

AAWS Highlights

Business of the Board



Meeting of the AAWS, Inc., Board of Directors

March 07, 2025

AAWS Board of Directors

Carolyn W., AAWS Chairperson, Vera F., Reilly K.,
Deborah K., Clint M., Racy J., Ken T., John W., Bob W.

AAWS Internal Audit Committee

The Internal Audit Committee examines significant documents, including guidelines, policies, and bylaws.

The committee discussed and recommended the AAWS board adopt a volunteer agreement for new and existing directors. The committee recommended the AAWS board approve the management RACI (*Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed*) chart with one outstanding item. The committee discussed a draft process for updates and oversight of the employee handbook. They decided to receive quarterly update reports from HR regarding everything except minor editorial changes, with an annual review of the handbook itself.

Recommendations forwarded to and approved by the AAWS Board of Directors.

- **The Internal Audit Committee recommends that the AAWS board adopt a volunteer agreement.**
- **The Internal Audit Committee recommends that the AAWS board approve the management RACI with one outstanding item, number six, that will be resolved at the next meeting.**

AAWS Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee is tasked with filling vacancies on the board of directors for A.A. World Services, Inc.

Nontrustee Director Search Update

The committee provided an update on the non-Trustee Director position announcement for the upcoming 2026 vacancy. The announcement will be published in upcoming issues of Box 459 and The Grapevine. A letter to the Fellowship will be distributed via email blast, the Meeting Guide App, and aa.org in early May 2025.

AAWS Finance Committee

The Finance Committee reviews and approves AAWS financial reports, the annual budget, and the mid-year reforecast budget. Additionally, the committee approves literature price changes and discusses self-support matters.

Finance Committee Update

The Finance Report highlighted consistent total operating revenue and expenses, with both aligning closely to the budget. Noteworthy was a significant milestone in gross literature sales attained in February, marking the highest post-pandemic sales month. Additionally, strong literature sales have provided funds to apply to major upcoming expenses, potentially reducing the need to draw from reserves.

Key financial health indicators showed improvements with a reduction in literature receivables more than 60 days past due and a strong year-over-year cash position. Operational expenses across various categories, including salaries, professional fees, and facilities, were all below budget, reflecting efficient financial management.

Financial report, January 2025 unaudited financial information, and related summary financial information

The Finance Committee reviewed financial performance for the month ended January 31, 2025. Total operating revenue is \$1,712,115 which is about 2% less than the budget of \$1,753,473. Total operating expenses before depreciation are \$1,282,013 which is about 2% less than the budget of \$1,304,480. Operating surplus before depreciation is \$430,103 compared to a budgeted surplus of \$448,994. Literature accounts receivable is \$633,318, of which 52.9% is current, 23.9% is less than 60 days past due, and 23.2% is more than 60 days past due. The reserve fund is at 6.42 months of 2025 budgeted GSO, GV, and LV operating expenses versus a target range of 9 to 12 months.

Self-Support Committee Update

The Support Committee reviewed a request to return a bequest due to tax implications for the contributor and is seeking guidance from the Finance Committee on this exception.

The committee also emphasized the need for improved communication to inform members on bequest guidelines, particularly regarding contributions from Canada. Additional information will be added to the Finance Guidelines in a future printing.

Recommendations forwarded and approved by the AAWS Board of Directors.

- **The AAWS Finance Committee recommended approval of a Literature Price Change Policy and Procedure Statement with one amendment.**

AAWS Publishing Committee

The Publishing Committee oversees AAWS's licensing and publishing activities, including recommending initial pricing for all A.A. literature. They also track the progress of international translations and literature production.

During the AAWS Publishing Committee meeting significant updates were shared. Improvements have been made to reduce the number of back orders, which have decreased from around 60 to 16 items. There was an emphasis on digital distribution, noting a substantial 300% increase over the last year in correctional facilities accessing AA literature on tablets. Strong revenue reports from enhanced eBooks and audiobooks, with the January figures reaching \$18,698, not including updates from Amazon Kindle, which are pending.

The Publishing Committee had no recommendations to the AAWS Board.

AAWS TCS Committee

The TCS committee works to improve services, enhance communication with the AAWS Board and Fellowship, and consider strategies to use technology for carrying the message.

The TCS Committee meeting covered a range of topics, including clarification on past conversations about service materials, and ensuring an inclusive process for safety guidelines. Regular updates were provided by various working groups and committees. Future actions were outlined for circulating new safety guidelines among General Service Board members and addressing social media policies.

The TCS Committee had no recommendations to the AAWS Board.

Interim Language Services Committee

The Interim Language Services committee provides guidance and oversight to the Language Services Department, with a priority of policy development.

