

61st General Service Conference Agenda Items that Area 56 Addressed at MC

Corrections

- A. Consider adding references to the Big Book in the pamphlet “A.A. in Correctional Facilities,” including a proposed section describing Big Book studies as a possible meeting format.

A56: NO ACTION

GSC: The text in the pamphlet “A.A. in Correctional Facilities” in the section on “Meetings” be replaced with:

Many groups also hold Step meetings, Tradition meetings or Big Book studies. Each type of meeting serves a different purpose; all are needed.

And that the heading and text of the section “Step meetings,” which reads, Since the Twelve Steps are the basis of our recovery in A.A., many groups hold Step meetings. Some groups read passages from the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions or the Big Book, followed by a discussion.

Groups may also read and discuss the Twelve Traditions, the best answers we have found to be the questions “How can A.A. best function?” and “How can A.A. best stay whole and so survive?” Since the Big Book contains not only directions for how many of our members practice the Twelve Steps, but also a brief history of our Fellowship’s beginnings and personal stories to help newcomers identify with other alcoholics, many A.A. groups devote meeting time to the study of this basic text. Audio recordings of the Big Book and Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions are available from the General Service Office. The pamphlets “The Twelve Steps illustrated” and “The Twelve traditions Illustrated” may also be helpful.

Cooperation with the Professional Community

- A. Discuss a draft sample letter to professionals on how they might use the AA Grapevine, La Vina and La Vigne.

The committee reviewed background and voted unanimously to take no action

GSC: CPC Committee took no action.

- B. Review a draft service piece regarding use of the AA Grapevine, La Vina and La Vigne in CPC endeavors.

The committee reviewed background including the subcommittees conclusion and recommendation. The committee voted unanimously to include it as recommended in the C.P.C. Kit and Workbook

GSC: CPC Committee forwarded as an additional consideration and suggested including the piece in the C.P.C. kit with minor edits suggested by the committee.

Finance

- A. Consider a request “that the trustees’ Finance Committee develop a Finance Workbook, a draft of which is to be made available for the 2012 General Service Conference, to assist group, intergroup/central offices, district and area service workers in carrying the message of our shared responsibility for the Seventh Tradition.”

Recommend

The committee recommended that the trustee's Finance Committee develop a finance workbook, a draft of which is to be made available for the 2012 General Service Conference, to assist group, intergroup/central offices, district and area service workers in carrying the message of our shared responsibility for the Seventh Tradition

This action FAILED at the Conference Voting

GSC: Took no action

- B. Consider a request “that the trustees’ Finance Committee convert Self-Support packet F-19 to a comprehensive Finance Kit.”

Recommend

The committee recommended “that the trustees’ Finance Committee convert Self-Support packet F-19 to a comprehensive Finance Kit.”

This action FAILED at the Conference Voting

GSC: Additional Consideration: The committee discussed a request that the trustees’ Finance Committee convert the Self-Support packet F-19 to a comprehensive Self-Support Kit. The committee requested that the trustees’ Finance Committee develop a draft Self-Support Kit to be brought back to the Conference Finance Committee for review.

Grapevine:

- A. Consider that A.A. Grapevine, Inc., be permitted to utilize digital channels and current (commissionable) support and distribution technologies such as but not limited to smart phones, tablets, e-readers, applications, and commissioned online stores for the sale and distribution of magazines, books and products.

No Action. Reasons: Demographics, fear of lack of fellowship, anonymity, and not everyone will have access to the technology or are technologically challenged.

GSC: After thoughtful and lengthy discussion, the Committee recommended that, in the spirit of being self-supporting while also protecting our Traditions of attraction, anonymity, and non-affiliation, A.A. Grapevine be permitted to utilize digital channels and current (commissionable) support and distribution technologies such as but not limited to smart phones, tablets, e-readers, applications, and commissioned online stores for the sale and distribution of magazines, books, and products. The committee request that the Board ensure that all contracts protect our Traditions with the option to discontinue any and all contracts at any time. The Committee requests that a status and financial report be submitted to the 2012 Grapevine Conference Committee.

- B. Consider permitting A. A. Grapevine, Inc., to accept contributions limited to the same General Service Board contribution policy, to be used for operation expenses with excess funds continuing to be forwarded to the Reserve Fund.

No Action. The financial struggle - survey was given out last year to see what will become of the Grapevine.

1. Who subscribes - reasons for subscriptions etc. About 63 areas participated in the survey. Brief talk of Grapevine going digital which would reduce printing costs. Our Committee made a motion for the grapevine to accept contributions from AA members and groups, but the motion was defeated, therefore no action was taken.

GSC: Grapevine Committee took no action

- C. Review request for a discussion on how best to support the Grapevine magazine.

No Action Discuss only

Unanimous vote on motion for conference discussion on how best support the Grapevine

5 committee members subscribe and 4 do not

Subscription prices are an obstacle

Groups are not promoting subscriptions

GV items other than magazine not actively promoted in the groups but well offered by the Central offices

An effort to get the clubs and groups to sell individual copies of the monthly magazine and other items.

More active participation at I.G.s by reps

Offering past issues at groups may be impediment sales of new subscriptions

GSC: discussed in Conference Committee of the Grapevine.

D. Review and discuss the results of the surveys conducted per the 2010 Advisory Action.

No Action. What is the value of the Grapevine Magazine?

