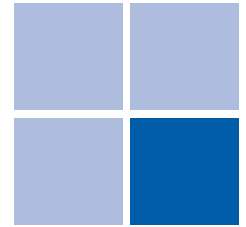


Quarterly Report *from* GSO



Activities of the General Service Board Including A.A. World Services, Inc., AA Grapevine, Inc.

This is a confidential bulletin, for use only within A.A.

First Quarter, 2024

General Service Board Meeting

The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc. held its quarterly meeting at the Westin New York Hotel at Times Square on Monday, January 29, 2024. Mike L., Interim Chair the General Service Board, presided. All committees met during the weekend. Highlights of committee reports appear below:

Archives

The committee reviewed proposed changes to the GSO Archives Deaccession Form that was initially approved in 2009. Following discussion, the committee accepted the changes to the GSO Archives Deaccession Form.

Conference

The committee recommended to the General Service Board that the request for the General Secretary and Chair of the General Service Board of Great Britain be approved to attend the 2024 U.S./Canada General Service Conference as observers.

Conference actions with Simple Majority but failed to have substantial unanimity: The committee thoughtfully discussed concerns raised by Conference members and A.A. members about the section in the Final Conference Report, "Recommendations Passed by Simple Majority." The committee noted that this section comes from a 1986 Report and Charter Advisory Action, "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 will be duly noted in the Conference Report." The committee discussed the ambiguity of the Conference Group Conscience when a recommendation that fails by a Simple Majority is automatically forwarded to a Trustees' Committee as a consideration and felt that this could unintentionally foster disunity within the Fellowship. The committee noted how the Final Conference Report is used to clearly communicate the Group Conscience from the General Service Conference,

and raised concerns that the Simple Majority section could lead to misunderstandings and confusion. The committee felt that sentiment within the Fellowship may have shifted since the 1986 Advisory Action and agreed to forward a request to the 2024 Conference Committee on Report and Charter to discuss if the practice of communicating items that failed to achieve substantial unanimity as suggestions is still desirable, and if the Conference would like to continue the reporting of these items separately from other items that did not carry from a General Service Conference. The staff secretary will include additional sharing from the committee as background to aid a discussion about this topic.

Subcommittee on Inventory: At their January 12, 2024, meeting, the committee reviewed and accepted the final report from the Inventory Subcommittee. The committee expressed their gratitude to the Inventory Subcommittee for their work on the GSB Inventory and the plan for a Conference inventory to take place at the 75th GSC. The committee agreed to forward the 2025 Conference Inventory Plan to the 2024 Conference Committee on Agenda. The committee noted that a summary of activities related to the GSB inventory will be included in the GSB Board report at the 74th GSC. The committee expressed their gratitude for the work of the Inventory Subcommittee and accepted the report.

Cooperation with the Professional Community

The staff secretary reported the CPC Service Cards are live on the GSO website for CPC Committees to download and use in their local service work. The digital template includes two sections on the card that allows for input of local contact information or a locally developed QR code to be placed on it by local A.A. members performing CPC service. This card can be produced as a poster, flyer, distributed digitally, or added into a presentation.

The trustee's committee received an update from the AAWS Publishing Department on the continued development of the "Pamphlet for the Mental Health

Professionals” which included a working title and look forward to a progress report or draft language at the July meeting.

Corrections

Service material has been developed on Facilitating Online Meetings in Correctional Settings and will be available through the Corrections Desk and the Corrections Kit shortly.

The American Correctional Association meeting in August 2024 was identified as a high priority for a presentation to Corrections Professionals from the United States and Canada.

There are ongoing discussions about how to effectively communicate information about tablet literature in Corrections settings to the Fellowship. Service material is being developed and a survey will be distributed through the National Warden’s Association to gain a facility-level understanding of the availability of AAWS and AA Grapevine literature.

Finance

GSO Financial Results

The committee reviewed the GSO preliminary unaudited financial results for the year ended December 31, 2023. As in prior years, only unaudited 2023 revenue information was reported. Unaudited 2023 financial statements including expenses are scheduled to be completed the week of February 5 and will be distributed to all Board members at that time. Audited 2023 financial statements will be provided to delegates at the General Service Conference.

Gross literature sales for 2023 are \$14,489,002 (93% of budget). This is \$1,092,998 lower than the budgeted amount of \$15,582,000. Preliminary cost of goods sold for 2023 was \$7,297,877 (96% of budget), making the Literature Gross Margin \$7,191,125 (90% of budget). Gross margin is \$758,875 lower than the budgeted amount of \$7,950,000.

