



Highlights of the 71st General Service Conference

AA in a Time of Change

Who?

The Conference is comprised of twenty-one trustees, ninety-three delegates, staff from the General Service Office, Grapevine, and General Service Board chairmen emeriti.

What?

At the annual Conference meeting, matters of importance to the Fellowship as a whole are first considered and discussed by one of the standing Conference committees, then brought to the full Conference in the form of committee recommendations.

All Conference members then have the opportunity to ask questions and discuss the recommendations before they are voted on. Committee recommendations that are approved become Conference Advisory Actions

Where?

The 71st General Service Conference met virtually, using the Zoom platform. This is the second time in history that the Conference was held virtually, with the 70th being the first. Unlike the 70th Conference, 71st Conference was a full length, full agenda, all-hands-on-deck affair.

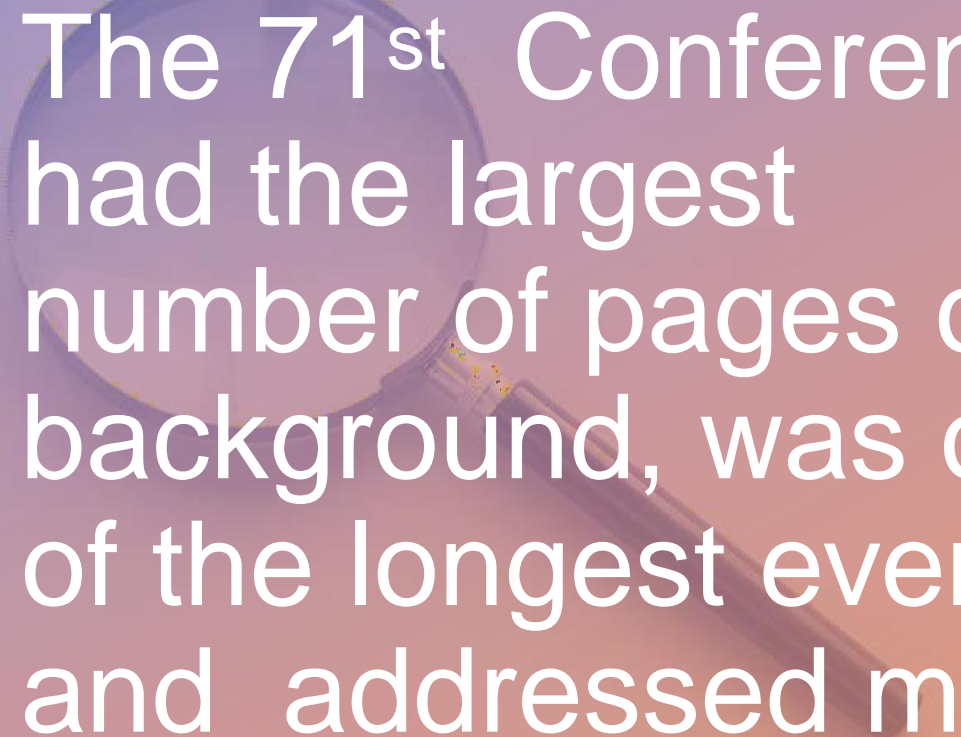


When?

The 71st General Service Conference was held Saturday April 17 to Saturday April 24, 2021, but this year we went a little bit long, 2:13 a.m. EST on Sunday April 25, 2021, to be exact



How?



The 71st Conference had the largest number of pages of background, was one of the longest ever, and addressed more Agenda items than ever.....

Why?

“We may not need a General Service Conference to ensure our own recovery. We do need it to ensure the recovery of the alcoholic who still stumbles in the darkness one short block from this room. We need it to ensure the recovery of a child being born tonight, destined for alcoholism. We need it to provide, in keeping with our Twelfth Step, a permanent haven for all alcoholics who, in the ages ahead, can find in A.A. that rebirth that brought us back to life....”



So, What Happened?

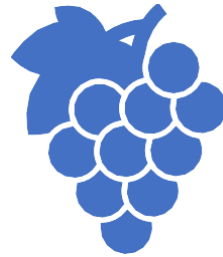
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- Reports From GSB, AAWS, AAGV, Treasurer Etc.
 - Meetings
 - Workshops
 - Committee Reports

Reports....

