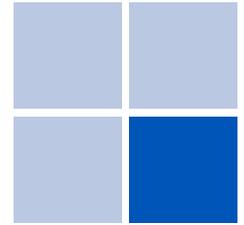


# Quarterly Report from GSO



## 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.*

*Fourth 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, November 4, 2024. Scott H., Chair of the General Service Board, presided. All committees met during the weekend. Highlights of committee reports appear below:

### Archives

The committee reviewed the draft “Weeding Guidelines for Audiovisual Materials” and accepted the guidelines as presented. The guidelines were established to provide the Archives Department with guidance by which to measure decisions when deselecting audiovisual materials held within the collection. The committee also reviewed a sample inventory of the unprocessed audiovisual material and expressed satisfaction with the work undertaken to date. The committee looks forward to continued progress reports of the inventory process of these materials.

The committee discussed a draft of the “GSO Archives Policy on Categorization of Archival Materials for Access and Use” and approved the policy as presented. This new policy replaces the current “Classification of Archival Materials” approved by the committee in 1990.

The committee reviewed the draft revised “GSO Archives Deaccession Policy” and following discussion approved the draft revised policy with minor editorial changes.

### Conference

The committee reviewed the 2025 Conference budget, noting key drivers of variances and ongoing efforts to negotiate discounts to the final bill, and ongoing work to identify cost savings opportunities such as non-hotel meals.

The committee reviewed and accepted progress reports from Subcommittees EDW (Equitable Distribution of Workload), Improvements, and Inventory, forwarding

them to the 75th GSC. The committee expressed their gratitude for the subcommittees’ work on implementing a short-term EDW process for the 75th GSC and developing a draft EDW Operations procedure; work to implement the Conference Inventory plan; targeted and broad feedback from General Service Conference evaluations and additional committee considerations from the 2024 Conference Agenda committee; and implementing the Inventory Plan for the 75th GSC. The committee received a progress report from GSO’s general manager on the progress of site selection and Conference dates for the 2027 and 2028 General Service Conference.

### Cooperation with the Professional Community

The trustees’ committee discussed expanding CPC outreach. The staff secretary reported the desk is seeking shared experience from the Fellowship on how local CPC committees inform professionals who deal with neurodivergent and unhoused alcoholics. This shared experience will help guide future A.A. articles and other outward-facing content.

The Alcoholics Anonymous World Services (AAWS) Publishing Department provided an update on the continuing progress of the development of the pamphlet to mental health professionals, noting the working title “How A.A. Can Help Mental Health Professionals.”

The committee reviewed the improvements made to the exhibit displays sent to local volunteers at CPC national events. The committee requested that the staff secretary continues to explore exhibiting at a variety of professional events to expand our outreach. Noting the success of the A.A. workshop at the recent American Correctional Association event, the committee discussed following up with a workshop in 2025 and the relationship we are building with corrections professionals.

### Corrections

The committee reviewed the progress report on the Corrections Survey, which outlined the work completed

to date. The committee looks forward to a progress report at the February 2025 meeting.

## Finance

### *Conference Finance Committee Actions/Recommendations*

The committee discussed the 74th GSC Committee Consideration requesting that the Trustees' Finance and Budgetary Committee produce an initial draft of the supplemental financial reporting based on projects and took no action. The committee agreed that while the current reporting modules provide sufficient financial reporting, there is an ongoing exploration of additional methods and formats that can be utilized.

### *Review of the AAWS, GV, and GSB IRS Form 990s*

The Committee accepted the report on the draft IRS form 990s.

The Committee recommended to the General Service Board filing the IRS form 990 for: A.A. World Services, AA Grapevine, and the General Service Board of A.A.

### *GSO Financial Results*

The committee reviewed the unaudited financial results for the nine months ended September 30, 2024. Total operating revenue is \$14,591,894 which is 3% more than the year to date (YTD) budget of \$14,140,375. Total operating expenses before depreciation are \$13,417,466, which is 3% less than the YTD budget of \$13,826,110. Operating surplus before depreciation is \$1,174,429 compared to a budgeted YTD surplus of \$314,265. Literature accounts receivable is \$673,202, of which 41.7% is current, 34.4% is fewer than 60 days past due, and 23.9% is more than 60 days past due. The Reserve Fund is at 6.41 months of 2024 reforecast operating expenses versus a target range of nine to 12 months.

Cash increased \$179K year-over-year due to increased contributions. Accounts receivable, including the receivable from Grapevine, decreased \$339K year-over-year due to more effective collection of literature receivables. Literature receivables more than 60 days past due decreased \$255K year-over-year. Accounts payable and accrued expenses decreased \$1.380M year-over-year as increased contributions and the January 2024 Reserve Fund draw have enabled more timely payments to vendors.

Contributions were greater than budget. Gross literature sales and gross margin were both less than budget. However, gross margin as a percentage of gross literature sales improved relative to budget. Overall, operating expenses before depreciation were below budget. Except for employee benefits, payroll taxes, and printing post-

age and supplies, all expense categories were less than budget. In employee benefits, medical and dental insurance, health reimbursement account expenses, and 403b plan employer match are greater than budget. In payroll taxes, our New York State unemployment insurance taxes are greater than expected.

