ACA Conference Business Meeting (CBM) Minutes
January 31, 2026,
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. ET
Held via Video Conference/Zoom

Notes taken by Karin O., CBM Secretary
Minutes prepared by Trish Irelan, Exec. Asst. to Board Secretary
Minutes approved at the Annual Business Conference on May 16, 2026.

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Pre-Meeting; Help desk: technical, agenda, and process questions
Opening • Serenity Prayer • Diversity Statement • The Suggested Commitment to Service Reading • Daily Meditation Reading • **Notice:** Meeting is Recorded
WSO Chair Welcome • Conference Co-Chairs Introductions
Welcome Delegates Zoom Chat information and guidelines Introductions

Technology Briefing

Safety protocol link

Review of Agenda

Establish Quorum- 48 delegates

ABC Committee Chair Report (Marcus H. & Carmen B.)

Marcus and Carmen provided an update on what the ABC Committee and related subcommittees have accomplished in recent months, and highlighted current service opportunities and fellowship/conference needs, including:

- Service needs/volunteer opportunities:
  - The committee is seeking to train an additional conference secretary and recruit additional members into this service role.
  - Marcus thanked Karin for continuing fellowship service support, especially while Trish (WSO Board Secretary) was out sick.
  - Marcus and Carmen announced they will term out as ABC Committee chairs at the 2026 ABC and encouraged members to join and consider leadership roles.
  - One volunteer, Eric R., has stepped up to help facilitate the 2026 ABC; additional volunteers are still needed.
- Meeting schedule: ABC Committee meetings are held on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays at 10:30 am Eastern.
- Sustainability Subcommittee update:
  - The subcommittee is reviewing conference structures used by other 12-step programs, with the goal of exploring potential improvements to the ABC structure.
  - They will give a presentation later in the meeting, and volunteers are invited to participate.
- Floor Motions Task Force update:
  - The task force was formed after the last CBM.
  - They will present later on proposed wording for a future motion regarding time-sensitive motions.
  - Their next work period will focus on wording for emergency motions.
  - The task force meets on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays from 12:30–1:30pm Eastern.
- Parliamentary process / appeals:
  - For this meeting, the chair stated they will follow past practice and the OPPM regarding appeals of chair rulings, allowing appeals during the alternate motion process.
  - Delegates later will vote on a future motion related to appealing chair rulings; if it passes, it would not be implemented until it proceeds through minority opinion and then the ABC.
- Document process improvements - The committee has been working to standardize when committee documents are due, to allow materials to be posted to the portal earlier.
- Delegates will receive a post-CBM survey and are encouraged to provide feedback on:
  - usefulness of the portal
  - timeliness of posted documents
  - whether they had sufficient information

- The committee responded to feedback about the prioritization survey, adding more information on each topic so delegates can better prioritize.
- Minority reports: The ABC Committee is developing a procedure for delegates to review, with the goal of adding a process to the OPPM.
    - Since the OPPM currently does not fully address minority reports, the committee will follow standard practice by using Robert's Rules.
- Delegate collaboration request: Carmen noted there are 29 ballot proposals, and asked delegates to share strategies in chat during the break for working through the proposals with their meeting groups.

Minority Opinions for Motions Passed at Sept. CBM

Voting Process

1. Proposal 13 - Committee Minutes Motion

   Motion: That all WSO committees (Collaboration Committees, Committees, and sub-committees), working groups, studies, advisory groups, and assessment projects submit meeting minutes or reports for posting on the ACAWSO.org website within two months of each meeting.

   Minority Opinion

   - I don't think two months is enough time for someone to type up all the minutes, submit them to IT, and have IT post them to the website. What happens if it doesn't get done?

   Response: No response.

   Poll: Do delegates wish to have a revote on this motion?