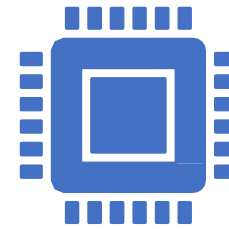
GSB/GVB/AAWS Management Fly-By



AAWS continues the search for a new General Manager to replace Greg T.



The Grapevine continues the search for a new Editor, although no one can replace Albin Z.



The first glimmers of light at the end of the tunnel for the GSO to start re-opening its physical office (Time to dust off those MetroCards....)

A Financial Fly- By

- 7th Tradition of Self-Support – \$10.26 million set another record, up 15.80% from \$8.86 million in 2019
- Self-Support - covered 94.9% of cost of services compared to 69.8% in 2019
- AAWS publishing gross profits – \$6.58 million down 29.70% from \$9.36 million in 2019, used to cover \$550K shortfall between 7th Tradition Contributions and Costs
- Service costs down

Committee Recommendations & Floor Action(s)

Agenda

**The 2022 General
Service
Conference theme
is**

**“A.A. Comes of
Age 2.0: Unified in
Love and Service.”**



Agenda

The following are the presentation/ discussion topics for the 2022 General Service Conference:

- **1. How do A.A.s go to any lengths to Recover, Unify, and Serve?**
- **2. Going Beyond Fear**
- **3. How to Reach Anyone, Anywhere**



Agenda

The following will be the workshop topic for the 2022 General Service Conference:

The Warranties – Our Promise to the Fellowship and the World.



Cooperation with the Professional Community

Discuss progress report on LinkedIn page implementation.

The committee recommended that the goals expressed in the 2018 Advisory Action establishing a dynamic A.A.W.S. LinkedIn page be implemented by G.S.O

Cooperation with the Professional Community

Consider a request to create a pamphlet for mental health professionals.

The Committee recommended that the trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities develop a pamphlet directed to mental health professionals.

Cooperation with the Professional Community

Discuss draft updated pamphlet
“Members of the Clergy ask about
Alcoholics Anonymous.”

The committee recommended that the
updated draft pamphlet “Members of
the Clergy Ask About Alcoholics
Anonymous” be approved with minor
editorial changes and retitled “Faith
Leaders Ask About Alcoholics
Anonymous.”



Corrections

The committee recommendedRevisions be made to A.A.W.S. literature directed to members behind the walls and that the terms “inmate” and “offender” be replaced with “person in custody.”

Finance

The Committee recommended changes to the pamphlet “Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix.”

The committee recommended the addition of a watermark to the 2nd and 3rd pie charts with the word “SAMPLE” on page 13 of the pamphlet, “Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix.”

Finance

The committee recommended adding the following language to the pamphlet “Self- Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix” as follows:

On page 7 after the bulleted section entitled “A.A.’s General Service Office”:

Please note that not all areas, districts, intergroups and central offices follow these divisions of service for institutions work, cooperation with the professional community, public information, etc. Therefore, prior to making contributions in your area, please find out which entity is providing these services and allocate your contributions accordingly.

On page 13 after the pie chart examples and before the question, “Where should I send contributions?”

Duties of the entities notated above are described on page 7 of this pamphlet. Performance of these service duties vary from area to area. Please be sure to inquire which services these entities provide in your area and contribute accordingly.

step six

Committee considerations:

The committee suggested that any updates made to the pie charts in the pamphlet, “Where Money and Spirituality Mix” be reflected on all similar Service Materials.

Grapevine and La Viña

The committee recommended that the AA Grapevine Board implement an Instagram account and requested that a report on the Instagram account be brought back to the 2022 Conference Committee on Grapevine and La Viña.

Grapevine and La Viña

The committee considered gender-neutral language options for possible changes to the A.A. Preamble and took no action. The committee felt they needed more information to make a decision.

Not the Conference's final word on this.....

Literature

The committee recommended that the “A.A.W.S. Policy on Conversion of Written Conference-approved Literature and Service Material into Video Format,” approved by the A.A. World Services, Inc. Board of Directors in January 2020, be acknowledged and accepted by the General Service Conference.