As of September 30, 2024, operating cash on hand was \$312K versus accounts payable of \$1.154K resulting in a short-term deficit of \$842K, an improvement from the \$1.126M deficiency on December 31, 2023. In comparison, as of September 30, 2023, operating cash on hand was \$390K versus accounts payable of \$1.902M (a short-term deficiency of \$1.512M).

The GSO financial report was accepted by the committee.

### *GSO 2025 Preliminary Budget*

The AAWS Finance Committee had a preliminary discussion of the 2025 budget at its November 1, 2024 meeting. An interim meeting will be scheduled for a more in-depth budget discussion.

### *Reserve Fund*

As of September 30, 2024, the Reserve Fund Assets totaled \$12.357 million consisting of cash and certificates of deposit. Less the liability for unfulfilled Grapevine subscriptions of \$540K, the Reserve Fund Balance was \$11.817 million.

Based on the expense budgets for GSO, Grapevine and La Viña (total \$22.111M), the Reserve Fund balance is equal to 6.41 months of operating expenses. The goal range is coverage of nine to 12 months. Note that the calculation is influenced equally by the size of the Reserve Fund balance and the level of GSO, Grapevine and La Viña expenses.

The GSO Reserve Fund report was accepted by the committee.

### *Grapevine and La Viña Financial Results*

The committee reviewed the unaudited financial results for the nine months ended September 30, 2024. Grapevine subscriptions numbers continue to increase and are 10% above last year. However, subscriptions are below the 2024 reforecast by 4.7% as of September 30. The revenue per copy is very close to the reforecast.

Grapevine's income continues to experience solid revenue growth in both subscription income and content income compared to last year, with almost no increase in direct costs. Total gross margin has increased \$455,498 (35%) year-over-year; however, it is below the reforecast by \$39,173.

Year-to-date Grapevine expenses are running very close to the reforecast, but are also higher than last year, as planned. Total expenses are over \$8,009 and the net loss is \$47,182 higher than the reforecast.

La Viña's subscription numbers are also up 9.1% from last year but 8.3% below the reforecast. This flows through to revenue, which is also lower than the reforecast. Year-to-date direct costs are lower than the previous year, as well.

Content revenue for La Viña continues to perform well and contributes more to gross margin than subscription revenue. Gross margin for subscriptions is \$22,931; and \$60,703 for content-related revenue.

La Viña expenses are just \$363 over the reforecast and \$135k less than last year. Overall, La Viña's bottom line is less than 1% over the reforecast. The total contribution from the General Service Board is \$133,000 less than last year.

The Grapevine and La Viña financial reports were accepted by the committee.

### ***Grapevine and La Viña 2025 Preliminary Budget***

Work is underway on the budget, with a five-year plan for La Viña. In addition, a new five-year plan for Grapevine is in development, as current projections indicate the goals of the existing plan may not be met.

### ***Quarterly Financial Report (QFR) for Quarter 3***

The committee reviewed the report and recommended minor revisions for clarity. Once translation is complete, the report will be distributed. The committee also noted that, if needed, the QFR can be shared by the Member Services Department and Staff.

The QFR report was accepted by the committee.

### ***Finance Strategy Subcommittee***

The subcommittee met twice since the last Trustees' Finance Committee (TFC) meeting and is making progress on shared services agreements. The subcommittee received information on the HR services provided to the Grapevine.

The Finance Strategy Subcommittee report was accepted by the committee.

### ***General Sharing Session***

The topic of the Fall Quarterly General Sharing Session was "Our Group Conscience." Teddy B-W., AAGV Nontrustee Director, and Tom H., Southeast Regional Trustee presented, and David S. moderated. David began the session by reading a quote from the January 1948 essay in *The Language of the Heart*, "Tradition Two":

"The collective conscience of the group will, given time, almost surely demonstrate its perfect dependability. The group conscience will, in the end, prove a far more infallible guide for the group affairs than the decision of any individual member, however good or wise he may be. This is a striking and almost unbelievable fact about Alcoholics Anonymous."

Teddy began by quoting the Second Tradition, "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." He then quoted an April 1946 Grapevine article in which Bill W. stated, "Nobody invented Alcoholics Anonymous. It grew."

He shared how "the genius of our Traditions is that they are frequently open to interpretation. Each new generation of members get to decide these things for themselves, and the application of these Traditions continues to evolve. A group conscience is, in truth, rarely a final decision or irrevocable vote. It is more like a fluid consensus with substantial unanimity. For me as an alcoholic it's essential that I learn to let go, to compromise and work in harmony with others."

The process of group decisions involves sharing personal experience, and perhaps most importantly listening as if we have no opinion. It was a revelation to come to learn that "I could be more helpful and contribute more if I were the carrier of the conscience rather than the conscience itself."

In this way, deep listening is an act of surrender. "How many times did I hear myself say, 'I think we need a group conscience about this,' when what I meant was: 'I'm upset about this, and everyone needs to agree with me.' In my opinion, the one unfailing characteristic of an informed group conscience is minority opinion, and it is my solemn duty to do all that I can to cultivate the climate in which the minority opinion can reveal itself."

To participate in the group conscience process requires me to believe that no one of us knows better than all of us. That makes it possible for me to put the "we" before "me" and play my part in helping the group reach an informed group conscience. When participating and not facilitating, I try to speak my truth. I try to listen to other opinions with an open heart — as well as open ears, try to understand rather than to be understood — and then, vote my conscience. If I am in the minority and am heard as such, I can more cheerfully accept the group's decision in spirit, and work to implement in action, practicing the Third Step in the process.

