

HIGHLIGHTS FROM A.A.W.S.

DECEMBER 11, 2015

The A.A. World Services Board met on Friday, December 11, 2015, at the General Service Office, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY. Chair of the A.A.W.S. Board, Chet P. opened the meeting and welcomed all in attendance.

Manager's Report

General Manager Greg T. reported that major construction is complete on the G.S.O./Grapevine co-location construction project, with an expected project end date of December 30, 2015. A.A. Grapevine will move in during the week of January 11, 2016.

Information technology – G.S.O. IT Manager Cynthia Garippa is working with Archives to select a Records Retention consultant who will advise on policies and timelines for G.S.O.

Archives – Archives staff is in the process of curating the exhibit walls and space with new designs. The audio-cataloging project is almost finished, with the “CD” series expected to be completed by mid-December. Archives has also updated its Disaster Prevention, Preparedness, and Response Plan.

Records – Nay Williams, staff assistant to the Conference assignment, held a meeting on December 17 with all staff assistants regarding their roles and responsibilities for the General Service Conference.

Human resources – Nancy Davis has joined G.S.O. as Executive Assistant to the General Manager. Arlene Diaz is now full-time Support Services assistant.

G.S.O./GV – Our annual holiday event for all G.S.O. and Grapevine employees and retirees will be held on Friday, December 18. A brown bag luncheon was held on November 17 for all G.S.O. employees as a follow-up to issues of concern. The General Manager will consider hosting these sessions periodically as employees need to be informed and engaged in issues that affect them directly.

October/November Travel

October 9-11: Southwest Regional Forum in St. Louis.

October 16-18: European Service Meeting in York, England.

November 5-7: Poland General Service Conference in Warsaw, Poland.

November 13-15: East Central Regional Forum in Milwaukee.

Staff

New staff members Jeff W. (Corrections) and Sandra W. (Literature) are settled into their assignments.

Conference – Preparations for the 66th General Service Conference are in progress, including putting together the Conference Communications Kit, and selection of Panel 66 members of Conference committees.

Technology/Communication/Services

The committee reviewed the A.A.W.S. Policy on G.S.O.'s A.A. Website and made no changes. It was noted that the report had been updated to reflect the analytics more accurately.

The committee discussed the A.A.W.S. Fair Use Policy regarding sharing A.A.W.S. copyrighted video content on other websites. Noting that A.A.W.S. currently requests that copyrighted material not be posted on other sites, but that those sites link to the material on aa.org, the committee asked management to consult with legal counsel about applying the A.A.W.S. Fair Use Policy to A.A.W.S.

copyrighted videos, and specifically about the distribution of A.A. public service announcements and the use of P.S.A.'s on local A.A. websites.

Publishing

The A.A.W.S. Board **agreed to forward** to the Conference Report and Charter Committee the following recommendation brought forth by the Publishing Committee:

That *The A.A. Service Manual* be revised per existing schedule after the 2016 General Service Conference and that beginning in 2017 a new edition be published biannually (i.e., every two years, instead of annually), a savings of approximately \$45-50,000 in alternate years when a new edition is not published. The next edition of the Service Manual would be published in 2018 (after the Conference), the subsequent edition in 2020 (after the Conference), etc.

Gross sales: For the first ten months of 2015, sales are below the estimate: \$10,882,447 actual sales vs. estimate of \$12,770,394, a \$1,887,947 or 14.51% variance. In October, gross sales (including digital books) were \$1,259,866 versus the budget of \$1,424,202, a \$164,366 or 11.54% negative variance.

Web sales: Total web sales (A.A.W.S. Online Bookstore) for January-October 2015 stand at \$6,629,293 which accounts for about 62% of total sales for the company. Sales on the B2B online store (primarily Intergroups/Central Offices and other bulk orders) for January-October are \$4,944,943.72 and B2C sales (individual customers) stand at \$1,684,349.62.

International activity: the Rarotongan (Cook Islands) Big Book is near completion; for the first time, Mongolia is being granted a license to print and distribute the Big Book locally; for the first time, Iran's "Nameless Sobers-A.A." is being issued an Authorization to Print locally; re-translation of the Thai Big Book is being submitted for review. The Navajo translation project is nearly fifty percent complete.

Translation of Conference Material: The Conference translation project is proceeding, with the Spanish and French editorial teams translating the Conference Communications Kit, the History of Conference Advisory Actions and other materials, with some delays. Specifically, it may be necessary to hire additional freelance resources in order to complete the Spanish translation of the Conference inventory and *The A.A. Service Manual*.

Finance

The unaudited G.S.O. financial update for the 10 months ended October 31, 2015 showed that net sales were \$1,857,773 or 14.8% less than budget; contributions were \$77,112 less than budget and compared with \$97,571 less than budget at September 30th and \$59,000 under budget at June 30th. Net loss for the ten months was \$52,797 compared with a budgeted profit of \$224,606 and a ten-month 2014 profit of \$2,136,931 (Note: 2014 numbers included sales of the 75th anniversary edition and buying prior to the literature price increase in October 2014.) It was noted that contributions got off to a slow start in 2015, with January being approximately \$81,000 below budget, so the budget figure has been somewhat behind most of the year.

Other

G.S.O./A.A.W.S. relationships with outside organizations – After a full discussion with respect to the implications of affiliating with organizations that no longer support A.A.'s principles, it was understood that invitations to such organizations (e.g., to the General Service Conference opening dinner) would be reconsidered by the office.