Literature

The committee recommended that a Fifth Edition of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, be developed, including an update of stories to better reflect current membership

Literature

The committee recommended that, pending its development, the draft Fifth Edition of the Big Book would include a new foreword, an updated preface and updates to expand on existing ideas in Appendices III and V.

More Literature.....

The committee recommended a revision to page 117 in the book, *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, replacing the phrase “opposite sex” with the word “partner” as follows, and that a footnote be added to provide context to the change as it relates to inclusivity:

"Nearly every sound human being experiences, at some time in life, a compelling desire to find a partner with whom the fullest possible union can be made – spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical. This mighty urge is the root of great human accomplishments, a creative energy that deeply influences our lives. God fashioned us that way...."

Yet more
literature

The committee recommended to revise the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* in the chapter “Step Six” on page 66 which currently reads :

"No one wants to be angry enough to murder, lustful enough to rape, gluttonous enough to ruin his health."

Be revised to read:

"No one wants to commit the deadly sins of anger, lust, or gluttony."

Some more Literature

Consider updating the pamphlet “A.A. for the Black and African-American Alcoholic.”

The committee recommended that the pamphlet “A.A. for the Black and African-American Alcoholic” be updated to include fresh stories and a new title that is respectful and inclusive....

Some more Literature

“The Twelve Traditions Illustrated” pamphlet

The committee recommended that the draft update of the pamphlet, “The Twelve Traditions Illustrated,” be approved with the title, “Experience Has Taught Us: Our Twelve Traditions Illustrated.”

“The Twelve Traditions Illustrated” pamphlet:
Consider not retiring the existing version of the pamphlet “The Twelve Traditions Illustrated.”

The committee recommended not to retire the existing version of the pamphlet “The Twelve Traditions Illustrated.”

The committee noted that the draft updated version of the pamphlet, pending its approval, is well-suited for an introduction to the Traditions, and the existing version is helpful for more in-depth consideration of the Traditions.

Some more Literature

The committee recommended that the Long Form of each Tradition be included at the end of each essay for that Tradition in the book, *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, and that the complete set of Traditions at the back of the book be retained as is.

Some more
Literature

The committee recommended that a Fourth Edition of the book, *Alcohólicos Anónimos*, be developed, including an update of stories to better reflect current membership

Literature continued

Consider request to revise text related to self-support in the pamphlet “Frequently Asked Questions About A.A.”

The line on page 17 currently reads:

“...to defray the cost of renting a meeting place and other meeting expenses, including coffee, sandwiches, cakes or whatever else may be served.”

Be revised to read:

“...to defray the cost of renting a meeting place and other meeting expenses.”

Literature continued

The committee recommended that the paragraph containing the suggestion that sponsor and newcomer be of the same sex on page 12 in the pamphlet “Questions and Answers on Sponsorship” be revised as follows:

The paragraph on page 12 currently reads:

“In most instances, A.A. custom does suggest one limitation, already noted on page 10: If the group is large enough to allow a choice, sponsor and newcomer be of the same sex. The reasons are the same from both viewpoints; we A.A. members, no matter how long we have been sober, remain thoroughly human, subject to emotions that might divert us from “our primary purpose.”

Be revised to read:


A.A. custom does suggest one limitation: sponsorship should be avoided whenever a romantic entanglement might arise between sponsor and sponsee. We A.A. members, no matter how long we have been sober, remain thoroughly human, subject to emotions that might divert us from “our primary purpose.”

Literature
continued

The committee recommended
that the draft pamphlet for
Spanish-speaking women in A.A.
be approved.

Literature continued

The committee recommended the 4th Edition be translated into plain and simple language and developed in a way that is accessible and relatable to as wide of an audience as possible



The last of
Literature
(This one Via Floor
Action!)

The pamphlet "A.A. for the Native North American" be updated to include language that is both respectful and inclusive of all indigenous peoples as well as add fresh stories and updating inaccuracies contained in the current pamphlet and that a draft pamphlet be brought back to the 2022 Conference Committee on Literature.