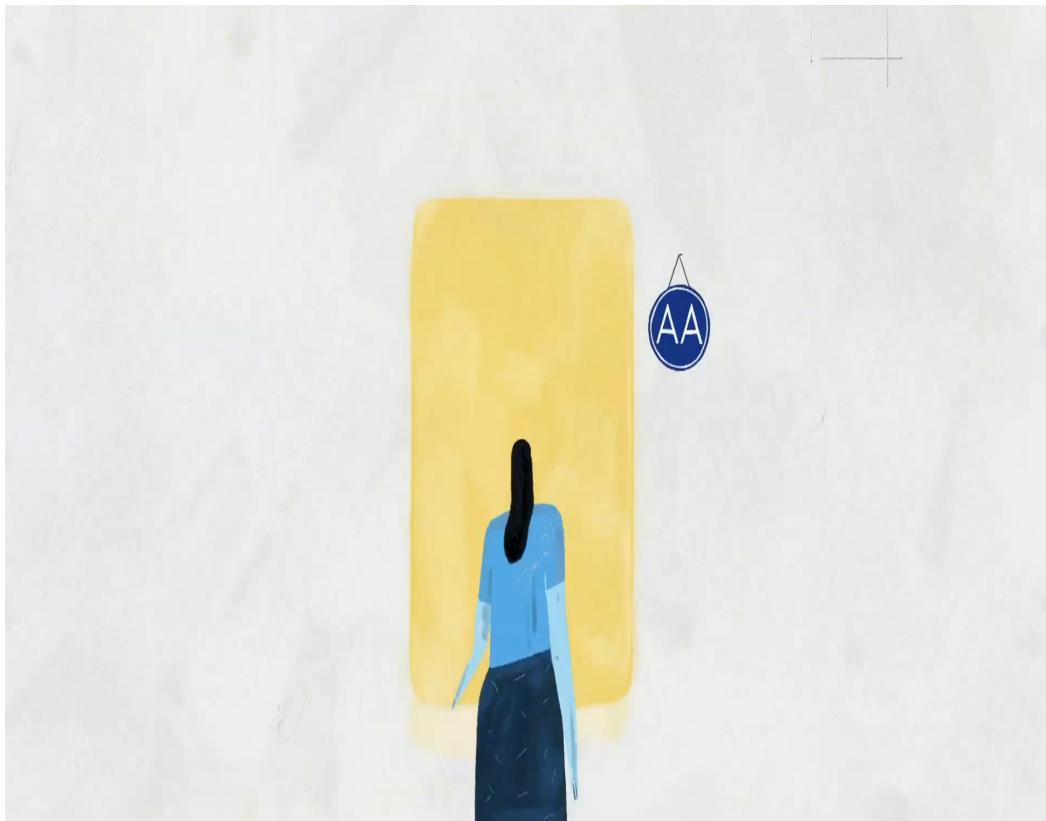
Interim Language Services Committee Update

The discussion focused on clarifying the transition of committee work as the current committee concludes and a new one begins. Key concerns included determining which committee would oversee ongoing tasks related to language services, communication services, and translation policies. A proposal was made to create an outline of communication procedures for directors and trustees to improve awareness of the steps involved. The committee accepted a report from the working group on communication services, and further discussions were planned for the June meeting, including reviewing departmental workloads and defining communication timelines more clearly.

The Interim Language Services Committee had no recommendations to the AAWS Board.

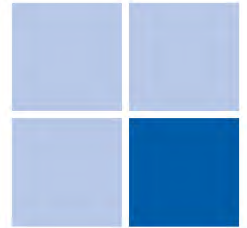
International Convention 2025

Planning for the International Convention is progressing well, with a strong communication strategy in place to emphasize the upcoming early bird pricing change on April 15th. Efforts led by the Communication Services Department have resulted in key implementations, including a countdown clock on the website and updated seminar pages featuring new information and videos. A total of five videos, including three produced by an outside vendor, will be released to enhance outreach. Email blasts are expected to generate excitement for the 90th celebration. Enthusiastic stories from past attendees continue to emerge, adding to the anticipation!



AAWS Highlights

What's Happening at GSO



Bob W., General Manager

March 07, 2025

Archives

Research activities are strong, with over 1,500 emails managed in two months, excluding additional inquiries. However, a three-month backlog persists due to temporary database issues. Staff training is planned, and the AV preservation project has entered Phase II, with 1,800 audiovisual pieces inventoried and undergoing evaluation. A significant discovery of 1940s AA radio recordings on acetate will be digitized for preservation. Upcoming priorities include continuing the AV project, planning exhibits for the 2025 International Convention, and curating a special display for the 75th anniversary of the General Service Conference.

Communication Services

A bonus episode of the *Primary Purpose* podcast, which features multiple interviews, is currently in the editing phase, with a thorough internal review before release. A new internally created short video is now available on the IC webpage and will be shared on the Grapevine Instagram during peak engagement time. Season 1 of the podcast has concluded, with analytics being gathered for the first quarterly report. Informational cards are being included in literature shipments, and outreach efforts are underway to engage media outlets that review new podcasts.

Finance

The redesigned quarterly contributions reports are now available on Fellowship Connection for areas and DCMs, with refinements based on feedback. The Finance Strategy Committee approved a shared HR service agreement between AAWS and Grapevine to enhance financial flexibility. Updates to the finance policy and procedure manual were made in collaboration with the controller team. Since the last board meeting, 13,611 contributions have been processed, along with 483 literature receivable payments and 369 vendor invoices. Over the next 90 days, the team will complete the 2024 financial statement audit, followed by pension and defined contribution plan audits, with adjustments to improve efficiency before the 990 audit.

