states that a majority vote passes a Conference action as a suggestion, and that a two-thirds vote is binding.

Now I ask myself, a majority or two-thirds of what? On page 23, it tells me, "of a Conference quorum". The next sentence tells me a quorum is two-thirds of all Conference members registered. This tells me that a quorum must vote on an issue for it to be considered, and if over half vote for the issue it passes as a suggestion and if two-thirds vote for the issue, it will be binding.

Bill deviated from the two-thirds vote of the quorum on page 25, "the charter and by-laws of the General Service Board, or any amendments thereto, should always be subject to the approval of the General Service Conference by a two-thirds vote of all its members". Another deviation is on page 24, "It will be further understood, regardless of the legal prerogatives of the General Service Board, as a matter of tradition, that a three-quarters vote of all Conference members may bring about a reorganization, etc." A.A.'s charter makes a clear distinction between a two-thirds vote of a quorum and a two-thirds vote of the Conference members registered.

Warranty four also makes reference to this subject. On page 68, "that all important decisions be reached by discussion, vote, and,

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WHENEVER POSSIBLE, by substantial unanimity”, then it goes on to talk about safeguards and guarantees that describe the spiritual freedom of the Conference to find substantial unanimity. Further down the page, I find that substantial unanimity does have limitations, “Here we shall need to trust the majority, sometimes a bare majority”.

My thoughts go back to the Conference last April when the issue of what literature the groups should be selling came up for vote. This recommendation received 81 votes in favor and 38 votes opposed. A quorum voted, (119) and 81 votes in favor was over two-thirds, yet this issue did not get recognized. When a delegate asked Bob what would become of this recommendation, he said, “nothing, it died on the floor”.

John, you told me at the Conference you thought each Conference had the right to deviate from its charter and establish its own rules. (Letter 4-2-85 to Frank). I can’t find anything in the Charter, the Concepts or the Warranties that substantiates this idea.

On page 69, (Warranty Four) “In passing, it should be noted that the Conference will sometimes have to decide, with respect to a particular question, what the requirements of substantial unanimity are going to be” – (like the deviations on pages 24 & 25) then it goes on to say “Such an advance agreement can, of course, be had on a simple majority vote.”

No where does A.A. Charter, Concepts, or Warranties suggest the Conference should eliminate the fact that a simple majority vote is a suggestion to the Boards and a two-thirds vote of a quorum is binding.

Until a provision of this type is added to the Conference Charter, (which would require a two-thirds vote of all the Conference members) it seems to me the Conference should follow its charter. It’s the only group conscience they have to follow. (Concept 3, page 15) “We have seen how the A.A. Groups, under the concept of the “group conscience”, are today holding the ultimate authority and the final responsibility for world services. We have also noted how, by reason of the Conference Charter and the “trusted servant” provision of Tradition Two, the groups have delegated to their General Service Conference full authority to manage and conduct A.A.’s world affairs”.

Had the past Conferences followed their charter, I don’t believe the outcome would be much different. What would concern me about a provision of this type is what it would do to the relationship of the Conference structure (two third delegates, one third trustees, and G.S.O. staff) and the practical balance of voting power as they stand today. (Page 22, Meaning of the Conference Charter). Though these arrangements can be changed by Conference action, experience indicates that they are thoroughly practical and are likely to survive all future strain.

Thank you for your time John, and thank you for accepting the awesome responsibility you have at G.S.O. With God’s help, you will do a fine job. If you don’t mind, I’ll give God a little nudge in my prayers to listen for my friend John.



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Sincerely,

Frank

inc; Conference structure/voting power letter  
copy; Gordon  
Natalie

**From:** Mirza, Michelle  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 10:33 AM  
**To:** Staffcoord <staffcoord@aa.org>  
**Subject:** RE: Background for Conference Policy/Admissions Committee

Hi Mary,

The Conference Report and Charter Committee reviewed a revised Service Manual in 1999, which was in response to a 1997 Advisory Action – “A thorough review of *The A.A. Service* manual be undertaken by the Publications Department of the General Service Office for the purpose of increasing readability, consolidating and clarifying the text, and that a preliminary draft be sent to the 1998 Conference Committee on Report and Charter no later than February 1, 1998, for consideration.” The revision incorporated changes requested by the 1998 and 1999 Conference Committee on Report and Charter.

The block of text that followed the title “The Meaning of the Conference Charter” was revised in the rewrite and the new text appeared in the revised 1999-2000 edition of *The Service Manual* to read:

**The Conference Charter**

Appendices A and C contain the full text of both the original Conference Charter and the current version. The Charter, adopted in 1955, describes in detail the body of principles and relationships through which A.A. services function as a whole. The Conference itself is not incorporated, and its charter is not a legal document – it is truly an informal agreement between the Fellowship as a whole and its trustees, setting forth the means by which A.A. can give worldwide service.

Note that the revised text has not been changed since 1999.

Hope this helps.

Best,

Michelle