Tom began by noting that much of the sharing from a past presentation by the late John S., general service trustee “Accepting an Informed Group Conscience” reflected much of his own thoughts and feelings verbatim. Therefore, much of the talk had been taken from John S.

Tom opened with the question, “What does the term ‘group conscience’ mean to you? More importantly, what does it mean to Alcoholics Anonymous?”

Taking from John S.’s presentation, Tom shared, “I feel it is only fair to warn you that the title of my talk could have just as easily been ‘Let’s Talk About the Tyranny of the Minority.’ Nothing that I say today is in any way aimed at stifling debate or infringing on the right of the minority to be heard.”

Tom went on to say, “The essential ingredients to an informed group conscience are that all the relevant facts are presented for discussion, that everyone has been given a full and equal voice, and that we only act on serious matters through substantial unanimity. Please notice that the emphasis here is on the word ‘informed.’ We can satisfy all these requirements, yet still not have a guarantee that we have reached a right decision.”

Majorities, as well as minorities, can be wrong. Bill W. recognized that it is possible to be “fully informed” and “wrong.” Warrant Four states, “That all important decisions be reached by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity.” In discussing this warranty, Bill said, “When a decision taken in substantial unanimity does happen to go wrong, there can be no heated recrimination. Everybody will be able to say, ‘Well, we had a careful debate, we took the decision, and it turned out to be a bad one. Better luck next time!’”

Tom continued, “Let me speak frankly here. Alcoholics Anonymous has its fair share of magnificent malcontents, people who apparently make it their life’s work to produce ‘heated recriminations’ that will fill your mailbox and pollute the ethers of your email. Unfortunately, all of us often fall short of the ideal civility that Bill W. held out to us. I think what Bill was pointing out is that the extraordinary rights we grant the minority and the deliberately slow process we use to reach a decision are designed not to guarantee that we will always be right, but that we will always seek to preserve A.A. unity. I believe that the minority’s right to be heard is vital in preserving our unity as a fellowship, but like any right that we enjoy in a democratic society, it must be exercised responsibly. After all, in our society at large, we cherish the right of free speech; yet no one has the right to yell ‘fire’ in a crowded theater.

“I do not expect that there will ever be uniformity of opinion within the Fellowship regarding many of the

great issues to come before us at the Conference. These are certainly matters capable of debate. People with equal love and concern for the Fellowship can find themselves on different sides of these issues. I am more than happy to engage in a dialogue with anyone on the facts and the application of A.A. principles to those sets of facts or situations. However, when there is a long history of time and effort devoted to seeking an informed group conscience on an issue, both at the level of the General Service Conference and throughout the Fellowship, I usually find that by this time I have long since ceased to try to win converts to my way of thinking.

“At this stage, my primary purpose in engaging in such a dialog is to allow myself and others to answer this question: Has the minority opinion been given full and fair hearing? Each of us must answer this question for him- or herself. I trust that each of us in answering this question will then be able to act in a way that permits us to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic and to preserve A.A. unity.”

After the presentations, David S., moderator, invited sharing on the topic from those in attendance, including the delegates of the World Service Meeting who were attending the General Service Board weekend as observers.

A World Service delegate began the sharing by saying how he had never learned the Traditions by being on a committee, reading books, or listening to people at workshops. Instead, he had learned by participating in districts and assemblies, seeing how the Traditions of A.A. were applied in real situations.

He was told there are four ways to test our discussions:

1. Is it current?
2. Is it employed?
3. Is it the letter of the law (the written word)? —  
You don’t have to be exact.
4. Is it the spirit of the word? What is the intent?

The last two can be illustrated with this question: Is it promotion, or is it awareness? He shared, “I always focus on the 12 Traditions first so I can really listen. I have to listen to learn, but I also have to learn to listen. There’s a fine line between being an elder statesman and a bleeding deacon; sometimes, we hopscotch across that line.”

He shared how even sometimes you might think you’re being an elder statesman, but you could just be pushing your own ideas or opinions. “In my opinion, an important part of the group consciousness happens two days later when I find myself lobbying for my ideas. Once a decision is made, it’s not about whether I agree; it’s about me supporting that decision. If it’s not meant to be, we can always review it.”

Three things that impact the group conscience are:

1. Well informed: the right decision.
2. Uninformed: we end up discussing it for a long time.
3. Misinformed: this is the most troublesome. “I’ve learned that if I fail to prepare, I’m preparing to fail.”

Another World Service delegate shared his experience with not agreeing with decisions made at his General Service Conference. There had been instances in which he had been able to appreciate that although he had not agreed, he would support it as it was the group conscience of the Fellowship. However, there was one decision where his conference was opposed to adopting the U.S./Canada decision to change the Preamble. He had felt so exposed when he had raised his hand against the recommendation in the voting session and was not able to change to majority opinion. He noted that in his structure, questions are not readdressed for three years. He had been preparing to raise the question and then came to realize that the time requirement was actually three conference cycles, which means he will have to wait another two years. He has learned that sometimes when a Higher Power influences a group conscience, that HP probably knows we need time to adjust.