Human Resources

Recruiting efforts have resumed, with positions such as a Spanish translator, junior designer, staff services roles, and an archives research assistant actively in progress. Performance reviews are being enhanced with more training, openness, and efficiency, with ongoing feedback collection for future improvements. A new process for digitizing files in PDF/A format is being implemented for better archival standards. Employee engagement remains a priority.

Language Services

The recruitment process for the Language Services team remains ongoing, with difficulties in securing a full team since late 2022. A contractor with La Viña experience has been identified to help address the backlog of 121 Spanish and 70 French translation requests. The *service manual* translation is expected to be delayed due to late report submissions requiring multiple review stages before translation.

Operations

The operations team handled a substantial workload in 2024, responding to over 24,000 emails, nearly 17,000 phone calls, and 23,000 front desk calls, along with processing approximately 29,000 literature orders. The team's dedication and efficiency were acknowledged.

Publishing

The Plain Language Big Book has surpassed 150,000 copies distributed, with increasing positive reception. Readers continue to praise its accessibility, reinforcing its intended impact. While e-book sales and digital distribution are gaining traction, digital adoption remains slower than print, requiring further outreach. A new vendor is testing digital access in a Pennsylvania federal facility, potentially expanding distribution to 150 correctional facilities. Efforts are ongoing to enhance accessibility and refine messaging around the book's purpose and reception.

Staff Services

Over the past year, the department responded to 161,885 emails and 2,754 phone calls. The department welcomed nearly 1,700 visitors to the office — some of whom attended the Friday meetings, including 33 large groups. Regarding the International Convention, a non-AA speaker specializing in deaf recovery will participate via Zoom in the *AA for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing* session. Additionally, an invitation from the General Service Board to attend Regional Forums is in production. The video is being produced internally and will be informally incorporating a creative element. The tablet literature list has been updated and will be added to the Corrections Kit as a new service material to better inform professionals and incarcerated members about available resources.



Technology Services

Several major projects are underway, including enabling allowing contributions to be made in Canadian dollars while maintaining financial reporting in U.S. dollars. This work is tied to updates for the Web Store and Contributions site, with discussions on potentially accelerating the timeline and budget impact. Additionally, video download and streaming capabilities are being scoped for integration. The recent QCR report rollout came in \$18,400 under budget, highlighting efficiency gains. Cost-saving measures are also being implemented by optimizing file retention policies, reducing unnecessary daily and monthly backups, which will lower storage costs.

Legal, Licensing, and Intellectual Properties

Last year, the team received 1,341 international licensing and translation requests and current within the established 45-day window. A new multipurpose license form consolidating multiple licenses has been successfully implemented. A committee of members within the US/Canada structure has been established to review the Haitian Creole Big Book translation before printing. Collaboration continues on IP-related matters through the support and participation with the AAWS ad-hoc committee on Intellectual Property. This collaborative governance work has been very helpful in establishing IP related policy, standards and processes that we apply in carrying out this vital service.

General Manager

With the General Service Conference approaching, the General Service Office has been working diligently to ensure that all conference-related materials are distributed on time in English, Spanish, and French.

Staff Services, Publishing, and Language Services departments have collaborated closely to finalize and distribute conference background materials. Additionally, the office has initiated its annual performance review process, providing employees with an opportunity to reflect, receive feedback, and set goals for growth and development. The office remains committed to fostering a culture rooted in AA principles, emphasizing empathy, respect, and openness.

The office retrofit project is progressing on schedule, with contractor evaluations underway and construction set to begin in late March or early April. Efforts will initially focus on less disruptive areas to accommodate conference preparations, with more intensive work scheduled from July to November.

The Language Services Department has successfully completed the translation of conference background materials while also managing various other translation projects, including the 2025 International Convention Souvenir Book, the General Service Conference Manual, and the Spanish Big Book revisions.

Planning for the 2025 International Convention in Vancouver is advancing smoothly, with ongoing coordination between internal and external stakeholders. If you haven't registered yet, please do so by April 15th to take advantage of pre-registration pricing.

Recent travel included participation in the Western Canada Regional Service Assembly, with upcoming commitments to state conventions in Indiana and Vermont, as well as a site visit for the International Convention in June.

Make plans to attend the 2025 A.A. International Convention scheduled in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada



Taking place once every five years, the A.A. International Convention marks the anniversary of Bill W.'s first meeting with Dr. Bob and the birth of Alcoholics Anonymous in 1935. A.A. members and their families and friends from around the globe attend the event. At the International Convention people attend meetings, workshops, dances and events. A highlight is the traditional flag ceremony to celebrate sobriety worldwide.

Vancouver will welcome A.A. members from around the world for the 2025 International Convention. This will mark the 90th anniversary of the beginning of our Fellowship's founding. The International Convention will take place from July 3 - 6, 2025, at the Vancouver Convention Centre and BC Place Stadium.

As the Convention approaches, we will update our website with registration information. Let's celebrate sobriety together in Vancouver in 2025!

** 2025 International Convention logo is an AAWS Service Mark and may ONLY be used with permission from AAWS.*