Contributions for 2023 are \$10,872,239 (104% of budget). This is \$372,239 more than the budgeted amount of \$10,500,000. December 2023 contributions were \$1,684,109, the most received in one month in over four years. Contributions received in 2023 surpassed the previous annual record of \$10,782,983 set in 2021.

Total revenue for 2023 was \$18,515,501 (99% of budget), This is \$275,819 less than the budgeted amount of \$18,791,320.

GSO 2024 Budget

Work started in September 2023 with financial strategic planning and documenting a timeline which tells

the story of the budget process. A budget that shows the different phases of the budget process, expense reductions made during the process, and an itemized list of reductions and deferred projects was shared with the committee.

In the 2024 budget, total operating revenue is \$19,642,359. Operating expense before depreciation and before GSB support of La Viña is \$19,024,414. GSB support of La Viña is projected to be \$569,512. The bottom line is a surplus of a little less than \$50,000.

Gross Literature Sales are budgeted at \$16,817,345. This is based on unit sales remaining the same as 2023. However, the dollars increased to reflect sales for a full year at the new prices implemented in April 2023. The budget does not include the selling of any new titles. If approved by the Conference, new items will be incorporated in the budget at the time of the reforecast in July.

Contributions are budgeted at \$10,500,000, the same as the 2023 budget and \$372,239 less than the 2023 actual.

The Trustees’ Finance and Budgetary Committee recommended that the General Service Board approve the 2024 AAWS/GSB Budget with Contributions Revenue of \$10,500,000, Gross Margin on Literature Sales of \$8,492,759, Operating Expenses of \$19,024,414, Support for La Viña of \$569,512 and a net income before depreciation of \$48,433. Deducting depreciation of \$1,020,000 and the budgeted distribution from the International Literature Fund of \$30,000, the net budgeted deficit for 2024 is \$1,001,567.

Reserve Fund

As of December 31, 2023, the Reserve Fund balance net of Grapevine subscription liability is \$12,630,862 which is 7.30 months of 2023 GSO/GV operating expenses.

The Reserve Fund report was accepted by the committee.

Grapevine Financial Results

For the year ending December 31, 2023, only preliminary revenue was reported. Total circulation of the Grapevine magazine and app was 55,412. This compared with a budget of 52,056 and 2022 actual of 59,070.

Total revenue for the year was \$2,562,978 which is \$50,978 more than budgeted and \$83,882 less than the \$2,646,860 achieved in 2022.

Total gross margin for the year was \$1,230,869 which is \$42,474 more than budgeted and \$192,859 less than the \$1,423,728 achieved in 2022.

The Grapevine financial report was accepted by the committee.

La Viña Financial Results

For the preliminary unaudited results for December 31, 2023, total circulation for La Viña was 6,484 compared to 6,732 budgeted and 6,415 in December 2022. Total revenue sales from the magazine and app were \$247,356 compared with a budget of \$209,755. Total gross margin was \$144,316 compared with a budget of \$110,694.

The Trustees' Finance and Budgetary Committee, based upon updated subscription data, approved the adjustment in the calculated amount of the subscription liability to be held in the Reserve Fund from \$573,012 to \$540,000, allowing for \$33,012 in excess funds to be withdrawn from the Reserve Fund and provided to Grapevine. The Funding percentage of this liability at 34% did not change.

The La Viña financial report was accepted by the committee.

Grapevine and La Viña 2024 Budget

The budget significantly lowers the shortfall for Grapevine and La Viña. It also provides the resources to expand the sales of magazine subscriptions, app subscriptions, books, audio books and other products. Highlights include the following: Reduction of travel, subscription price increase, and efforts to increase subscriptions to "GV Complete." There are three new products this year: Prayer and Meditation audio book in February, Our Twelve Steps in April, Emotional Sobriety audio book in September. Reductions include less freelance help and more work to be done in-house.

Work continues on long-term plans to return La Viña finances to pre-pandemic levels by increasing print and complete subscriptions and lowering costs.

The Trustees' Finance and Budgetary Committee recommended that the General Service Board approve the 2024 Grapevine (excluding La Viña) budget with Gross Margin on Literature and Subscription sales of \$1,907,115, Operating expenses of \$2,499,287, Expected interest on unearned subscription receipts invested in the Reserve Fund of \$9,600, resulting in a net budgeted deficit of \$582,572.

The Trustees' Finance and Budgetary Committee recommended that the General Service Board approve the 2024 La Viña Budget consisting of Gross Margin on Literature and Subscription sales of \$118,861, Expenses of \$688,373, and funding from the General Service Board, per Advisory Action, in the amount of \$569,512, resulting in a net result of \$0.