A GSO staff member then shared how they had the privilege of attending that service structure’s Conference while on the International Assignment. There is a recognition of group autonomy and group similarities. It was a wonderful experience. “After a long day, many of us needed an A.A. meeting. The Preamble was read, ‘Alcoholics Anonymous is a Fellowship of people who share their experience, strength and hope...’ No matter where they are located, groups will do what they want to do.”

A Class B trustee shared about the principle of humility as it relates to the group conscience. There is truly a humility in being able to report, live in and implement the group conscience. We promote unity in the group by doing that. “I don’t get to go home and say, ‘Well this is what ‘they’ did, but I didn’t agree.’ I don’t get to say why I think I was right, and ‘they’ were wrong. The second principle to exercise is faith in the group conscience, in order to then apply humility and have the willingness to step aside.

The third principle which is so important is rotation. There is a beauty about the way the structure is set up. Our Founders observed that when we stay too long, it gets harder to accept the group conscience. “That’s when it’s time to go home and make coffee at my home group.”

A general service trustee shared on how we can help

bring forward the group conscience. “We are going through Proposed Agenda Items (PAI) that have been sent in by members of our Fellowship, groups, districts and areas. These items were sent in because of a group conscience, which believes they are good ideas for Alcoholics Anonymous. They may not know that we have a total of 145 of them to consider. We will not have the time to go through every one of those items at the General Service Conference. Perhaps we can do a better job of informing our groups, districts and areas and individual members that taking no action on an agenda item does not mean we are not grateful for their effort in discussing and submitting it. Maybe we can introduce more information about the conference, agenda items, and PAI submissions. It’s been observed for years now that there is a distancing between the Fellowship and the bottom of the triangle. More effective communication is a way to bridge that divide and help us all to come to an informed group conscience.

“A few things that have been helpful in understanding the group conscience: Consider how we behave in our home groups; remember that our group conscience is guided by our Higher Power; pray to be instruments of peace, love, and forgiveness; to bring hope, light, and joy; and to always remember that we are trying to do the best that we can for Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole.”

## International

The 28th World Service Meeting (WSM) delegates attending the trustees’ International Committee shared their experiences from the WSM. They agreed that regardless of the size of their structure or how long it has been in existence, the challenges faced by A.A. groups around the world — whether small, old, new, wealthy or poor — are similar. The love for A.A. and the desire to serve and help is a shared commitment among all. Several delegates expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to connect with structures worldwide and to attend the General Service Board weekend. Many were impressed by how the U.S. and Canada conduct their business and appreciated the autonomy that each structure has.

The committee reviewed and accepted the AAWS Licensing and Translation Report and noted that A.A. Iran has initiated the process to translate the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* in Kurdish language to help carry the message of recovery to alcoholics of the Kurdish community living at the border with Iraq.

The trustees-at-large for the U.S. and Canada shared about their experiences at A.A. conventions in Colombia, Portugal, and Poland noting the valuable opportunity to interact with members of the A.A. Fellowship in other

countries and learn from their experiences carrying the message of A.A. to newcomers, to correctional facilities and reaching out to professionals.

## **International Convention/Regional Forums**

### ***International Convention***

The committee received an update on vendor information on audio recordings at the 2025 International Convention. A firm was located to produce audiotapes of all International Convention sessions, including the A.A. portion of the Big Meetings. Consider the timing of when to open sales based on historical timelines.

The committee reviewed and accepted the progress report of the subcommittee to develop a new declaration to be adopted at the 2030 International Convention. The committee appreciated the concept of creating a declaration related to our Third Legacy of Service, potentially the topic of group conscience and participation.

The committee received a verbal report from the 2025 Volunteer Welcome Committee chair that included information about the six-member Core Team attending more than 20 service and fellowship events with International Convention displays. The volunteer mailing list is currently 1,678.

### ***Regional Forums***

The committee agreed to appoint a subcommittee to review Regional Forums Request for Information (RFI) forms.

Responses to the Evaluation Questionnaires for the 2024 Pacific and Eastern Canada Regional Forums were largely positive and provided thoughtful suggestions to consider, especially regarding interpreting needs. We had a great turnout of Spanish and Francophone members at the two Regional Forums. Based on attendee feedback we have fallen short of providing adequate interpreting services. The staff secretary was asked to gather information on additional interpreting options that may be useful.

The committee accepted the suggested date of January 17, 2026, for the Special Forum for the Deaf Community.

### **Literature**

The subcommittee for the Fifth Edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous* continues to prepare a draft manuscript. The Fifth Edition subcommittee is charged with updating the story section, expanding Appendices III and V, updating the Preface, and writing a new Foreword.

The working group for the Fourth Edition of *Alcohólicos Anónimos* continues to work on a draft manu-

script. The working group continues to review story submissions and to receive updated chapter translations.

New Appointed Committee Members were approved to guide the development of new pamphlets for the transgender alcoholic and for the Asian and Asian-American alcoholic. The service opportunity is being shared in Box 4-5-9, Grapevine and La Viña, and through Area Delegates, Literature Committee Chairs, and Intergroups and Central Offices.

### **Nominating**

The trustees' Nominating Committee selected three candidates for Class A General Service Board Trustee to invite to the February 2025 board meetings. The committee's decision was based on a comparison of professional skills and leadership experience listed in candidate résumés, followed by virtual interviews of the top applicants. In February the three candidates will be interviewed a second time by the trustees' Nominating Committee. The applicants will be able to attend board committee meetings as observers, and circulate with trustees, staff, and delegate chairs throughout the weekend. The General Service Board will approve two applicants to be included on the 2025 General Service Board slate of Trustees.