96% think it is important

94% do not subscribe

Survey bias to people that like the Grapevine. Obviously the people don't want - possible to shut it down to save money. Grapevine needs to be more instrumental in attracting subscribers. People have apathy towards it.

Area 56 stats isn't listed; poor tracking.

GSC: Grapevine Conference Committee recommended that an ad hoc committee be formed to look for actionable items within the report but did not pass the floor.

Literature

A. Review progress report from the trustees' Literature Committee on the development of literature which focuses on spirituality that includes stories from atheists and agnostics who are successfully sober in Alcoholics Anonymous.

Reviewed: The committee is making appropriate progress. Significant elements

**Development of Pamphlet*

**General intro and stories from alcoholics sober in AA reflecting a wide range of spiritual experiences*

**Target Audience - alcoholic newcomer who struggles with the spiritual aspect of the program*

**Secondary Audience - resource for professionals who have questions about the subject.*

Two Comments from Literature Committee

**Spiritual "Aspect"*

**Not enough time to solicit stories and not publicized well enough.*

GSC: The trustees' Literature Committee continue to develop literature which focuses on spirituality that includes stories from atheists and agnostics who are sober in Alcoholics Anonymous. The committee expressed support for the trustees' efforts to develop a pamphlet which reflects the wide range of spiritual experiences of A.A. members and asked that a draft pamphlet or progress report be brought to the 2012 Conference Committee on Literature for consideration.

B. Consider suggestion to replace the text under "When you're a G.S.R." in the pamphlet "G.S.R. General Service Representative."

Passed

"You are linking your homegroup with the whole of AA. In 1950, a new type of trusted servant "group representative" was suggested to help in the selection of delegates to the newly formed General Service Conference. By 1953 the job of group representative was also seen as a good means of exchanging up to date information.

Discussed

Cost

Significance in the role of historical accuracy.

GSC: Passed motion

C. Consider suggestion to develop an item similar to the Self-support or "green card" to help promote the use of our literature as a Twelfth Step tool.

No Action.

Discussed

Usefulness of green card

Need for GSO to produce more service material for opening meeting

Cost

There may be a need for a tool to address problem of literature use/non-use but this is not the tool.

GSC: Lit Committee took no action.

- D. Consider a request to reconsider the 2010 Conference Advisory Action that “the trustees’ Literature Committee develop literature which focuses on spirituality that includes stories from atheists and agnostics who are successfully sober in Alcoholics Anonymous.”

No Action. Conference approval process will do necessary work that the call to rescind action does double and triple checking as pamphlet is developed.

Misinterpretation --- fear response

Minority opinion will be recognized within already established process.

GSC: Literature Committee took no action.

Public Information

- C. Consider approval of the General Service Board “Policy on Actors Portraying A.A. members or Potential A.A. Members in Videos produced by the General Service Board or its Affiliates.

FAILED AT Conference Vote

The committee reviewed background including the trustee’s discussion notes, conclusion note, and the proposed policy.

The committee voted unanimously to, recommended adding the word “New” at the beginning of the policy. Delete the word “unless” at the end of the top paragraph as well as, Items a. and b.

GSC: Motion passed

- E. Consider revisions to “Understanding Anonymity” which include text on the topic of anonymity in the digital age and answers to the question “What should I tell my loved ones about protecting the anonymity of the A.A. members they may meet.”

The committee reviewed background including the subcommittees conclusion and recommendation. Not having the actual text for the what to tell love ones part of this question the committee took no action on this part.

The committee voted unanimously to, accept the recommended changes to this pamphlet to bring it in line with our current digital age.

GSC: Motion passed

Report and Charter

- A. The A.A. Service Manual 2011-2012 Edition:

- a) Review revisions from the A.A.W.S. Board.

- b) Review draft of description on trustee’s emeriti.

No Action taken on A.2.(A.b.)

Draft not included but a committee member agrees that role of trustees emeriti should be reviewed by the conference particularly considering prudently managing financial resources used.

GSC: Motion passed

- B. Conference Charter:

- a. Consider request to recommend adding “the right of Petition and Appeal” to the Conference Charter as found in The A.A. Service Manual.

No Action taken on B.1.(B.a.)

Discussion centered on the need to "codify" in the conference charter giving specific reference to a particular charter numbered item and paragraph for accountability. Should the placement and wording be developed and returned to the next conference.

Awaiting development of process of appeal and petition by Policy and Admission Committee

GSC: Motion passed

Treatment Facilities/Special Needs/Accessibilities

- A. Discuss report from the trustees’ Committee regarding changing “Treatment Facilities”

Committee to “Treatment” Committee in committee titles and in A.A. literature

NO ACTION

GSC: Motion passed

FLOOR ACTION

That video “Hope: AA” get an inexpensive technical fix by blurring the faces

1st vote 16 for and 7 against

Minority opinion caused a changed vote

Vote to Re-vote 24 for and 3 against

Re-vote 5 for 23 against **FAILED**

GSC: There was discussion about the HOPE video and our anonymity policy at the ‘video production’ level. I learned that our area is not the only area that will not use the updated HOPE video. Out of the entire floor voting (up to 134 votes), only 24 voted against the new anonymity policy. Of the 24 who voted against it, it seemed like there were areas like ours, that agreed with the proposal up to the limitations and other areas who felt that the spirit of this tradition spoke to the anonymity of A.A. members, not actors portraying future, or current, A.A. members.