Liquidity Update

The GSO 2024 budget is expected to be cash flow positive, however GV/LV is not. The Grapevine shortfall

is expected and was highlighted in the five-year plan when investing in the app. The five-year plan also showed the need for Reserve Fund withdrawal to continue to support the app for years 1, 2, and 3 of the plan. The cash position for GSO is better now than it has been in months. However, there is still a backlog in paying vendors. A Reserve Fund drawdown will be necessary to convert to the digital age with Grapevine and to emerge from Covid with AAWS.

AAWS has monitored cash position on a weekly basis and if cash had been needed imminently, a meeting would have been called in accordance with the Reserve Fund Policy. AAWS wanted to complete its efforts in expense reductions and finish the work of the 2024 budget process to prepare for the year ahead before recommending a Reserve Fund withdrawal.

The Trustees' Finance and Budgetary Committee recommended that the General Service Board authorize the withdrawal of \$1,064,652 from the Reserve Fund, to be allocated as follows:

\$500,000 to the General Service Board to ensure sufficient cash on hand to meet liquidity requirements in the second quarter of 2024, which includes \$1.1 million of Conference expenses. This is in response to the cash on hand deficiency carried over since the end of 2022 that was not fully mitigated by positive cash flow results in 2023 that resulted from the generous commitment to self-support from the Fellowship that exceeded both the previous annual record and 2023 reforecast budget for contributions, close management of expenses, and collections of receivables. This draw plus expected positive cash flow in the first quarter of 2024 will fully fund the expenses expected to be paid in the second quarter of 2024.

\$564,652 to Grapevine to fund year three of the Grapevine five-year plan covering the period January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2026. This five-year plan, reviewed by the Trustees' Finance and Budgetary Committee at its January 2023 meeting, called for capital investment and operating support of approximately \$1.1 million in year two (2023) and operating support of approximately \$565k in year three (2024), with the expectation that Grapevine operations would be cash flow positive and not require operating support starting in year four (2025).

Finance Strategy Subcommittee

This subcommittee has met twice since its inception and has worked on scope and intercompany finances. The scope of this subcommittee is to define the flow and impact of AAWS/GSB/GV intercompany payments, to compile information about current efforts and future opportunities for cost containment/revenue enhancements and lastly to discuss fiscal opportunities with an ultimate eye toward sustaining services and strengthening the

Reserve Fund and reviewing the investment policy of the Reserve Fund. The subcommittee created a schedule of payments between the Grapevine, GSB and AAWS.

The subcommittee will examine intercompany allocations, how intercompany balances are determined, and how this is presented to the Finance and Budgetary Committee. They will also help develop a process of how allocations are charged to La Viña. The committee accepted the report of the subcommittee.

Fourth Quarter Financial Report to Fellowship

The fourth quarter financial report will have the revenue numbers, but there is always the potential of an audit adjustment. Expenses are still being worked on and can change when the audit is finalized. When the final audit report is issued, it will be shared with the Conference. The committee decided to provide a revenue-based Financial Report with the budget draft and an explanatory document detailing the budget process and the reductions made during the process. A final report including expenses will be provided at the Conference.

General Sharing Session

The topic of the Winter Quarterly General Sharing Session was “Leadership.” Robert L., Trustee-at-Large Canada, and Vera F., AAWS Nontrustee Director, presented.

Robert began by saying “The leadership I am going to talk about is not just for servants engaged in the general service structure, but also for those people who actively contribute to carrying the message to the suffering alcoholic.” He referenced page 106 of *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, “Here we turn outward toward our fellow alcoholics who are still in distress. Here we experience the kind of giving that asks no reward.”

He shared how his sponsor, for example, was a leader. “His peace, his quiet smile, his ability to be attentive, his compassion and benevolence attracted me to him and to follow in his footsteps.” Robert noted that we need to remember the idea of attraction rather than promotion. Leadership is based on a kind of joyous humility, which “amounts to a clear recognition of what and who we really are, followed by a sincere attempt to become what we could be” (pg. 58, *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*). He shared, “I became a journalist, a writer rather than an electrician or an accountant, for example. I have less difficulty using my pen than screwing in a light bulb in a lamp; and for me two and two can make twenty-two instead of four.”

Robert then noted how Concepts III and IX remind us that a good leader will be able to listen attentively and sometimes be flexible to change some or all their ideas, or, sometimes, stand their ground without becoming an-

gry or arrogant. There are few better ways of getting to know ourselves and forging true patience than through virulent adversity. In service, as in life, the pursuit of emotional sobriety and personal growth boils down to the precept that “It is a spiritual axiom that every time we are disturbed, no matter what the cause, there is something wrong with us” (pg. 90, *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*). There is no leadership without sponsorship.