The committee recommended Julie C. and Matt K. to serve as AAWS, Inc. Nontrustee Directors following the 2025 General Service Conference.

### **Public Information**

The committee watched five of the English language video public service announcements (PSAs) and provided feedback to the staff secretary, which will be incorporated into the Annual Report on Usefulness and Relevance of PSAs and forwarded to the 2025 Conference Committee on Public Information.

The committee expressed appreciation for the themes of the videos, especially "hope" and asked for consideration to include these ideas and messages in future videos.

The committee agreed to offer a suggestion to the Conference Committee on Public Information that the reference to a phone book in the video "Since Getting Sober I Have Hope" be removed.

The committee agreed that it would be advantageous to create new PSAs, but given the current budget constraints, offered a suggestion that one video at a time be developed.

The committee agreed to forward a suggestion to the 2025 Conference Committee on Public Information that a new video PSA be developed.

Following implementation of an Advisory Action of the 74th General Service Conference to distribute and track two video PSAs, the committee reviewed a report from external vendor Connect360 detailing the distribution of video PSAs. It was reported that in October, the English-language PSAs aired on 42 television stations in the U.S. for a value of \$999,404 in donated media. During that same time, Spanish-language PSAs aired on twelve unique TV stations in the U.S. for a value of \$73,636 in donated media. Canadian distribution of the same PSAs (in English and French) during this time was paused, pending the assignment of Canadian telecaster numbers and the inclusion of that data in the digital broadcast files. The committee looks forward to a progress report at the February 2025 meeting.

## Treatment and Accessibilities

The committee reviewed a draft of the revised flyer “Where Do I Go From Here?” (F-4) and considered two proposed designs. The committee approved a design to send to the 2025 Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities.

The committee approved the updated flyer of Accessibilities Resources published on aa.org and forwarded to the 2025 Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities for their review.

The committee reviewed the updated service piece “Making the A.A. Message Accessible” (F-107) with sharing from neurodivergent members. The committee agreed to send additional edits to the staff secretary and looks forward to seeing a draft at the February 2025 meeting.

## A.A. World Services

### Overview

Since its July 25, 2024, meeting, the A.A. World Services (AAWS) Corporate Board has met twice: September 6 and November 1. During this same period, the AAWS Finance, Publishing, Technology/Communication/Services, and Internal Audit committees each met once. Additionally, the AAWS chair and general manager met weekly, and the members of the AAWS Board met to discuss revisions to the AAWS Bylaws on October 23. This does not include meetings of sub-committees.

### AAWS Strategic Planning

The AAWS board met for four hours on Friday, September 6, in a strategic planning session to focus on two priority areas, separate from its normal business meeting schedule. The first was finance/budget and the second was communications.

The finance/budget discussion established guidance for AAWS’s FY2025 budget planning. In addition, the board decided it was prudent to create a three-year projection of expenses and revenue. That will allow a deeper look at some known extraordinary expenses on the horizon, such as the pending office renovations, and potential revenue from new publishing items including the *Plain Language Big Book — A Tool for Reading Alcoholics Anonymous* and the fifth edition of the *Big Book Alcoholics Anonymous*. This longer-range organizational planning will also prioritize what’s commonly called the “deferred project list” and support discussions about rebuilding the Reserve Fund.

The communications portion centered on improving communications in three broad areas: within the AAWS board itself; with the two other boards and the General Service Office; and with the Fellowship. This initial session generated many ideas that the board will explore further at its meeting in December.

## BOARD COMMITTEES

### Internal Audit Committee

The board approved the following recommendations to accept Technology Services policies:

- The IAC recommended that the AAWS Board adopt the Asset Management Policy.
- The IAC recommended that the AAWS Board adopt the Access Management Policy.
- The IAC recommended that the AAWS Board adopt the Data Protection Policy.
- The IAC recommended that the AAWS Board adopt the Physical Document Protection Policy.
- The IAC recommended that the AAWS Board approve the updated HR RACI (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, and Informed) Matrix utilized to determine what roles individuals will play as work is carried out and to what extent they will be involved in the project overall.
- The IAC recommended that the AAWS Board approve the 2024 Internal Audit Committee Comp, Scope and Procedure document.
- The IAC recommended that all AAWS Board Directors and Trustees undergo annual anti-harassment and discrimination training, to align with internal office policies and the Code of Conduct.

### Interim Language Services Committee

The committee continues to work to establish standardized processes and timelines for translations, keeping in mind available resources (both human and finan-

cial). In July and September, the committee reviewed the timelines and processes for Conference materials and forwarded that to the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference. In November, the committee reviewed the timelines and processes related to the Publishing Department.

### **Publishing Committee**

The board approved the following recommendations to be presented by the Publishing Committee:

- The Publishing Committee recommended that the AAWS Board adopt a fixed discount percentage of 35% to the list prices of discount literature package components with content evaluation to follow.
- The Publishing Committee recommended that the AAWS Board move forward with the proposed holiday offer for \$8 off the History Shelf (B-33), Alcoholics Anonymous Facsimile (B-3) for \$3, and a 15% discount on orders over \$100.
- The Publishing Committee recommended that the AAWS Board move forward with 100 units of the DVD production for the video "Markings on the Journey" at a list price of \$12.00.
- The Publishing Committee recommended that the AAWS Board move forward with a 200-unit flash drive production of the video "Markings on the Journey" at a list price of \$21.00.

