Discussion Topic for Committee Meeting

2.28.2015

Our practice of posting meeting minutes on our website has been on my mind. As often happens, one question lead to another so I reviewed service material. In particular, reports from the General Service Conference and Forum meetings, The A.A. Service Manual and our Area 17 Structures and Guidelines. Also, how GSO conducts meetings, writes reports, and shares this information with A.A. members. Our side of the street seemed important as well… What are we doing? How can we improve?

Are our assemblies and committee meetings open or closed? By the description of who attends, they are closed to Area 17 A.A. voting members and to any A.A. member who chooses to attend. They are not open to others, but we have from time to time invited visitors.

What should be included in our minutes, and how should the minutes be written up? Currently our minutes include “at the microphone” comments and give verbatim accounts. Some minutes give first names and last initials, other minutes do not. Instead of names and last initial, we could use terms like: “The members response, or the members commented.” And instead of including all the information that lead to decisions, we could report a summary of the decision.

Who should have access to our meeting minutes? The GSC report is not online. It is a confidential publication and is for members only. Our meeting minutes are posted online and are accessible to anyone in the world. If area meetings are closed, and for us only, we need a more discreet way to make minutes available to members.

Here are some of the references found while looking through our service literature:

Who may attend?

Area 17 Structures and Guidelines: Page 1- the assembly/committee meeting consists of voting members of the Area Assembly or their alternates, and A.A. members

A.A. Service Manual, S 55-56 - lists conference membership for GSC (may wish to invite visitors)

What is the content of our minutes? –

A.A. Service Manual S 58 – The GSC Report provides complete records of reports, discussion, workshops and actions. It is not a verbatim account, but no significant aspect is omitted.

Who do we report back to and who can have access to our meeting minutes?

A.A. Service Manual, S 52 - Reporting on the Conference (to groups/districts/area)

A.A. Service Manual S 58 - Develop a system of reporting (to groups/the fellowship)

How do we report back to our members in a confidential manner?

The General Service Conference Report, page 1 Contents– the report is a *confidential* A.A. document for members only, usage approved by the 1975 Conference.

aa.org East Central Regional Forum 2014, A.A. and Advancing Technologies: “To protect anonymity there could be secured areas on websites that are password protected: these could be used for the posting of minutes. There really is no privacy on-line. We need to form ad-hoc committee to explore these challenges.”

It seems like the next indicated step is to appoint an ad hoc committee to review our current practices, research these challenges, and make suggestions.

Coleen A., Area 17 Chair, Panel 65