He then reflected on Bill W.’s essay on Concept IX (on page C32), “What the sponsor does and says, how well he estimates the reactions of his prospects, how well he times and makes his presentation, how well he handles criticisms, and how well he leads his prospect on by personal spiritual example — these qualities of leadership can make all the difference, often the difference between life and death.”

Robert ended by sharing how “(Bill) was the first Trustee-at-large when he visited Norway, England and many other countries which now have well-established general service structures. Perhaps the finest example of his vision is that which led him to write the Concepts, so that the Fellowship would survive him. This foresight has ensured nothing less than the future of the Fellowship. I hope all of us do the same in unity.”

Vera shared on the topic of “servant leadership.” She began by noting, “In reading the history of the General Sharing Session, I learned that the topic was covered in the January 1978 General Service Board Sharing Session. Robert Greenleaf, a great friend of A.A., founded the ‘Servant Leader Movement,’ which holds the ideal of replacing self-interest with service to others. Servant leadership is all about the people you serve, which directly aligns with the spiritual principles of Alcoholics Anonymous.”

She noted that in Tradition Two, Bill wrote: “Our leaders are but trusted servants. They do not govern.” Tradition Two reminds us there is only one authority. Nonalcoholics might read those words and wonder: “Where does A.A. get its direction?” “Who runs it?” “How does anything get done around here?” Tradition Two answers this question. No one gives spiritual advice, judges anyone else’s conduct, or issues orders. We work together using the principle of cooperation versus control. We work together in unity recognizing the ultimate authority, a loving Higher Power that resides in our group conscience.

Vera then shifted to her personal experience with these principles. “As a nontrustee director on AAWS Corporate board I serve at the pleasure of the General Service Board and the members of A.A. And it is through delegated authority and responsibility that I can work on behalf of the members of Alcoholics Anonymous. I am

not the boss, and I realized that I didn't have to be the boss. My job was to help move the work forward. I felt a great sense of relief after that realization."

However, she shared that it signified a greater understanding of her fundamental responsibilities, "In essence, I consulted widely on new and important matters. I didn't pass the buck. And once I had sufficient general backing, I freely made decisions and put them into action within the framework of my defined authority and responsibility. That experience was another lesson in: It's okay not to have the answer, but what's not okay is not making the effort."

Vera reflected how preparation increases confidence, as well as efficiency, with the time it takes for this process to unfold. Striving for this is indispensable at all levels. Bill talked a great deal about the GSRs, the future leadership and building blocks of our structure. It takes a homegroup to make a Delegate.

She added a quote from the essay "Leadership in A.A.: Ever a Vital Need": "We have an abundance of men and women whose dedication, stability, vision, and special skills make them capable of dealing with every possible service assignment. We have only to seek folks out and trust them to serve us." Vera noted how "Throughout my time in A.A., I have been sought out, and trusted to serve. Those 'loving invitations' to participate have been and continue to be instrumental in a process of development and spiritual growth, both for me and for Alcoholics Anonymous."

She closed by saying, "Leadership in A.A. has required me to listen, to reserve judgement, put aside my agenda, my way of doing things for a new way, a new perspective, and a new experience. It has also given me multiple opportunities to learn how to make decisions and deal with criticism. Through sponsorship and sharing with other alcoholics, and participation in the committees I get to be a part of, I am invested in the future leadership of A.A. and in the future of A.A."

After the presentations, Deb K., moderator, invited sharing on the topic from those in attendance.

One delegate shared how to him leadership is exemplified in the people he sponsors that take the initiative to be helpful, even if they need help themselves to learn how to carry the message. He reflected how his own early recovery was wrought with self-sabotage as a defense mechanism and appreciated those that saw past it to help him stay.

A General Service Trustee shared how his own experience in corporate environments was that of a top-down leadership structure. In A.A. it's the opposite, we talk to people based on our own stories, and of how we are alike, make mistakes, and share a common humanity in our

disease. He shared how leading is also knowing when to listen to the group conscience, and different points of view, with the intention of learning and developing a perspective.

A General Service Trustee shared how in his professional experience he learned that leadership is the ability to influence a diverse group to reach a common goal. That process is sometimes messy, such as the battles that the Alcoholic Foundation had in the early years and how those carried over, but how those differences are essential to our functioning. Our role is to make sure A.A. is here for the next generation that needs it. For that reason, leadership exists at every level of our service structure with the guidance of spiritual principles.

A nontrustee director shared how she realized it was her last board weekend and was thinking about the impact that rotation has on our leadership. It is a way for new ideas and perspectives to come in that add value to the Fellowship. She spoke about the impact that her service and now rotation will have on her.

