

District 06 (San Francisco) Minutes for General Service Business Meeting
Tuesday July 14, 2020
Online Zoom Meeting

6:30 – 7 New GSR Orientation // 6:30 – 7:30 12 Concepts & Service Manual Study // 7:30 – 9 District Meeting

Opening of Meeting

- Open at 7:30pm with Serenity Prayer
- Justin Hedemark introduces our Delegate, Teddy.

***Special Presentation on the 70th Annual General Service Conference
Saturday, May 16th***

Recording Secretary's note: Below is a summary of what was told to us by Teddy, who was also summarizing the entire Conference. Not every detail was able to be captured. For more details you may ask the Delegate directly at delegate.p69@cnca06.org.

Our Delegate Teddy heard 1285 group consciences. 249 were at the Pre-conference Assembly, 445 through email, 580 on the web form (on website) and 11 by US Mail. There were 177 participants at the Conference.

DAY 1

Teddy is on two committees. He met with his primary committee (Treatment & Accessibility) for 3 hours and 1 hour for his secondary (International Conventions & Regional Forums). 45 minutes were given to him to present to the conference floor.

There was discussion about the Lord's Prayer in AA and in closing the big meeting of an International Convention. The discussion was passionate and included how the Lord's Prayer is seen by AA's outside the US. No motion was made and it seems that AA needs to talk about this more internally.

DAY 2

Finance Presentation – *Provisional numbers, not final, not including COVID-19*

It was a record year for self-support at 8.86 million dollars. 1.25 million was from individuals. AAWS publishing profits - \$9,36 million down 1% from 2018, used to cover shortfall between 7th Tradition and Cost of Services, resulting in net GSO loss of \$379,665. Grapevine lost 44k. La Viña was 289k. We were in the red 713k, the first time in the red since 2008. Expenses with software/technology for our new general service office. AA had just finished migrating to the cloud (aka, the internet), meaning that everyone at GSO could work from home during COVID-19.

\$1 in the year 1935 went into the basket. That same "dollar" today equals \$18.84 with inflation.

Current Situation

Average monthly cost of 1.4 million. Due to COVID-19 individual contributions dropped a modest

amount and literature sales dropped way down, leaving a \$700k shortfall for April. Because of this we drew down 3 million from our reserve fund. *This is what a prudent reserve is for – this is OK.*

What can we do? Make sure we continue the core of our 7th tradition to our home group, then help our intergroup, central offices, H&I. When that is done we can support our General Service Office in New York.

AA is still here and providing services.

Day 3

The committees gave a total of 15 recommendations and 15 committee considerations to the Trustees Committee. A Consideration means they want the Trustees Committee to discuss amongst themselves. Typically and historically the Trustees implement a Committee Consideration or at least give reasons why it's not feasible. [See the upcoming Conference report for further details.]

Recommendation: Update Bridging The Gap pamphlet.

Consideration – open the call for stories to more accurately reflect our fellowship. AA for the Older Alcoholic.

The Grapevine committee changed its name to the Grapevine and La Viña Committee.

Preamble – the committee did not want to mess around with changing men & women for 'people' because they wanted a more thorough look at the AA Preamble so they can come back with a range of options for next year. Other areas of the Preamble may be updated.

Instagram Account – more research and discussion needed. To be brought back next year.

31 of the Agenda Topics were automatically forwarded to next year's conference.

We didn't want to risk doing anything more than the essential business of AA [due to this being the first virtual Conference]. We didn't know prior to the Conference if we'd be able to reach an informed group conference [virtually].

Google Grants and the 7th Tradition. The Finance Committee has seen a report and believes the rest of the committee should see it as well. Further research is needed.

Literature. Only two recommendations. A new video is approved. Accepted the new policy on updating literature. This is a big deal and should allow AA to update literature much faster and more responsibly than in the past. Literature staff should now be able to INITIATE changes and not have to wait for direction from the once-a-year Conference Committee. [See *District Question section below for more detailed information.*] Consideration for plain-language literature. More information will be coming and will be discussed at the conference next year.

Trustees Committee: One name suggested was an improper nomination due to it not meeting rules. This brought much drama and the proposed alternate slate of directors was ruled Out Of Order. The disagreements were done well and the disagreements were not disagreeable.

Public Information – cut short due to being out of time.

DAY 4

Day 4 began with the chair of the general service board making an amends regarding the Trustee Committee drama. "It's clear that we're all human." "We trust our trusted servants."

Public Info

Google AdWords – only thing holding this back was relating to a privacy policy.

Accepted report on the development of new full-face PSAs.

The Podcast idea was liked but will be heard again next year.

FLOOR ACTION – PSA for minorities

FLOOR ACTION – halt Google AdWords actions until a report comes in.

Special Action – suspension of conference rules for 40 minutes in order to discuss the slate of Directors (Trustee Committee drama from the previous day) and how that would go forward.

Very close to a new Service Manual.

Archive Committee liked the idea of a new AA History Book and will report on this next year.

Report on staple-free literature and digital distribution in correctional facilities. Digital distribution is difficult as it's a facility-by-facility operation.

