

Highlights From A.A.W.S.

January 28, 2016

The A.A. World Services Board met on Thursday, January 28, 2016, 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 the blizzard, which occurred over the weekend, affected operations, however attendance in the office was at 70%. Due to a water main break, The Interchurch Center was closed on Wednesday, January 27, the day before the Board meeting.

Co-location construction project – The Grapevine moved in the week of January 11 and is now settled into their new workspace. Furniture-related issues continue (for both the A.A.W.S. and Grapevine areas), and a “final” walk-through is scheduled before the project can be considered “completed” to our satisfaction.

Information technology – A.A.W.S. IT Manager Cynthia Garippa created an intranet for internal use, and is working with all department heads to gather useful information and documents to add to the site. She continues to work with Archives on selecting a records retention consultant.

Archives – Archives staff responded to more than 1,300 requests for information and research in 2015. In December, we refreshed the wall exhibition that includes a number of new images. The exhibition looks back over the life of Bill and Dr. Bob, the start of A.A. and beginning of services.

Records – All new Area and District chairs information received by December 10, 2015 was added to the database during that week. The Records staff updated 450 new chairs and an additional 120 auxiliary records into our Fellowship New Vision (FNV) database.

January travel

January 8-10, 2016: Trustees' Strategic Planning Session in Kansas City, MO; visit to warehouse.

STAFF REPORT

The Staff members are excited about the upcoming Board weekend and are ready to meet with the visiting Conference committee chairs for the Delegate Chair Orientation. Next week there will be a concerted push to finalize background material for the 64th General Service Conference. Retired staff members will provide staff coverage at G.S.O. during the Conference week.

TECHNOLOGY / COMMUNICATION / SERVICES

The committee reviewed reports on 2015 visits to G.S.O.'s A.A. Website, the 2015 Fourth Quarter Website analytics, and the 2015 Annual Report on G.S.O.'s A.A. Website Activities and **recommended** that these items be forwarded to the trustees' Committee on Public Information.

PUBLISHING

Gross sales: For 2015, sales were below the estimate: \$12,706,249 actual sales vs. estimate of \$14,820,000, which is a \$2,113,751 or 14% negative variance. In December, gross sales (including digital books) were \$1,057,238 versus the budget of \$1,144,104 and this is an \$86,866 or 7.59% negative variance. June 2015 remains the only month in which sales were at or above estimate.

Web sales: Total web sales (A.A.W.S. Online Bookstore) for January-December 2015 stand at \$7,765,260, which accounts for about 62% of total sales for the company. Sales on the B2B online store (primarily Intergroup/Central Offices and other bulk orders) for January-December 2015 are \$5,764,666 and B2C sales (individual customers) stand at \$2,000,593. Total ebook gross sales for January-December 2015 stand at \$244,132 with 62,409 units distributed.

International licensing and translation: January-December 2015 saw a noticeable surge in international requests, submissions and licensing. Translations moving through the review process reached an all-time-high of 58 (up 45% from the previous year) across 28 languages (up 47% from 2014).

Big Books: Rarotongan translation is complete and will be set into final review by local Cook Islands committee, with printing to follow later this year; Navajo translation, translation committee review, and professional audio recording are approximately 80% complete; Assamese (India), Bambara (Mali), Croatia, Czech, German, Hebrew (Israel), Konkani (Goa, India), Mongolia, Thai, Ukraine translations are in process.

FINANCE

The unaudited financial results for the year ended December 31, 2015 showed that net sales were \$2,099,778 or 14% less than budget and \$4,407,849 less than the 12 months ended December 31, 2014. Total expenses for the year of \$15,094,339 were \$1,529,814 less than budget and \$321,475 less than 2014. It was noted that most expense lines have been running below budget all year long, primarily due to the salary line, where a number of budgeted positions were not filled or replaced.

The Board approved the committee **recommendation** that the 2016 budget, reflecting gross sales of \$13,707,484 and a net deficit of \$26,691, be forwarded to the trustees' Finance and Budgetary Committee.

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