Ad-Hoc committee on funding elected and appointed trusted servants to attend service workshops and conferences summary

Committee Members

Eddy M-M (Chair/Area Webmaster)
Geene F (Alt Delegate)
Frank (Area Treasurer)
Keith M (Past Delegate Panel 61 Utah)
Carol H (OSD Chair)
David L (AA Member)
Michael B (GSR)
Robin M (AA Member)

Objectives

- Discuss funding service workshops/conferences for area appointed and elected trusted servants.
- Benefits/Value to Area, Cost, Equitable, etc.
- Set some criteria necessary to disseminate information back to the area.

Background Info

Minutes from 2019 January Area Quarterly
Discussion Topic 1: Funding Service Workshops/Conferences for Area Appointed and Elected Trusted Servants.
Benefits/Value to Area, Cost, Equitable, etc. How do we best handle this to make it fair and be responsible with the money coming from the groups?

- Where is the value? Rather money went to still suffering alcoholic than to Chairperson's vacation. It's hard to see how sending the Chair helps the Committees - especially an outgoing Chair.
- This information gets lost after the rotation ends.
- The info learned at the workshops DOES get passed on to the incoming Chair. A lot of valuable connection and information is gained during the "off" times – breaks, dinner, travel, etc.
- Individual Committees could raise money to send their Chair if they think it is important. If 20 people gave $20, that would be significant.
- Maybe we should have an application process for Chairs who would like to attend a workshop. Like a grant?
- At PRAASA, Courtney will be discussing this with other Area Treasurers to see how they handle it.
- Good to do but we need criteria that can be met – what will be done to share the info to Area.
- These things can be attended electronically via Skype/Facetime. The whole workshop can be put on a thumb drive and used that way.
- These workshops are valuable tools. It's a money thing. Of course, we would send all of our servants if it was financially feasible.
- We need to know how much this would cost before we can speak to it.
- How much would it cost to send each Chair once per rotation?
- Do all of the Chairs even want to go?
- What's $600 to go to a conference if it saves a life?
- We should trust the Finance Committee to decide – if we have cash, yes. If we don't, no.
- Fundraisers?
- Take the money it costs to print and mail the Newsletter and use it here. Do Newsletter electronically.

An ad hoc committee will be formed to further investigate this and set some criteria necessary to disseminate information.

Summary of committee work:

Our committee met five times between the January and July Quarterly. The committee defined the scope of the work, goals of the committee, created a framework and came up with possible questions that we wanted to look at. Some of those questions included:

- Who/when has national/regional workshops/conferences?

- How long have the web and archivist been going to conferences and what have been the benefits received?
- Where should the "value of attending" choice be made?
- Determine what recommendations to make to the body?
- Look at the cause and effect of attending the workshop
- Do we need to spend money just because it's there?
- Will giving a flat amount (or cap) exclude someone who cannot make up the difference?
- How do we keep the districts/committees engaged about keeping the committee chair accountable to share and pass on the learned info?
- What is the best method of providing a report back after the workshop? (website, emails, newsletter, report-back events, reports at quarterlies/assemblies, etc.)

Budget/Financial

We also talked about why we send money to GSO instead of spending in the area, reviewed the current budget process and determined additional financial considerations. Below is the info:

Current Budget Process

- A proposed annual budget is created by the Treasurer using the following guidelines:
    - Forecast contributions based on previous years trends.
    - Consultation with existing Committee Chairs on financial needs for the year.
    - Review of previous year's expenditures to determine requirements, and current pricing – with assistance and guidance from the Alt. Treasurer
    - Review of area motions to ensure that activities directed by the Area are accounted for in the budget.
        - This would include forecasting expenditures for Elected Servants to attend PRASSA and Committee Chairs to attend national conferences
    - The Treasurer may solicit input, review and proposed changes from the Area Finance Committee, past Area Treasurers, outside accountants, etc., for assistance in the creation of the final proposed budget.
- The proposed budget is presented, discussed and is ultimately approved or denied via group conscience at the January Quarterly by the Area DCMs and voting Committee members.
    - Forecasted expenditures for Elected Servants to attend PRASSA and Committee Chairs to attend national conferences would be expressly identified in the proposed budget.
- Budget limits by Committee are disseminated to Committee Chairs and Electeds to communicate annual spending limits.
- Area business takes place.
- Transactions are entered and reviewed by Area Trusted Servants. The Treasurer records incoming contributions and receipts of funds, the Alt. Treasurer records expenses and disbursements.
    - Based on actual results – incoming and outgoing – the Treasurer and Alt Treasurer may determine the need to adjust budget limits accordingly.
- At every Quarterly the Treasurer and Alt. Treasurer report on actual results, and provide guidance on remaining year, including any adjustments determined.
- The DCMs and voting members approve the budget report via group conscience at each Quarterly.
- Annually, the Treasurer determines excess funds, Working Reserve needs. These calculations are reviewed and agreed upon by the Treasurer, Alt Treasurer and Finance Committee.
- Excess funds are contributed to GSO and are reported in the January quarterly and are approved via group conscience as part of the Treasurer's Report.