A staff member shared how to her humility is the gift to begin again and to take things one day at a time. Being an example means so much. Where she got sober, there was a speaker who talked about how what you do speaks so much louder than what you say. She feels that in her practice she will ask her Higher Power to use the best of her. She had thought initially that would help her to be her best, according to what she wants, but she has found that sometimes the best of her in a situation is showing her humanity, showing her strengths, and showing her weaknesses. She really had to embrace that, even when it seemed daunting. Although she doesn't always appear as she thinks she should, she knows she is showing up to the best of her ability in the right way. As a staff member, she is constantly reminded of the display of experiences from so many different areas and regions and the spirit of rotation.

A delegate shared how leadership looks a lot different than he thought it would. Being one of the oldest members of his home group, he was careful to sit back and let new members rise and not diminish their growth. He shared how he had noticed that in other groups he went to, the old timers are stuck in their ways and won't listen to new ideas and were power drivers.

A delegate shared how when she was a few months sober her sponsor and a few women enveloped her and got her involved in area service. She watched as those women got up on the dais; they were the delegate, alternate delegate, and area chair. She was smitten with their love and example of leadership. God tries his best not to call the qualified, but to qualify the called; she laughed how she had gotten here by making bad decisions! Now she is in a

room with some of the finest human beings. Many times, it's by making mistakes that we learn and grow.

A delegate shared how he loves to talk about leadership. He said there were two ways to look at it: Leadership as being a way of life, which is less about what is on a resume, than about inspiring people. He reminisced on the farewell talks given by outgoing General Service Trustees at the end of Conference last year.

The second way is to look at how we select our qualified leaders. He shared that the further down the triangle, he felt the more two dimensional the characters become. It was important to notice the difference of who someone is "on paper" versus seeing them interacting with others at an assembly. He encouraged more initial review, asking prospective trusted servants, "What's their vision for A.A.?"

A delegate shared how he learned a lot in the beginning from both good and bad leadership. He remembered when the GSR was not able to report back, so he tried to do better when, later on, he became GSR of his group.

A delegate shared her service journey had not been intentional, even from the beginning, as she had been mandated to attend meetings. Looking back, she reflected on how service had gotten her through many losses in life. "I got out of bed because I had service commitments and sponsees. One must freely give back to A.A. what is graciously received."

A Regional Trustee shared about the principle that good leaders eat last. He had learned that in the fire service, where he served for 30 years. He gave an example of a time he was on duty working on putting out a fire; that even in high pressure situations good leadership means practicing taking all the blame and none of the credit. The idea is to empower those around us to stand on their own two feet. This requires engagement, interacting with a new person, and taking the time to help the next person. He shared how those practices help to inspire others to be of service and gave the example of a past GSO employee who inspired him with his example.

A delegate shared how he thought he had all the answers when he first got here. His Higher Power sought fit to put him in a position to sit in the corner and listen to everybody else talk. It taught him a lot, especially as he got more involved in general service. It was hard at first dealing with imposter syndrome, until he got another learning experience. Watching leadership in action during COVID showed him the importance of showing up when needed and rising to the occasion with compassion. "We take the next right step."

Finally, the moderator closed the sharing session and remarked how Vera had initially talked about the group conscience, and how it was a beautiful place to end the

session around leadership. "For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern." She noted how Tradition Two shows up in seven of our Concept essays; that it is so important to keep in mind that the best source of leadership is the one we hear in the group conscience, that's where we can really have our confidence.

International

The committee accepted reports on the International Literature Fund and World Service Meeting Fund and observed that recent Seventh Tradition contributions to both funds reflect the awareness of countries of the need to assist each other to assure access to the A.A. message and support the World Service Meeting. The committee noted the effectiveness of suggestions from the 27th World Service Meeting's Policy, Admission and Finance Committee to encourage countries that are able to contribute funds to the World Service Meeting Fund.

The committee received reports from participation at the following recent international events: Meeting of Americas (REDELA) in Medellin, Colombia; European Service Meeting, in York, England and the V International Meeting on "Lifestyles v/s toxic Habits," in Guantanamo City, Cuba. The committee discussed the International Data Map project and agreed that due to current financial constraints the project and its budget be deferred to 2025. The committee recognized the significance of having information on global A.A. activity available for countries seeking to sponsor countries without A.A. presence. The committee noted the ongoing update of worldwide A.A. contact information at the International desk.

International Convention/Regional Forums

The IC/RF Subcommittee recommended that the subcommittee be reconstituted in July to continue the work identified in the Scope.

The committee received and accepted a revised schedule reflecting reduced Board/Staff Attendance. The staff secretary presented a revised Regional Forum budget for consideration. The committee accepted the revised budget and agreed to forward it to the Trustees' Finance and Budgetary Committee.