   Two delegates raised their hands. The 40% threshold was not reached for a revote, therefore the **motion stands.**

2. Nominating Committee Motion

   Motion: To amend the procedure in the OPPM to cease the use of the minority opinions on Trustee ratifications at the Annual Business Conference. Instead, for concerns about a Board member's emotional sobriety or qualifications, members/Delegates will instead use the fact based and verifiable "Concern for Board Fitness Input"form to be investigated and addressed by the Nominating Committee. (Brought forward by NomCom Chair)

Minority Opinion

- This is concerning for a number of reasons. A minority opinion is a basic, traditional spiritual right of our program, and Concept 3 says the right and responsibility of each trusted servant to speak and vote their conscience in the absence of any contrary mandate or any issue, regardless of the level of service. So that's a delegate speaking to a potential concern about a trustee. Another concern is about something being fact-based and verifiable that the nominating committee will be able to decide. I don't understand how that could be possible when one is presenting an opinion, a minority opinion based on experience. I feel this is a dangerous practice and a right being taken away.
- I am opposed because, while it might be uncomfortable for a trustee to hear a minority opinion, it is the most democratic process where an individual speaks to all of the

delegates like today, when there are 83 people instead of the nominating committee, which is less than 10 people.

- I am opposed because it's weird to me. The minority opinion is a basic right that we have, sort of like how the parliamentary procedures apply to group conscience, and that rationale shouldn't apply here. It might lead to people who are up for board ratification getting triggered. It seems to be protecting the emotions of people who are up for ratification. I think anyone who is up for ratification should be able to handle hard questions.

Response:

- Our process for trustee ratifications had no minority opinion until the 2022 ABC, and since then, we had a significant drop in applications. Our board trustees can handle themselves as we actually vet them for emotional sobriety. We need a continuous inflow of trustees to replace those who step down. As Adult Children, when we see someone put on the spot, it is very triggering, and it's not very emotionally safe for all of us because we need every delegate here to consider applying to be a trustee someday because our fellowship depends on every delegate here. Without the trustees, we don't exist; it's that simple. We went almost 2 years without any applications and it's not sustainable.

Poll: Do delegates want a revote?
16 delegates voted in favour. The 40% threshold was not reached for a revote, therefore the **motion stands.**

[Point of Order: *You only ask how many are opposed to revote, if it falls short of 40% of the quorum, they don't get a revote. So you only need to ask how many want a revote. Point accepted.*]

3. ABC Committee: Conference-related Changes voted on by Conference Motion

Motion: Any proposed changes to Conference-related sections of the WSO Operating Policy and Procedures Manual (OPPM) must be approved by a motion of the Conference, and added to the OPPM. Such information is currently contained in the Section entitled: ANNUAL BUSINESS CONFERENCE and CONFERENCE BUSINESS MEETINGS and in the APPENDIX entitled: ABC and CBM VOTING RULES. (Brought forward by ABC Study rep.)

Minority Opinion

- I'm concerned because as a first-time delegate at the ABC, there was so much information and I'm finding this a little bit blurry.

Response: No responses

Poll: Do delegates want a revote of this motion?

One delegate voted in favour. The 40% threshold was not reached for a revote, therefore the **motion stands.**

4. ABC Committee/Sustainability/Charter Restructuring Motion

Motion: Rename the ABC Study Subcommittee to be the Charter Committee and make it an ad hoc committee similar to the Concepts Committee. It will report to the Board and the conference. The balance of what the ABC Study Subcommittee was tasked with is assigned to the ABC Sustainability Study. All 3 committees (ABC Committee, ABC Study,

ABC Sustainability) have independently agreed to this change through group conscience. (Brought forward by ABC Study subcommittee)

- No minority opinions stated; therefore **motion stands**

5. Concept 2 to Fellowship Group Voting Motion

Motion: The version of Concept 2 approved at the 2025 ABC be placed into a Fellowship Group Vote process, so as to allow it to be approved and confirmed by the whole Fellowship, with the explicit understanding that a Conference decision not to initiate a Fellowship Group Vote here today will serve as a decision that the revised Concept 2 language already approved by the Conference at the 2025 ABC is final. (Brought forward by Concepts Study rep.)