Policy and Admissions

The committee recommended that the trustees' General Service Conference Committee make use of virtual meeting technologies to develop a process for polling the General Service Conference between annual meetings, in order to enable real-time discussion and debate, broad participation, and greater efficiency than the current process.



Policy and Admissions

The committee recommended that the Equitable Distribution of Workload Process...be implemented for the 72nd General Service Conference on a three-year trial basis....

Policy and Admissions

Consider requests regarding participation of online groups in the General Service structure.

The committee recommended that the U.S./Canada General Service Structure recognize online groups and encourage their participation, listing those groups who ask to be listed within the group's preferred district and area, with the default option being the location of the group's primary contact. This supersedes the 1997 Advisory Action that designated online groups as "International Correspondence Meetings."

The committee recommended that the General Service Board form a committee to explore future possibilities for the participation of online groups in the U.S./Canada General Service structure.

Public Info

It is recommended two new PSAs utilizing full face actors-- “Party” and “Wall”-- be approved.....

And that GSO study paid placement of PSA videos on Netflix, Hulu, and YouTube.....

Public Info



Discuss trustees' Public Information Committee review of P.I. pamphlets.



The committee recommended that the trustees' Public Information Committee revise the flyer "A Message to Teenagers"

Public Info



Discuss trustees' Public Information Committee review of P.I. pamphlets.



The committee recommended that the trustees' Public Information Committee revise the flyer "Speaking in Non-A.A. Meetings"

Public Info



Discuss creating Podcasts.



The committee recommended that GSO (with Grapevine cooperation) produce podcasts as a new format for “service material” on topics with sharing similar to that found in Box 459, aa.org, and sharing from Grapevine and La Vina.

Report & Charter

The committee recommended that the compilation and printing of the A.A. Directories (Canada, Eastern U.S. and Western U.S.) be discontinued.

Report & Charter

The committee recommended approval of the draft of *The A.A. Service Manual and the Twelve Concepts for World Service*, 2021-2023 Edition

NOTE: The A.A.W.S. Publishing department will do a final proofing prior to publication to correct any inaccuracies.

Report & Charter

The Committee recommended to amend the current Conference Charter, found in the Appendices of *The A.A. Service Manual combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service* to add a reference to the 12 Concepts:

“Purpose: The General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous is the guardian of world services and of the Twelve Steps, the Twelve Traditions **and the Twelve Concepts** of Alcoholics Anonymous. The Conference shall be a service body only; never a government for Alcoholics Anonymous.”

Report & Charter

The committee recommended that a new section be added at the end of the Twelve Concepts for World Service titled “Amendments,” and that it contain an updated version of the Concept XI essay that incorporates the information in the current footnotes and endnotes, along with comprehensive descriptions of the current General Service Board committees, and that a draft or progress report be brought back to the 2022 Conference Committee on Report and Charter.



Treatment & Accessibility

The committee recommended that three new audio interviews with A.A. members in the Armed Forces be approved and posted on G.S.O.'s A.A. website

Trustees



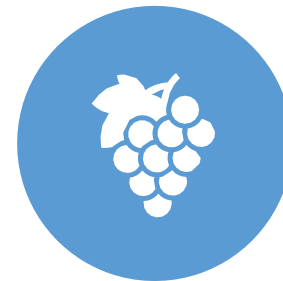
Unlike last year, there was no drama with the Conference's review of the Board's "proposed" Trustees and Boards of Directors of AAWS and AAGV:



The General Service Board Chair is: Linda C., JD



The AAWS Board Chair is: Jimmy D.



The AA Grapevine Board Chair is: Josh E.



Floor Action(s) & The Preamble

The Conference considered several “floor actions” (or recommendations that didn't come out of a committee) on the Preamble issue. Based upon these, on May 12 , 2021 the Grapevine Board changed the Preamble to read, “Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of people who....”



Take only memories...

T





Take only memories...
Leave only footprints

T





“We live in an era of change. Our Twelve Steps probably won’t change; the Traditions, not at all likely. But our manner of communication, our manner of organizing ourselves for function, for service — let us hope that this goes on changing for the better, forever.” (Bill W., 1960 GSC talk)