### **Technology/Communications/Services (TCS)**

The board approved the following recommendations to be presented by the TCS Committee:

- The TCS committee recommended to the AAWS Board that the Analytics Working Group Progress Report be forwarded by AAWS to the trustees' Committee on Public Information.
- The TCS committee recommended to the AAWS Board that the 2024 third quarter LinkedIn report be forwarded by AAWS to the trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community.
- The TCS committee recommended to the AAWS Board that the 2024 third quarter reports on Website, Meeting Guide app, YouTube, Google Ads, Online Business Listings and Podcast be forwarded by AAWS to the trustees' Committee on Public Information.

### **What's Happening at GSO**

Happy Autumn! I hope all are enjoying the beautiful changes it brings. As leaves begin to change their colors and the weather cools, the work at the General Service Office continues at a brisk pace.

### **Workload**

Concerns regarding workload continue to remain a high priority. The working group "Board Office Balance" meets regularly to discuss and assess the full office workload including staff support to both the General Service Board and the AAWS Board, their committees, subcommittees and working groups. The group is preparing to execute a full inventory of GSO.

### **2025 International Convention**

Registration for the convention opened on September 10, the excitement mounts as we approach the first in-person International Convention since 2015 held in Atlanta, Georgia. The first day of Online Registration was very robust, processing 13,154 registrations! With the enthusiasm for the convention being so high, our room block was depleted quicker than past conventions. Consistent with previous conventions, we are working with several hotels to provide more rooms. The Online Registration and Housing system includes links to alternative housing that is available outside our room block and in the greater Vancouver area, including hotel rooms, Airbnb and housing at local universities.

### **2024 World Service Meeting**

We are grateful to have welcomed over 75 World Service Meeting delegates representing 49 autonomous A.A. structures from around the world to the World Service Meeting, October 26–31. It was the largest attendance in the meeting's history. The World Service Meeting is a deeply important and spiritual event. Our General Service Board has also invited the WSM delegates to observe the GSB Weekend immediately following the event. This is consistent with past practice of our GSB and the WSM and will absolutely be significant for these autonomous structures to help them with the evolution of their own development, ultimately increasing the effectiveness of carrying the message around the world.

The International Assignment has been engaged in final preparations for the event, working closely to adopt a stronger Seventh Tradition support policy. All participating structures made sacrifices to implement cost-saving measures. Since its inception in 2018, the World Service Meeting Fund has significantly helped the WSM move closer to self-supporting. It is the primary support to countries in need to meet their Seventh Tradition responsibilities as well as to offset our structures financial participation.

### **Additional Activities**

The AAWS Board was assigned 20 Proposed Agenda Items for consideration for the 75th General Service

Conference (GSC). While the AAWS Board did not forward any of these to the GSC, some suggestions for things like existing items in additional formats were noted and will be forwarded to Publishing for consideration. Each submitter will receive a response from the AAWS Board. The full list of proposed items and their disposition will be consolidated from all boards and committees and provided to all Conference members.

## AA Grapevine

### Overview

Since the quarterly board meeting on July 25, 2024, the AA Grapevine Board of Directors met once for a Strategic Planning meeting on September 7 and again at the quarterly board meeting on November 1. At the invitation of the board, the following were also present for a short period of time throughout the course of the quarterly meeting: Andie Moss, Class A trustee (nonalcoholic); Gail P., Western Canada Regional Trustee; Dawn Klug, Class A trustee (nonalcoholic).

### Management Report

The board was updated by the Publisher on the following:

#### Apps

- Grapevine downloads in Q3: 6,916 compared to 8,159 in Q2
  - » Total in-app subscriptions in Q3: 6,020 compared to 5,510 in Q2
  - » Total subscribers with app access: 14,337 compared to 14,392 in Q2
- La Viña downloads in Q3: 291 compared to 360 in Q2
  - » Total in-app subscriptions through Q3: 253 compared to 202 through Q2

» Total subscribers with app access through Q3: 435 compared to 440 through Q2

- Income from Apple Store and Google Play, life of apps: \$185,678.88

### Print Magazines Subscription averages first half of 2024

- Grapevine 45,492 (508 copies under reforecast)
- La Viña 6,569 (531 copies under reforecast)

### Total Subscription averages first half of 2024 (print, app, online, complete)

- Grapevine 59,263
- La Viña 6,986
- Trade Sales year-to-date through September, \$158,188; down 5% from previous year-to-date, \$166,400

### New Media

- *Podcast*: 980,000 total downloads — up 94,716 since July. Averaging 869 downloads per day, 6,080 per week and 24,300 per month. On track to exceed one million downloads in 2024. Third anniversary episode on October 4. IC GSO Staff member Patrick C. guest on September 9, day before registration opened. Patrick also giving monthly updates on the podcast.
- *Instagram*: GV has 13,094 followers, up 294 since July. LV has 1,830 followers, up 63 since July. Top posts were a historic marker at Stepping Stones with the Bill and Lois house in background and an overheard-in-a-meeting meme: “I worked as a bartender on Saturdays, but that was like having a rabbit watch over the lettuce.”
- *YouTube*: 14,300 subscribers, up 400 since July. 325 videos, up 27 since July. 236,534 views overall. American Sign Language videos playlist has 4,962 views to date. Other new playlists: Sober Women in A.A., Familia Audio playlist (LV), YPAA Audio project.