The pamphlet "AA in Your Community" will not be discontinued but instead an updated draft will be presented next year.

More discussion about the Lord's Prayer again on Day 4.

Sadness on the decision of canceling the convention in Detroit this year. *See AA.org for a virtual convention.*

The No Rules Session.

Session closed with Michelle apologizing for a mistake that occurred in materials dealing with nominations to the AA World Services Board.

Bottom line and big takeaway was that a mistake had occurred. When detected, the Board of AA was split on what to do about it. The Conference was also split on what to do, so they handed it back to the Board.

The Board eventually reached substantial unanimity. The Conference handing it back (with their thoughts) helped the Board figure out what to do. In the end a slate of directors was approved, including one vacancy.

FLOOR ACTIONS

We didn't vote on the merits of the floor action, but they all went through a filter of "will this survive a motion to decline"? Six did.

- Revise those pie charts in the 7th Tradition Pamphlet
- Develop a PSA geared towards minorities
- Approve the A.A.W.S. slate as originally submitted
- Update the Pamphlet A.A. For the Black and African American Alcoholic
- Approve the A.A.W.S. slate as amended
- Hold off on Google AdWords/Grant

"AA moves slowly." Teddy would be surprised if anything happens during the course of the year.

The virtual Conference closed with the Serenity Prayer in French, Spanish and English, each being read by a native speaker in that language.

2021 conference proposed dates in April. Hopefully this will be in person, but we have learned what to do and what not to do when running a virtual Conference.

QUESTIONS FROM OUR DISTRICT FOR OUR DELEGATE

Q: We have new GSRs tonight that may be overwhelmed. Is there a takeaway you'd like to offer them for someone brand-new to General Service?

A: The global 'take away' is that when AA was founded, one of the first questions that arose was "Can the message, the Language Of the Heart, be transmitted other than face-to-face?" Again, it came up. Could the group conscience arise virtually? What we did was basically kept things running along – we didn't make so many decisions this year but instead kept everything on the boil ('on the back burner') but kept the biggest question "How do we bridge this gap between having a basic text written so many years ago and how is that made relevant today?" That's a huge question as far as access and accessibility. Even if we were meeting in person we would only have been able to kick the ball off this year and not make any decisions. Everyone I know in AA has an opinion on that issue. That's going to come back next year at the Conference.

The big takeaway was that we started the discussion for changes to our big book.

Q: How would it work, changes to AA materials in corrections? A: We did go into quite a bit more detail when they gave their report as to what that meant. Talked about the relevance of our existing videos. There's a number of vendors in this space, as prison libraries switch from paper and books to digital, a number of vendors work with the correctional facilities providing digital content (as I understand it). The way into the digital space is through these vendors. Our GSO is working with one or two of those vendors.

Q: Is it only in places where computers are available? A: No, that's what staple-free materials are for. Answer from Karen on that committee: Prisons across the country are getting different servers that are allowing digital access on tablets that are given to certain inmates in the prison. The question that we need to look at is "how are we going to distribute that?" Future logistics could be entirely different from what they are now.

Q: How are discussions on gender pronouns he/him vs. they – how are they being discussed or is there any broader context on that? A: This year that was the focus, the preamble. It was discussed in groups and the fellowship at large. For the purposes of the conference, as it was a committee issue the discussion happened in the Grapevine Committee, we were only allowed to ask questions and not be involved in the specific committee discussion.

I blended all group consciences that I received into one large spreadsheet and I will be passing that along to the next conference committee chair. That information is not lost - it will get passed on.

Q: Updating literature quickly without conference approval... what's the context on that and can you give more information? A: A new policy for updating our literature. It's a five-step procedure with checks and balances and the 5th step is Conference Approval. Anything that says Conference Approved

Literature will be conference approved still. Any literature change that needs to be initiated can now be initiated from our literature office. The conference will ultimately get to see it and sign off on it (or not). The conference meets only once a year and there's a lot going on, sometimes we get tied up focusing on a minor detail like a comma here or there. This will speed things up greatly. Conference Approval is still the 5th and final step

Q: The plain-language big book, can you elaborate? A: The literature committee, one of the things they did was meeting before the conference (like all committees) to decide what they would deal with at the conference and what would be referred to the next year's conference. They realized there needed to be better information shared with the fellowship on what that entails. They saw a great presentation on this and wanted to get that presentation to the rest of the fellowship. At the beginning of August we should hear more information on many things that will be going forward, including accessibility of our Big Book.

Q: My group had large and passionate discussions about the gender neutral pronouns. What does it mean that it's been forwarded to next year or forwarded to a committee? What should I tell my group? A: the 2021 key (in a spreadsheet) means it's forwarded to next year's conference. Advisory Action means sent to the conference by a 2/3rds vote and that means it's an *instruction* to our General Service Board to implement. A Consideration means they want the Trustees Committee to discuss amongst themselves. Typically and historically the Trustees implement a Committee Consideration or at least give reasons why it's not feasible.

Things that were not voted on are pushed to next year and are sent to the Trustees Conference Committee, the group that puts on the Conference.