Additional Financial Considerations

- These recommendations do not guarantee attendance annually. As with all area expenditures, budgets are limited by contributions. If contributions are forecast to be less than expenses, the Area Committee will make decisions on what services/expenses should be reduced to ensure that the area remains self-supporting.

Additional Financial Questions

- Could "excess" funds that would have been sent to GSO be used for this funding?

- Why would we send one person to an event when that money could be used to help many?
- Since 2014, the area has given GSO excess funds
    - 2014 $ 9,164.39
    - 2015 $ 14,679.78
    - 2016 $ 18,504.54
    - 2017 $ 14,454.06
    - 2018 $ 10,200.50
    - **Total** **$ 67,003.27**

<u>Cost for Delegate to attend PRAASA</u>

- 2014 $ 693.50
- 2015 $ 941.10
- 2016 $ 511.42
- 2017 $ 678.21
- 2018 $ 766.78
- 2019 $ 814.35
- **Total** **$ 4,414.36**
- **Annual Average** **$ 735.73**

<u>Cost for Appointed Servants to attend national workshops or conferences</u>

- **2017 Total** **$ 3,290.99**
    - Archivist $ 1,185.09
    - Webmaster $ 1,235.90
    - Corrections $ 870.00
- **2018 Total** **$ 1,734.36**
    - Archivist $ 902.36
    - Webmaster $ 832.00
- **Average Cost** **$ 1,005.00**

<u>Communication/Report Back</u>

The committee compiled a list of report back methods that would help with passing the info to the area as a whole. Suggestions on those methods include:

- Area 72 Website
- Area, Intergroup, and District newsletters
- Area Quarterlies
- Special Workshops
- Fridays at Area Assembly
- Special speaking by invite from districts or homegroups
- A final/summary report will be provided to archives

Suggestions on the content of the report back include:

- What was the purpose of the workshop attended?
- What were the main topics/workshops?
    - Why did you pick those topics over other topics?
- How did other areas handle these topics?
- Did a solution worth implementing in A72 come up?
    - What was it and how can we implement it?
- Does it affect other standing committees?
    - Will you report back to these committees or provide info?
- Who else was at the event (other areas, officers, etc)?
- How long did the event last?
    - Schedule/Agenda
- How does this help us serve the still suffering?

<u>Travel from other Areas</u>

The committee also felt it was important to reach out to other areas in the Pacific Region to see what they did. Below is the summary of that:

Emails were sent out on April 10th to the following areas in the Pacific Northwest Region:

Alaska	Mid. Southern California	Idaho
Arizona	Southern California	Nevada
California Northern Coastal	Hawaii	Oregon

Utah

Did not receive responses from Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, and Utah.
Below are the responses from the Areas that did respond.

PRASSA

Does your Area fund send your Alt. Delegate, Chair, Alt Chair, Treasurer and Alt. Treasurer to PRAASA? If yes, which trusted served? And does the Area fund all of the travel or a portion of the travel? Does the Area send the person both years of the rotation or only one time?

Arizona - Area 03
Area 3 funds the Delegate, Alternate Delegate, and Area Chair to PRAASA both years of the rotation. All travel and lodging and any event banquet funded. Part of our budget.

California Northern Coastal - Area 06
Our area typically sends the alternate delegate and a third officer (chosen from the hat) every year to PRAASA. Exceptions could be if money were tight, we might not send a third person. Travel is fully funded at single occupancy.

Mid. Southern California - Area 09
In Area 09, we have seven officers. The Delegate is given their own budget to attend PRAASA. The other six officers split $2,500 evenly, which determines how much can be paid. For example, my allotted amount for PRAASA ($2,500 split six ways) is $416 and my hotel costs were $462. I asked for the entire amount because not all of the other five officers used their full allotted amount.

California Northern - Area 07
All of our Officers are fully funded and the Committee chairs partially to PRAASA. This may vary a bit in leaner years but generally the case. We do this every year.

Southern California - Area 05
The Delegate and Alternate Delegate are fully funded and we have $500 budgeted for all other officers.

Other Travel

Do you send committee chairs such as treatment, corrections, web, archives etc to their national or regional conference? If yes, does the Area fund all of the travel or a portion of the travel? Does the Area send the person both years of the rotation or only one time?

Arizona - Area 03
Each of our standing committee chairs has a set budget. If the committee chair plans on attending and the cost exceeds their budget a request is made by the coordinator for funding to attend. To this point such request has not been denied. For example, our Corrections Coordinator has had funding approved to attend the National Corrections Conference every year since it began. The funding covers all travel and lodging and any Saturday evening event banquet.

California Northern Coastal - Area 06
Each year, we send one member of Archives, Bridging the Gap and our web committee to the National Archives and Bridging the Gap workshops and NAATW. Motions were passed to add these items to our budget each year, but we still have the committee make a housekeeping motion in advance, so we can be sure funds are available. It isn't always the chair that goes--each committee selects the member who will attend on their behalf.