## BOOK PUBLISHING

### Grapevine Store — Total Books Sold by Month & Promotions

Month	2023	2024	Var	% Var	Promotion
Jan	2,375	3,899	1,524	64.2%	n/a
Feb	4,148	5,163	1,015	24.5%	n/a
Mar	4,519	6,920	2,401	53.1%	n/a
<b>Apr</b>	<b>3,815</b>	<b>7,556</b>	<b>3,741</b>	<b>98.1%</b>	<b>Our 12 Step Launch</b>
<b>May</b>	<b>5,100</b>	<b>6,089</b>	<b>989</b>	<b>19.4%</b>	<b>Save 20% on Select Books</b>
Jun	4,219	6,215	1,996	47.3%	n/a
Jul	5,503	4,871	(632)	-11.5%	n/a
Aug	5,614	4,470	(1,144)	-20.4%	n/a
<b>Sep</b>	<b>5,626</b>	<b>5,890</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>4.7%</b>	<b>Re-promote Our 12 Step Launch</b>
<b>YTD thru Sep</b>	<b>40,919</b>	<b>51,073</b>	<b>10,154</b>	<b>24.8%</b>	

## Financials and Reforecast

The chair reported since the hiring of Donna C. as the AAGV Controller, the quality of the reports has been exceptional, and they have been submitted in a timely manner. Subscriptions are up 10% for both Grapevine and La Viña and gross margin is up over \$400K.

See Grapevine and La Viña financial summary on the following pages.

## Staff Reports

- AAWS Publisher reached out to Grapevine for attraction help with Plain Language Big Book. AAGV staff set up the following:
  - » Push notices on the GV App
  - » Link to AAWS on our website
  - » Article in the GV Magazine
  - » Literature Desk Staff member is guest on the GV Podcast 11/4
  - » Instagram Posts
- 28th La Viña Anniversary assembly resulted in \$13,000 collection to be allocated for the “Carry the Message” (CTM) fund or purchase of subscriptions.
- GV Engagement Editor now holds office hours allowing areas to connect and share ideas.
- Customer Service focuses have been training, phone messages, hiring and tracking customer service concerns.
- Licensing ad hoc committee created to review business model, and intellectual properties. Communication letter will be sent to all countries with licensing requests
- Editors and Production Manager current new projects include:
  - » Convention Souvenir Journal
  - » *Language of the Heart* special convention edition
  - » La Viña Agenda/Planner
  - » New La Viña collection book — *Lo Mejor De La Viña 2*
  - » Emotional Sobriety set with premium
- Web Coordinator reported seven new videos published on Instagram and YouTube:
  - » Why A.A. members love GV/LV Digital
  - » Explore the universe of GV/LV Digital Publications
  - » Two engaging videos about the ASL playlist
  - » Three engaging videos about the current GV/LV issues are live online.

## AA GRAPEVINE, INC. — Financial Report

CIRCULATION	September 2024 Actual YTD	September 2024 Reforecast YTD	Variance Actual vs Reforecast	September 2023 Actual YTD	Variance 2024 vs 2023
GV Magazine Circulation	45,492	46,000	(508)		
GV Complete	5,454	5,610	(156)		
GV Online	2,987	3,900	(913)		
GV App	5,330	6,700	(1,370)		
<b>Total Circulation</b>	<b>59,263</b>	<b>62,210</b>	<b>(2,947)</b>	<b>53,902</b>	<b>5,361</b>
FINANCIAL ACTIVITY					
Gross Margin on Subs/App Cross	685,385	712,076	(26,691)	447,252	238,133
Gross Margin-Books and other items	576,288	588,768	(12,480)	361,451	214,837
<b>Gross Margin</b>	<b>1,261,673</b>	<b>1,300,844</b>	<b>(39,171)</b>	<b>808,703</b>	<b>452,970</b>
EXPENSES					
Editorial	540,662	541,325	(663)	725,851	(185,188)
Circulation and Business	1,252,410	1,243,859	8,551	636,365	616,044
General and Administrative	88,129	88,088	121	40,776	47,352
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>1,881,201</b>	<b>1,873,192</b>	<b>8,009</b>	<b>1,402,992</b>	<b>478,208</b>
Reserve Fund Interest	7,200	7,200	0	4,672	2,528
<b>Net Income (Loss)</b>	<b>(612,329)</b>	<b>(565,148)</b>	<b>(47,181)</b>	<b>(589,617)</b>	<b>(22,711)</b>

