

Highlights from A.A.W.S.

June 15, 2018

The A.A. World Services Board met on Friday, June 15, 2018, at the General Service Office, 475 Riverside Drive, NY, NY. Chair of the A.A.W.S. Board, David N., welcomed all in attendance and opened the meeting with a moment of silence.

General Manager's Report

General Manager Greg T. provided the following report:

Administration – Since the conclusion of the 68th General Service Conference, the General Service Office has been implementing Conference Advisory Actions, as well as sharing additional committee considerations for appropriate follow-up. The office is also supporting the General Service Board's Communications Audit with the involvement of staff members on the core team and the ad hoc committee of the General Service Board (GSB).

Administrative Services – The Records department continues to process incoming work as well as cleaning up the database in preparation for the migration of information into the new ERP (enterprise resource planning) database. Conversations with an architectural firm continue regarding additional renovations on the 11th floor. There has also been discussion with a mechanical and engineering firm about rectifying the air flow on the floor before any additional renovations are done. The International Directory was published and sent to A.A.W.S. warehouses for distribution.

Archives – Since the beginning of the year, Archives staff has responded to over 670 inquiries. The temporary scanning assistant has completed deciphering and typing Dr. Bob's handwritten letters. The collection consists of 92 letters written by Dr. Bob and addressed to either Ruth Hock, Bobby B. or Bill W. They span more than a decade, from September 1938 through September 1950.

Human Resources – The past several months have been very busy with recruiting activities for multiple open positions as well as transitioning a number of employees from temporary to permanent positions.

Information Technology – The department been meeting with our implementation partner for the new ERP system. The new ERP software will replace the existing financial, purchase order and inventory management systems, Fellowship databases, e-commerce sites (i.e., online bookstores), online contributions and some of the assignment databases. A go-live date of February 1, 2019 is anticipated for the new software. The website design team met with the new website design vendor regarding prioritization and goal alignment.

May – June Travel:

May 4-6: Meetings with warehouse management and re-

tired French translation team, Montreal, Quebec.

May 11-12: District 36 A.A. Archives Gathering, Hershey, PA.

June 8-10: Western Canada Regional Forum, Regina, Saskatchewan.

Staff Report

Communication Services – The A.A.W.S. YouTube video copyright notices, the custom URL and the About Us page have all been implemented on the YouTube channel. The address for the page is: <https://www.youtube.com/c/AlcoholicsAnonymousWorldServicesInc>.

Conference – The lists of Conference Advisory Actions, Committee Considerations and Recommendations/Floor Actions that did not become Advisory Actions were posted to the Conference dashboard in all three languages.

C.P.C. – As liaison to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, the C.P.C. coordinator attended their quarterly Advisory Council meeting and participated with the local C.P.C. committee staffing a booth at the VA Healthcare Summit.

Corrections – Recording for the dubbed version of the video "A New Freedom" in French and Spanish has begun. The Corrections Correspondence Service has a waiting list of over 100 male A.A. members. An update was sent out to local corrections committees and delegates. So far in 2018, over 645 requests from incarcerated A.A. members have been answered by outside A.A. members.

International – Preparations continue for the 25th World Service Meeting. The desk has been working with an interdepartmental team to implement the International A.A. Data Map to be introduced at Regional Forums by the trustees-at-large.

Literature – The summer issue of *Box 4-5-9* is being finalized for distribution. Largely devoted to reporting from the 68th General Service Conference, the summer issue will also include articles on the Navajo translation of *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the concept of corporate poverty as it relates to A.A., and sharing from current and former Class A trustees on some common myths and misconceptions about A.A.

Nominating – The Nominating desk has notified delegates and appropriate area committee officers regarding upcoming

vacancies that will occur following the 2019 General Service Conference.

Public Information – The video public service announcement “Changes” is in post-production. This will include French and Spanish versions. The young people’s video approved at the 2018 General Service Conference is being added to aa.org.

Regional Forums – The recently-approved young people’s video and the PSA “Changes” were scheduled to play at the Western Canada Regional Forum and will continue to screen at forums throughout 2018 and 2019. Preparations for the next three Regional Forums continue along with planning for the 2018 Local Forum.

Treatment and Accessibilities – The ASL video version of the “Update on ASL Big Book and Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions Video Project” was produced and distributed to Conference members and accessibilities, elder and remote communities chairs.

Technology/Communication/Services (TCS)

The TCS Committee reviewed the minutes of G.S.O.’s Website Committee, along with progress reports and updates on G.S.O.’s A.A. website analytics.

Oral reports were given by the director of I.T. Services and the Group Services assignment. The director of I.T. services noted that work on the International Directory and data map is almost finished; testing of the new ERP system is targeted to begin in October, with finance to be the first component to be rolled out. The Group Services coordinator reported that the office is collecting information identifying additional databases used by staff and staff assistants in support of the ERP process; A.A. Guidelines are being revised as needed.