The committee secretary shared that the Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. Board forwarded a revised 2025 International Convention budget reflecting an increase in overhead costs from \$150,000 to \$522,165 and resulting in a deficit budget. AAWS requested the trustees' Committee on International Convention-Regional Forums revisit the previously approved registration fees set at the October 2023 GSB meeting to address the deficit. After thoughtful discussion the committee

recommended to the General Service Board that the 2025 International Convention Pre-Registration fee be increased from \$155.00 to \$160.00 (USD) per attendee and that the Full Registration fee be increased from \$180.00 to \$185.00 (USD) per attendee to correct the deficit budget.

The committee reviewed and accepted a tentative list of Program titles for the 2025 International Convention with minor revisions.

Literature

The committee reviewed the draft Plain Language Big Book manuscript and requested additional copyediting by the Publishing Department. The committee agreed to forward to the 2024 Conference Committee on Literature the Plain Language Big Book with the requested copyediting.

The committee also discussed the suggested titles submitted by the Plain Language Big Book subcommittee. After thoughtful discussion, the committee agreed upon one of the three titles which will appear on the draft manuscript that is being forwarded to the 2024 Conference Committee on Literature.

The committee discussed the draft logistics and timeline submitted by the Plain Language Big Book subcommittee. The committee also reviewed the draft “letter of understanding” outlining the confidentiality guidelines related to review of the manuscript (to ensure A.A.’s legal rights in the registration of the approved final draft of the manuscript with the U.S. Copyright Office, maintain the integrity of A.A. literature and ultimately our most valued asset which is A.A. unity).

The committee discussed the progress to date on the revision to the pamphlet “A.A. for the Native North American.” The project is moving along apace with a limited increase of submitted stories. Given that the original deadline of December 31, 2023, has passed, the committee agreed to extend the deadline to April 30, 2024, to give time for further story submissions. The staff secretary will revise the call out for stories with the new deadline and distribute accordingly.

Nominating

The committee reviewed all candidates’ resumes submitted for West Central and Western Canada regional trustees and found all candidates eligible for election at the General Service Conference in April 2024.

The committee reviewed the slates submitted for the General Service Board (GSB), Officers of GSB, A.A. World Services, Inc., and AA Grapevine, Inc. and agreed to forward each slate as presented to the General Service Board for approval.

The committee that the revised Procedure No. 14 — Selection of Chairperson of the General Service Board and presented it for adoption.

Public Information

“A.A. at a Glance” — The committee reviewed the revised draft flyer “A.A. at a Glance” and **agreed to forward** it to the Conference Committee on Public Information.

“Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings” — The committee **agreed to forward** to the 2024 Conference Committee on Public Information the revised pamphlet “Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings” (with a new working title), which had been previously reviewed by the trustees’ Public Information Committee.

Comprehensive Media Plan — The committee **agreed to forward** to the 2024 Conference Committee on Public Information the *2024 Comprehensive Media Plan*, which had been reviewed by the trustee’s Public Information Committee prior to this meeting through electronic mail.

Working group on Analytics Reporting — The committee reviewed the Working Group on Analytics report. There was a discussion of the potential advantages of a new tool, including the ease of creating regular basic reports in three languages.

The committee **agreed to forward** the 2023 Analytics Working Group progress report to the Conference Committee on Public Information. The committee looks forward to a progress report at the July 2024 meeting.

Treatment and Accessibilities

The staff secretary is developing a timeline workflow to edit and post the remaining twelve interviews of the Military Audio Project to aa.org. The committee looks forward to a progress report at the July 2024 meeting.

The trustees’ committee was provided with an update on the search for two appointed committee members (ACMs). The committee approved the direction of the search and looks forward to an update report at the July 2024 meeting.

AA Grapevine

The AA Grapevine Board of Directors has met twice since the October 27, quarterly meeting. A Strategic Planning session and a Planning meeting on December 9, 2023. The Finance and Budget committee met on December 7, 2023.

Overview

The board aimed to increase app information, Fellowship participation, and subscriptions through strategic planning and app attraction initiatives. GV and LV

Editorial teams are busy with new products and upcoming magazine issues. Did you know we have a new online catalog? Websites, podcasts, and social media channels are all contributing to an increased online presence. Strategic cost-cutting measures are included in our 2024 budget proposal. The emphasis on product diversification and subscription upgrades fuels revenue growth. La Viña remains a focus for financial improvement strategies and an important part of the strategic plan implementation. A new controller has been hired; an official announcement to the Fellowship will be made on February 5, 2024. Finally, preparations for the Grapevine's 80th anniversary are underway. Stay tuned for more information!