## LA VIÑA — Financial Report

CIRCULATION	September 2024 Actual YTD	September 2024 Reforecast YTD	Variance Actual vs Reforecast	September 2023 Actual YTD	Variance 2024 vs 2023
LV Magazine Circulation	6,569	7,100	(531)		
LV Complete	109	113	(4)		
LV Online	73	55	18		
LV App	235	350	(115)		
<b>Total Circulation</b>	<b>6,986</b>	<b>7,618</b>	<b>(632)</b>	<b>6,345</b>	<b>641</b>
FINANCIAL ACTIVITY					
Gross Margin on Subs/App Cross	22,931	25,617	(2,686)	30,103	(7,172)
Gross Margin-Books and other items	60,703	61,266	(563)	55,473	5,230
<b>Gross Margin</b>	<b>83,634</b>	<b>86,883</b>	<b>(3,249)</b>	<b>85,576</b>	<b>(1,942)</b>
EXPENSES					
Editorial	255,580	259,118	(3,538)	406,583	(151,003)
Circulation and Business	248,923	242,768	6,155	242,074	636,365
General and Administrative	15,795	18,050	(2,255)	6,481	9,314
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>520,298</b>	<b>519,936</b>	<b>362</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>(134,838)</b>
Total Operating Income (Shortfall)	(436,664)	(433,053)	(3,611)	(569,561)	132,896
Contribution GSB	436,664	433,053	3,611	569,561	132,896
<b>Net Income (Loss)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

## Board Meeting

### Board Committee Activity

*Nominating and Governance:* Teresa J. reported the AAGV N & G committee has submitted their recommendations for the Regional Trustee and the Class B Trustee to the Trustees Nominating Committee in accordance with Procedure 5a.

*2025 Int'l Convention Ad hoc:* Morgan B. reported we are putting together a volunteer list with the help of Nikki O. There will be a Grapevine play in the afternoon titled “My Fair Drunk Lady.” There was also discussion on developing a commemorative *Language of the Heart* edition for the convention.

*Artificial Intelligence Ad hoc:* Teddy B-W. reported there will be an AI Briefing/Orientation during the December meeting. A collection of best practices will be gathered by the office manager. They will include helpful articles, best practices, policies, reports and presentations. We will be forming guidelines and will have ongoing communication with AAWS.

*La Viña Ad Hoc:* Chris reported that the committee met three times, and we are focusing on making improvements. The committee is creating a five-year plan for La Viña. Customer Service has hired a new Spanish-speaking

rep and developed a new script. LV Chairs are helping members subscribe at events. There are videos for “LV app how to” on Instagram and YouTube platforms.

*AAGV/LV Survey Ad Hoc:* Morgan reported discussion regarding the Committee Consideration on the survey. Past surveys for GV subscribers’ costs were over \$20K and a survey for the Fellowship would be considerably more. We already have data that gauges popularity. Our recommendation is to take no action regarding a survey, as there is a significant expense, and the existing data is sufficient for current needs.

### Editorial Advisory Board

Cathy M. from Maine is the newest member. Representatives from Central U.S. and Eastern Canada needed.

### Strategic Planning

Molly Oliver (nonalcoholic) stated with the assistance of Nikki O., who has professional experience in organizational psychology, that they have put together a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunity, Threats (SWOT) analysis. This will help develop strategies to improve our products and strategies. Ninety minutes will be put aside at the December planning meeting.

### ***Delegates Chair Meeting with GV Conference Committee***

AAGV Board Chair Joyce met with the AAGV Conference committee on October 15 to discuss the proposed agenda items for the 75th GSC. Grapevine Editor-in-Chief Jon W., Conference Secretary Paola M. and Office Manager Kimberly L. also attended. The proposed agenda items were presented for input. Each item received consideration and conversation. No voting took place. Notes from the discussion were brought to the AA Grapevine board for further discussion and final decision.

#### **Old Business**

- Board authorized publisher to make the apps available internationally.
- Grapevine and La Viña packet given to the World Service delegates.
- AAWS and GV Board 2025 Calendars were discussed. The calendar now allows AAWS to attend AAGV virtual meeting and AAGV to attend AAWS virtual meetings.
- The AAGV outreach Event Calendar for the first half of 2025 was finalized.

#### **New Business**

- LV Podcast play from Area 06 at the 2025 International Convention was discussed. The performers would pay their own way. Chris stated that there is a GV play and thinks it would be great for LV to have one. Julia D. volunteered to collaborate with Paz P.
- Pension Plan fees discussed — motion to accept fee, seconded, approved.
- An idea for GV greeting cards was presented. They would consist of AAGV cartoons and other editorials and art from A.A. members repackaged in the form of greeting cards. A motion to proceed was seconded and the board approved.

- Apple is offering to take a book and create an audiobook for free. In exchange they would get the exclusive rights for six months. It would be AI narrated. After six months it would be ours to sell. Publisher gathering additional information so board can look at questions of affiliation and exclusivity of one distributor on one outlet.

### **Grapevine Board Actions**

The board took the following actions at its meeting September 7, 2024

- Approved the June 22 planning meeting minutes
- Approved the GV Treasurer report
- Approved the LV Treasurer report
- Approved price increase for LV to \$3.00 per issue with other subscriptions — parallel to what we do with AA Grapevine with an amendment by January 1, 2025

The board took the following actions at its quarterly meeting November 1, 2024

- Approved the July minutes with amendments
- Approved the GV Treasurer report
- Approved the LV Treasurer report
- Approved a Licensing Ad Hoc committee to include Chris, David, Teddy, Donna, and Kimberly and have report back for January meeting
- Approved Chris to proceed making GV app available internationally and have report back for January meeting
- Approved authorizing up to \$1,575 in actuarial fees to evaluate the impact of a potential Cost of Living Adjustment for the A.A. Employees' Pension Plan
- Approved Greeting Cards Pilot and have a report back in December
- Approved preparing a five-year plan for the Grapevine (2026–2030) to be presented to the 76th GSC.

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