Minority Opinion

- I voted no because these are ACA's founding documents, and they should not be changed. Most meetings don't read the concepts, so most members are not familiar with or knowledgeable enough about the concepts to make an informed decision. I'm sure many have not even heard of the concepts and I think that our founding documents are just too important, and we are not ready as a fellowship to make these determinations.

Response:

For clarification, this motion did not ask for approval about Concept 2 revision as it was approved at the 2025 ABC. This is only about it going to fellowship voting as it stands for final approval. Again, this motion is not about changing the concept as it's already been approved to revise Concept 2.

Poll: Delegates that want a revote?

Three delegates voted in favour. The 40% threshold was not reached for a revote, therefore the **motion stands.**

Motion for Appealing a Chair or Parliamentarian Ruling

Motion Presentation Voting Process

Motion: Is there a second on the motion?

- Region 5 - Josh seconded the motion

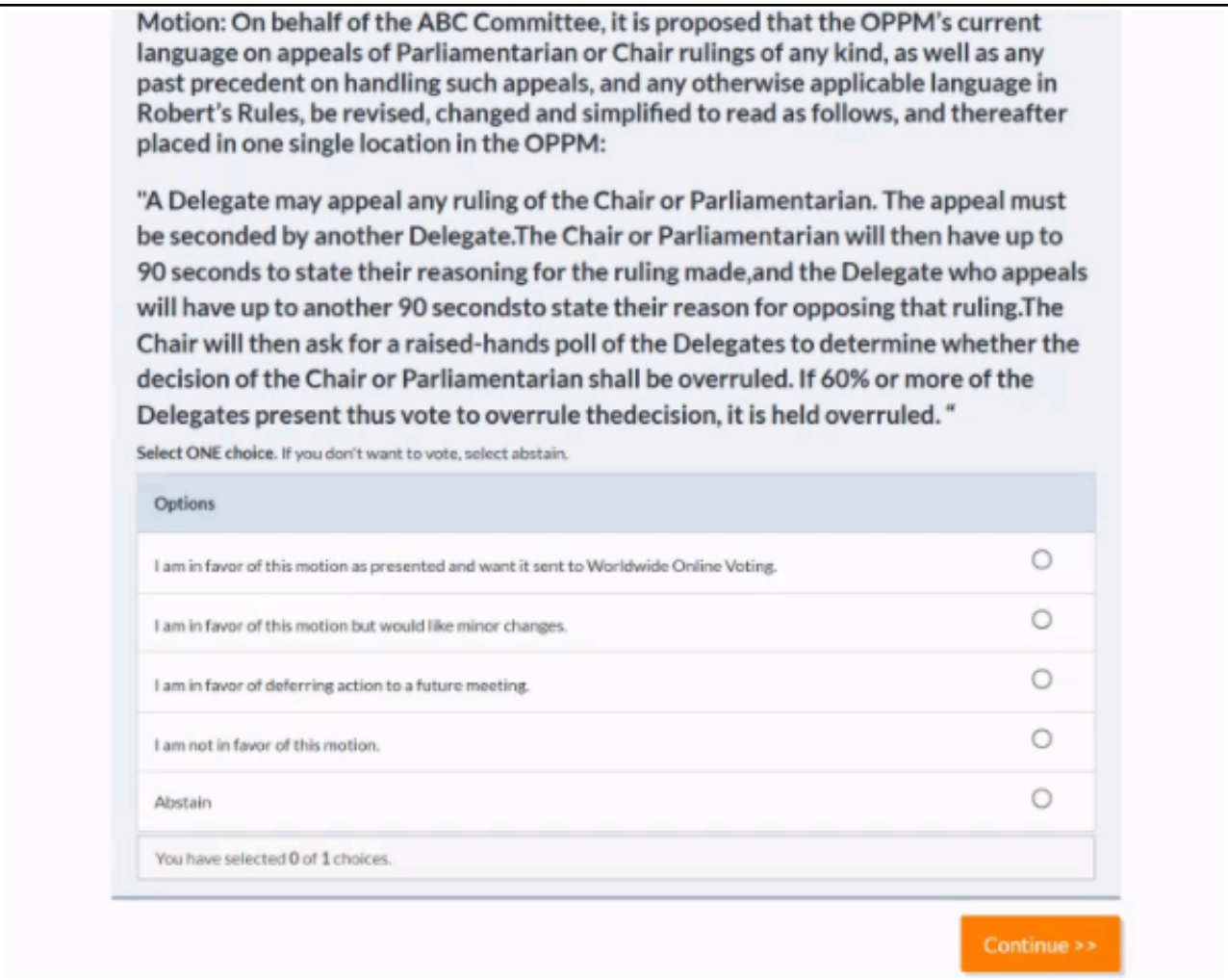
Discussion/Q&A:

- The bylaws for ACA WSO already state that disagreements will be resolved at the ABC by using Robert's Rules of Order. The bylaws also say that the ultimate authority for resolving disputes is a group conscience by those present, so I don't understand the reason for this procedure change
- There is a basic point to understand that right now procedurally, there isn't a way for delegates to challenge or appeal a chair's ruling directly, so this would establish a procedure by which the previous speaker talked about in principle. This could be applied in practice through a defined process that would live in the OPPM. So I think this is critical

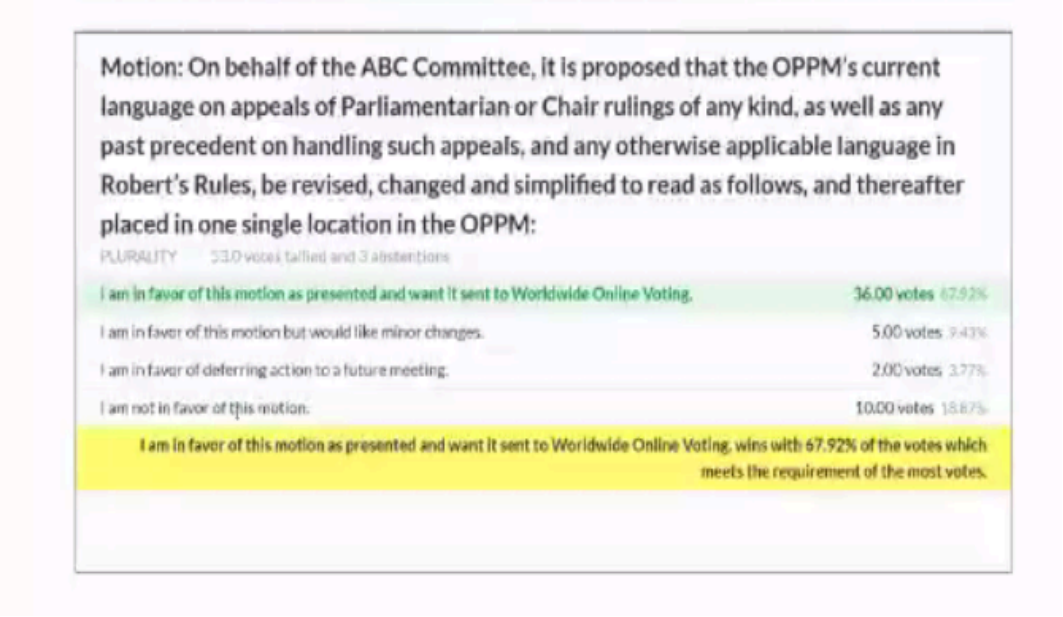
because it allows the group conscience of the delegates present to say, “wait a second, we actually object to that ruling, and we’d like to go a different direction”. So this context is important.