Strategic Planning

The AAGVB met half a day on Saturday, December 9, 2023. As a follow up to the October strategic planning session, the AAGV board and staff worked with Tony B., creativity and strategy expert, 32+ years in A.A. Fellowship, for a one-day idea generation session. The primary goal of the session was to increase penetration of the Fellowship to drive higher app subscription levels for AAGV/LV. Tactics included creating clear roles, goals and task accountability for both board members and staff as well as AAGV/LV representatives. The facilitator focused on how to reach groups and members to attract subscribers and what we need to do differently for the Hispanic community. Using a graphic timeline, the group prioritized action steps. AAGV publisher created an action plan and assigned staff and board. A team meeting with the committee chair and publisher will take place in February. A report back to the full board will take place at the March Planning meeting.

Board Meeting

During its December 9, 2023, half a day Planning meeting, the board was updated by the publisher on the following: Discussion around the app launch downloads, subscriptions and revenue received to date. The board discussed whether the apps should be offered worldwide and what that would entail, with no action taken. The publisher will develop and assign attraction efforts based on the ideas generated at the strategic planning session.

The board received activity reports from office operations, Grapevine and La Viña editorial, production, digital communications, digital engagement, and customer relations.

Board Committee Activity

Finance and Budget:

The chair reported the AAGV Finance committee met on December 7, 2023. They reviewed and approved

the October 2023 YTD Financial Statements for Grapevine and La Viña and reviewed the working 2024 Budget for GV and LV. On December 9, 2023, the board was presented with the October 2023 YTD financial results for Grapevine and La Viña and approved them and reviewed the working 2024 Budget for GV and LV. On January 25, the board was presented with the November 2023 YTD financial results for Grapevine and La Viña, the 2024 Budget including the rolling cash flow forecast. In addition, the Board reviewed draft revenue results for FY 2023 for Grapevine and La Viña.

Nominating and Governance: The chair reported no activity since October 2023.

Ad hoc Director's Handbook: The chair reported, the ad hoc committee met on December 6 and January 23. The Table of Contents for the updated handbook was approved and content owners assigned a section. The committee will be creating new content for all sections. The size of the handbook will be reduced to approximately 25 pages by adding links. The document will live on the Onboard platform for easy access. The plan is that the draft will be completed by the March Planning meeting for review by two board members. The final handbook should be available for the next rotation.

Ad hoc Personnel Handbook: A revised draft from Human Resources will be reviewed by the director of operations and publisher and returned to HR if edits are required. Once that process is completed, the draft will be turned over to the committee for their review and recommendation to the full board.

Ad hoc 2025 Convention: The committee met on November 7. The committee discussed GV/LV location possibilities at the Convention, souvenir item as well as other "asks" to be presented to the Convention desk. Subsequent meetings had to be rescheduled due to scheduling conflicts. GV publisher will notify the committee of an upcoming meeting as soon as possible.

Editorial Advisory Board

The GVEAB met on January 11, 2024. GVEAB currently recruiting for a Canadian and Central US member. LVEAB met on November 15, 2023.

Management Report

The Publisher reported the following:

GV LV App

- Downloads GV = 26,623; New in-app subscriptions = 5,305 (iOS 4,745, Android 560).
- Downloads LV = 1,061; New in-app subscriptions = 143 (iOS 117, Android 26).
- Past month GV iOS use: 20,505 sessions on 3,072 devices.