The committee discussed the A.A.W.S./G.S.O. app to be launched in conjunction with the new A.A. website, which would include the Meeting Guide, Big Book, Daily Reflections and alert/messaging capabilities.

Clickstream analytics were reviewed for the “Need Help with a Drinking Problem” page on aa.org; the Website Design Committee gave a brief progress report; and revisions were reviewed for the “About” page and copyright notices on the A.A.W.S./G.S.O. YouTube channel.

The Board approved the following recommendation brought forward by the TCS Committee:

- That the 2018 First Quarter Website Analytics and the 2018 First Quarter Report on G.S.O.’s A.A. Website Activities be forwarded to the trustees’ Committee on Public Information.

Publishing

The committee accepted the Publishing Department report, highlighting the following information:

Gross sales: April gross sales are above budget with actual gross sales at \$1,137,668, which is a \$9,921 (.88%) positive variance against budget of \$1,127,747.

Web sales: Total web sales (A.A.W.S. Online Bookstores) for April stand at \$759,744, which accounts for about 68% of total sales for the company. Sales for April on the B2B online store (primarily intergroup/central offices and other bulk or-

ders) are \$510,870, and B2C sales (individual customers) stand at \$248,874.

Digital books: Total e-book gross sales through April stand at \$75,050, with 19,156 units distributed.

Participation at 25th Annual Red Road Convention: GSB chair Michele Grinberg (Class A nonalcoholic trustee) and Publishing Director David R. attended the 25th Annual Red Road Convention in Albuquerque, New Mexico, to deliver a presentation celebrating the completion of the Navajo Big Book.

Current A.A. literature translation projects are underway in Brazil, Bali, Czech Republic, Denmark, Morocco, Poland and Ukraine.

As a result of the 2018 General Service Conference, several literature projects and updates are underway, including new and revised pamphlets, the updated 2018-2020 A.A. Service Manual and the 2018 General Service Conference Final Report.

The committee discussed preliminary reports on the development of a strategic plan to ensure that A.A.W.S. Conference-approved literature is available to all (i.e., visual, auditory, and learning challenges); exploration of all available opportunities for digital distribution of A.A.W.S. titles; and warehousing and fulfillment processes.

The Board approved the following recommendations brought forward by the Publishing Committee:

- That the pamphlet “This Is A.A.” (large print) be priced at \$0.25 per unit in English, French and Spanish.
- That the pamphlet “Frequently Asked Questions” (large print) be priced at \$0.35 per unit in English, French and Spanish.
- That the “Anonymity in the Digital Age” placard in the medium size (11” x 17”) be priced at \$11.00 per unit, in addition to the small size (8.5” x 11”) at \$8.50 per unit.

Finance

G.S.O.’s four-month unaudited financial report indicated that gross sales were \$10,912 (-.22%) behind budget, contributions were \$136,216 (5.32%) ahead of budget and total operating expenses were \$102,119 (1.70%) more than budget. Net loss for the four months was \$64,895 compared with a budgeted loss of \$117,685.

While the gross sales are quite close to budget, it was noted that non-AA literature sales are down for the first five months of the year as compared to last year. Contributions were strong for April and total revenue is ahead of budget by \$154,909.

It was noted that the La Viña support will now appear on G.S.O. financial statements, and with this inclusion of the La Viña service activities, there is a net loss for the four months of \$94,667 compared with a budgeted loss of \$154,137.

As for expenses, the salaries are over budget by \$46,386 (\$275,883 more than April 2017). This is an expected variance, however, as there were eight new positions added since April of 2017.

Office Service and Expenses are over budget by \$74,680. This variance is due largely to unexpected audiovisual charges

from the 2018 Conference. Additionally, Travels, Meals and Accommodations are \$232,157 greater than 2017 when the Conference was held in Rye, New York instead of New York City.

Selling expenses are \$107,218 under budget as compared to last year. This savings is due mainly to diminishing credit card processing fees. The Finance and IT departments have brought the functions of e-commerce and compliance in-house which has nullified the need for a third-party vendor.

Internal Audit Committee

The committee reported that an RFP (request for proposal) related to the development and performance of an Internal

Audit Program of all of A.A.W.S.'s non-financial internal controls was distributed to two firms. The committee also reviewed archival documents regarding the Disaster Recovery Plan, including past A.A.W.S. Board actions, and will continue discussion at future meetings.

Nominating Committee

The Board approved the following recommendation brought forward by the Nominating Committee:

- That the committee's procedure no. 2 in the Composition, Scope and Procedure be amended to read: "Makes recommendations reached in committee by a vote of substantial unanimity."