We didn't vote anything down this year.

Specifically the discussion around gender neutral language and Preamble, that is still very much alive. The Grapevine Committee really liked the spirit of that and are keeping that conversation alive and are broadening it out further, specifically in the Preamble. There may be other things in the Preamble that need a refresh. So they asked the Grapevine committee to think on it more and bring it back to the Committee for next year.

Q: What step are we on for approval? A: This is different, the Preamble is 'owned' by the Grapevine and not Literature. It's handled in the Grapevine Committee. However, other literature changes: "The new policy allows for them to update the pamphlets and other materials ... updates for diversity and inclusivity." The forwards, Doctor's Opinion, first 164 pages, Dr. Bob's Nightmare, Appendices [*and one more the Recording Secretary missed*] are specifically excluded from the new literature approval changes.

Q: How did COVID and Shelter in Place affect your ability to gather group consciences, and was that related to why many of the big book changes were passed over or took so long?

A: If anything I felt better informed this year because we knew that we were facing a challenge, so we created so many different ways for GSRs to inform the Delegate. When I was reading the group consciences I was having spiritual experiences. I knew intellectually they were gathered via Zoom, but I felt like I was at the group business meeting where people were talking to each other. One of the unforeseen consequences of COVID-19, we don't have to go back to how things were before exactly, we have other things we can do now. The way conferences gather information have changed. People took a lot more time writing things out this year than they did last year. Strange to say, counterintuitively I felt better informed. I can't say what it was like for every GSR trying to get an informed group conscience from their group, but from the array, length and depth of the opinions I got I felt really well informed. The big question mark before the virtual conference was would we be able to reach a group conscience

for AA as a whole by virtual means. Coming out we know that we can do it and we need more time to do it. We had less times this year because 135 people had arranged their schedules to be available for 1.5 weeks in April. When rescheduled to May, everyone had to reschedule for 4 days. If we had made it 1.5 weeks not everyone would have been available.

7th Tradition and Treasurer's Report

Beth Saunders, Treasurer. 7th Tradition is via Venmo: @Beth_Saunders. Note any amount you would like split out to go to H&I.

Treasury details went out via email for June financials. Payment made for another year for our PO Box and the rent for the box was raised slightly.

Liaison for San Quentin Sponsorship

Steve Runng. Men with 5 years or more of sobriety are being sought as sponsors for San Quentin inmates.

Intergroup Liaison

Allison – This Thursday at 6:30 is our 2nd Town Hall meeting to discuss returning to in-person AA meetings eventually. They are available for everyone. Discuss what it would look like returning to in-person AA meetings. This next will focus on liability, waivers, and hybrid AA meetings. Minutes are available with a Q&A of the first town hall on the Intergroup Website. See:

<https://aasfmarin.org/resuming>

Our financial rating is still Excellent. Money from your groups can definitely go to GSO.

The archives committee is collecting information “during these historic times”. If you have any local things to commemorate what’s happening in AA right now, let Jackie B. or me know.

Previous AA Minutes were approved as written.

New GSR Introductions

Joey, GSR of the Trans GNC meeting that started in September, Wednesday at 7:30. Rachel, GSR for Blue Book Special, 11 a.m. on Sunday that previously met at 2900 24th Street but now meets online. Lori, GSR Reflections on the Bay, 8:00 am meeting born via Zoom but formed from people in San Francisco.

Deena, co-GSR for Bernal New Day. Jim, GSR for The Niners which meets at 8:00 am on Sunday at the Gratitude Center and now via Zoom. Tommy, alt-GSR for Each Day a new Beginning Mon-Fri.

If you have any General Service Questions, email sfgeneralservice@gmail.com or call your Service Sponsor.

Summer Assembly on August 8th. IT's a workshop Assembly done virtually. It will cover topics including Talk about Our Financial Future, when Outside Issues affect our Primary Purpose, and Inclusion and Diversity. August 8th via Zoom.

Elections for our Area and District are this November.

Four Things the Area wants your Group to Discuss

- 1 – Discuss ideas and options to operate CNCA on a more financially prudent basis.
- 2 – Discuss content available on the Area website, and what might be added to improve communication.
<https://www.cnca06.org>
- 3 – Discuss how we can best strengthen the composition and leadership of our future trusted servants.
- 4 – Discuss ideas on how to convey information regarding Area Assembly motions to the GSRs.

Beth: Let your groups know I am very grateful for their contribution to the District.

AA Birthdays

Julie S. Nine years. Jackie B. Fourteen years. Jeff S. Six years.

Chelsea: my COVID home group is 7 days a week at 9:00 am called A Way Out. Find it on AASFMarin.org. It's a big book study.

Jackie – the Gratitude Center is open for indoor hybrid meetings. The Health Department visited. The office of the City of San Francisco's City Attorney has deemed that AA meetings in San Francisco are considered an Essential Service according to the health department. Indoor meetings are allowed as long as they are 12 or fewer people, social distancing and masks at all time. That meeting is available every day at 6:00 pm for a hybrid meeting.

Meeting closed at 9:01 pm with the Responsibility Statement.