- App user ratings: Google Play 4.8/5; Apple 4.1/5.
 - Current position on Apple top 200 Magazine and Newspaper apps: 34 — just behind Boston Globe but ahead of *Bon Appetit*, The San Francisco *Chronicle* and *Vanity Fair*.
 - Total app sales to top \$100,000 by end of January. GV Inc. revenue to date \$66,455.
 - App attraction efforts: A 13-point plan coming out of our last strategic planning meeting issued to staff and board. Teams developing action plans.
 - Delayed La Viña reimbursements from GSB put GV in a cash crunch October through December. We managed with a close watch on payables and receivables. Now issuing weekly cash reports for review by publisher, treasurer and finance staff. Grapevine Finance confirms GSB La Viña reimbursement Q2 payment of \$233,766 on December 8, and Q3 payment of \$211,755 on January 8.
 - New Controller hired and will start on February 5, 2024. YPTC will continue to serve us for four to six weeks to help with transition and audit.
 - Director of Operations: Janet Bryan is retiring as of April 29, 2024. Transition plans are in the works.
 - January special offer out to “print only” subscribers to upgrade to “complete” for only \$10.
 - Upcoming new products: *Prayer and Meditation* audio book, February 15; *Our Twelve Steps*, April 2.
 - Podcast: Over 726,000 downloads, continues to grow with this month’s listenership up 11% over previous month; Instagram: Grapevine 11,500 followers, La Viña 1,565 followers; YouTube: 12,400 subscribers, 239 videos with 181,874 views. The podcast is now available on YouTube. Grapevine Channel subscribers and any YouTube user who watches A.A. related content will get exposure to the podcast on their feeds.
 - New YouTube playlist “*Blessed*” released in January with RSS feed for Podcast.
 - Grapevine and La Viña News appearing monthly on the Meeting Guide App.
 - App stories to be in Grapevine and La Viña magazines, Grapevine and La Viña News and on the podcast.
 - GV/LV staff attend monthly All Employee huddle with GSO.
 - A Grapevine Area Chair Workshop was held on January 18 to inform Area servants about the new apps and answer questions.
 - Digital Engagement Editor broadening outreach to GVR/RLV network.
 - Director of Operations revising the Business Continuation Plan.
 - Customer Relations Coordinator and new fulfillment house Customer Service relationship has been productive.
 - Online store updates are ongoing.
 - New online only 2024 catalogue released (*postcard with QR code available*).
 - Carry the Message certificates processed in 2023: 1,633.
- Editorial Report: Grapevine:* The senior editor reported the following:
- Recent Grapevine magazines released:
 - » NOV—Gratitude (featuring an interview with Michelle in Archives).
 - » DEC—Remote Communities & Holiday Stories (interview with Mike L.).
 - » JAN—Emotional Sobriety (Regional Forums announcement) — out now.
 - Grapevine magazines currently in production and on schedule:
 - » FEB—Getting Through Tough Times—done, printing.
 - » MARCH—Spanish-Speaking A.A. Members’ La Viña stories (interview with Paz P.)—final proofing.
 - » APRIL—Favorite Big Book Stories (Big Book 85th Anniversary!)—proofing.
 - » MAY—How the Steps Changed My Life (Release of brand-new Step Book!)—stories edited, art meeting soon.
 - » JUNE—Happy 80th Grapevine! — Special Issue—editing stories.
 - » JULY—Annual Prison Issue—selecting stories.
 - *Our Twelve Steps*—New Spring Book—a brand-new collection of stories from A.A. members about the joys and challenges of working the program’s Twelve Steps of recovery—on schedule—due out April 2024.
 - Working with new Digital Engagement Editor to create content for the new app.
 - Early work on special June 2024 GV issue—Grapevine’s 80th Anniversary!!!
 - Podcast — working with hosts to connect with interview subjects from current stories in magazine and important GV & LV information.
 - Publishing more A.A. News and interviews with Class A & B Trustees and important A.A. announcements (working closely with GSO staff desks).
 - Early work being done on *Emotional Sobriety* audio-book (*possible Fall 2024*).
 - Early work is being done on 2025 International Convention product.

Editorial Report: La Viña: The La Viña editor reported the following:

- Recent La Viña magazine released:
 - » NOV/DEC Alegría (The joy of living).
 - » JAN/FEB 2024: Nuevos (Newcomers edition).
- La Viña magazines currently in production and on schedule:
 - » MARCH/APRIL: Short stories — Proof 2.
 - » MAY/JUNE: Relapse — Copy editing.
 - » JULY/AUGUST: Prisons — Selecting stories.
- Stories — 150 new batch of stories received in December only.
- 2025 Editorial Calendar ready and on the website.
- LV informational workshop — last Thursday of the month at 3 pm. We share updates and give presentations of our products. Increasing engagement with Trusted Servants and spreading the word about the App.
- Daily quote: SMS service cancelled. Members can find it in the La Viña App.
- La Viña App: The LV editorial team has developed written and audiovisual materials, in Spanish, focused on the needs expressed in the Hispanic community.

Video tutorials to download and use for La Viña application, as well as PowerPoint presentations with the tools and resources that are available to all A.A. members.

- Working with digital engagement editor, updating and creating content for the app.

The board received activity reports from operations, production, digital communications, digital engagement, and customer relations.

Grapevine Web Report

The digital publishing manager reported monthly web traffic in the 4th quarter for GV averaged 292,916 new visitors; 41,000 returning visitors and 598,610 page views. Due to an upgrade to Google Analytics 4, the numbers for LV were not correct and therefore not included in 4th quarter reporting.

- In addition to **approving** the Planning meeting minutes of September 9, 2023, the Board took the following actions at its meeting on December 9, 2023:
 - » Approved the October 31, 2023, Grapevine financial report.
 - » Approved the October 31, 2023, La Viña financial report.

Travel

Nov. 10 – 12	National Corrections Conference	Oklahoma City, OK
Nov. 17 – 19	East Central Regional Forum	Independence, OH
Nov. 17 – 19	Southern States A.A. Service Assembly	Orlando, FL
Jan. 20	Northeast New York Service Orientation	Hudson, NY

For comments or questions write to: Staff Coordinator, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163