Mid. Southern California - Area 09
Each of our Committee Chairs is given a discretionary budget. Most of these are about $400/year. It is up to the discretion of each Chair to decide how to spend the money. I don't think many use their funds for national workshops. Most use their money for local events. Each Chair has the ability to ask for more money, which would need to be presented as a motion and passed or not.

California Northern - Area 07
We do send our chairpersons to Archives, Bridging the Gap, and Technology Workshop. We send the current chair to both years if they wish to attend. They are funded in full. For what it is worth, we fund our Delegate to attend the Pacific Regional Forum.

Southern California - Area 05
We have $125.00 budgeted for each committee chair to help with expenses for travel only to PRAASA.

<u>FUNDING</u>
If funding does occur for travel to PRAASA, regional forums or national conference for committees, what is the mechanism that triggers it each year? Is it something automatically budgeted for? Was it a motion that created the travel? Are there any other ways your Area is making the decision on how to select which trusted servants to send to which event? Is it a lottery? First come first serve.

Arizona - Area 03
Area 3 budgets sending our Delegate, Alt Delegate, and Chair to PRAASA and Regional Forums. We also Budget sending our Delegate to the International Convention every 5 years.

Our standing committee chairs request funding to attend events. For example, our Remote Communities Coordinator requested funding to attend the Special Forum last year because the theme was Native Peoples and he felt it would be helpful in his service position. So basically, outside of our budgeted travel items, our servants make case by case request. The approval process is dependent on the amount requested.

This seems to work for us because our coordinators get to choose what they feel is important and if they are available to attend such events. These events are not part of the coordinator job description, if they were, then we would have to budget for them.

California Northern Coastal - Area 06
Motions are how all items like this were added to the budget in the first place. PRAASA is automatic. As noted above, the committees do a housekeeping motion as a formality each year for the various workshops. For the Hispanic Women's Workshop in CA, the area officers have appointed liaisons each year we didn't host and a regular motion is made to fund travel. (One of these years, we will likely have a motion to add to the budget and then can do the housekeeping process each year.) For the third area officer funded to PRAASA, we wouldn't fund the same person more than once and people choose whether or not to put their name in the hat. That happens at our officer meeting.

Mid. Southern California - Area 09
I can't recall the timing, but we ask each Committee Chair to indicate if their current budget is sufficient or does it need to be increased. Our Finance Committee then creates an annual proposed budget based on these numbers. After several meetings discussing the proposed budget, there is a formal vote for the final budget, which is completed every year.

California Northern - Area 07
We fund traditionally based on duties that include attending events, it is discussed during the Spending Plan discussions every year

Southern California - Area 05
Yes. This is in our budget process.

PRAASA

The committee reviewed the value of attending the Pacific Regional Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly (PRAASA) and we believe there are great benefits to both individuals and to the fellowship. The results are demonstrated by members becoming better informed about the process and procedures of carrying our life-saving message to the still suffering alcoholics. Specifically, current and fundamental aspects of General Service concepts and procedures are reviewed and discussed. Consistently the area host committee responsible for the PRAASA agenda blends current hot topic issues with traditional methods of carrying our message. In addition to 20 to 25 individual panel presentations, there are workshops on each of our standing chair committee assignments. Both the Delegates Ask-it-Basket and Past Trustee's sharing session offer incredible information and institutional knowledge and solutions to problems that we cannot get anywhere else.

Keith M. Panel 61 Area 69 past delegate says: "Personally, this annual event, held in early March, has provided the spiritual rocket fuel boost that's added to my general service work since 1995 when I was a first-year GSR. As I have moved through a variety of Group, District, and Area general service assignments, there has always been a PRAASA presentation and/or workshop that has provided help to me in serving our fellowship. PRAASA creates a unique learning opportunity for our leaders of the future and as a result, we all serve better and are more informed about the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous."

Overall Summary/Recommendations

The committee took into account different views of opinions and tried to address concerns that had been expressed both directly and indirectly. We feel that took on this task with objective views and open to hearing all thoughts. Through our research and work, the committee determined that there were four recommendations we wanted to present to the area. Those recommendations are:

1) We recommend that we fully fund all the elected officers to attend PRAASA annually. This recommendation is in addition to Motion 75.2, which funds the Delegate to attend PRAASA. This recommendation would also replace motion 00.4, which provide unallocated funds for elected officers. We recommend elected officers who attend PRAASA provide detailed reports to the archives and to the area as requested.

2) We recommend that we fully fund Appointed Committee Chairs to attend national workshops/conferences that have G.S.O. participation that supports their responsibilities to the area. This recommendation would replace motion 10.1 and 15.2. We recommend Appointed Committee Chairs who attend national workshops/conferences provide detailed reports to their respective committees, to the archives, and to the area as requested.

3) We recommend that when any area trusted servant attends a workshop, conference, or other event funded by the area, they will provide a written report (provided to the newsletter, website, and archives) and an oral report to the body as appropriate (Committee Quarterlies, Area Quarterlies, Area Assembly, etc.).

4) We recommend that the funding would be approved through the regular budgeting process which includes approval from the Area DCMs and voting Committee members at the January Business Quarterly.