- The actual Robert’s Rules that are being used should be provided because I think it’s very confusing when a parliamentarian or the ABC committee says we’re following Robert’s Rules, and it isn't clear what version or parts, it's a mixed bag of OPPM rules and Parliamentarian rules.
- Q: Can someone speak to the notice about the modified Robert’s Rules of Order in March 2020 have been modified and approved by the board, and does that factor into this?
- A: The point in this motion is that we are setting Robert's Rules aside to simplify the process.
- A: The question about what Robert's Rules apply has been a confusing issue in the past and this is an attempt to say here is the rule and it will be put in the OPPM where it’s available and we will make sure it’s in that location as opposed to the current mixture of processes which are in at least two locations and unfortunately don’t even cover all circumstances. The point of this is to simplify, unify, and make it easily located.
- Q: Is this new motion removing the use of Robert's Rules of Order?
- A: It is correct that it removes Robert’s Rules, but only with regard to challenges of chair rulings or parliamentarian and nothing else.

<u>Voting:</u>



- Voting Results:



- **Motion Passed - will be sent to Worldwide Online Voting.**

Establish Quorum- 54 delegates

Floor Motion Task Force Report
Link Presentation

Discussion/Q&A

- I'm really concerned about this three-weeks-in-advance submission because to me, a time-sensitive floor motion is usually made during a meeting. I don't get that. There is a problem with time-sensitive submissions and a three-week deadline of submissions before a conference business meeting.
- In my opinion, a true emergency floor motion could be handled organically through cooperation between the chair and the parliamentarian.
- What is the nature of an emergency situation? A brief description of what happened in Sweden might help.
- A: Regarding emergencies, as noted in the slides, these are time-sensitive, not emergencies, and true emergencies we haven't dealt with yet.
- Regarding Sweden, in 2019, the delegates weren't aware of a situation until the ABC, that the board had voted not to have the AWC accompany the ABC in Malmo, Sweden and there was a motion from the floor that we reconsider that. The situation was that nobody knew ahead of time to have formed an opinion.
- I agree that the idea of being a three week in advance deadline for what could be an emergency could be a contradiction. When these started, the floor motions started for the same day. It happened with the ABC and it happened overnight. So how can we have a

possibility of these things being introduced at the moment? Telling somebody that they have to wait until the next meeting seems problematic to me.

- Q: As I understand it, we need to get to a situation where the conference, the fellowship, has representation that's not directly under WSO. For some of the proposals when it's dealing with literature, and there's a proposal saying, we want the delegates to approve of anything the WSO analyses on a few of them, is that it seems to me they're saying, well, if it's only at the yearly, then that'll keep us from making the moves that we need to make, because they need to be made quicker. So it seems like this falls in line with this: to say we have a book order, we have a money order thing that we need to get taken care of, and we're meeting quarterly, so it wouldn't have to be yearly. So it really affects all these other ballot proposals. Can someone speak to this? Thank you.
- A: This draft proposal is not intended to address those issues, but they would in fact be addressed. The real intent behind this was that we used to have a process that was overnight because it involved an evaluation of whether a floor motion was in fact, allowable under the standards printed in the OPPM. Now we don't have an overnight process, so what do we do? Do those standards actually make sense in the context of something that is, in one sense, narrower than a floor motion that might be something really serious, such as a point of order.
- The idea of it being presented three weeks out contradicts time-sensitivity. Also, one of the criteria is it must have great significance or greatly affect the fellowship as a whole, and those needs may be different in North America than the needs in Europe or Asia. Who would decide about the significance? It feels to me that any kind of floor motions should just be presented to the delegates at the beginning, and let them decide ahead of time.
- I like this motion, and I think it's overdue. In the past, I have seen an abuse of the process to get motions and proposals in that aren't really time-sensitive, and we've allowed that. This bogs down the whole meeting and keeps our conference from getting business done. It gives all of us the opportunity to ponder if it is time-sensitive or not.
- All these rules are coming from the board or board committee, not from the conference. The conference is not able to establish its own rules. This is an unnecessary complication. Traditional two states that the ultimate authority is the group conscience of those present. I don't know why we can't just ask for a group conscience on any proposal as to whether or not it's time-sensitive and resolve the issue. So there's no need for more rules or complications. Keep it simple and let the delegates present decide by group conscience whether they want to listen to a motion.
- I believe there is a big difference between the idea of a floor motion and a motion that is time sensitive. I would like the committee to reconvene and think about how to truly incorporate the idea of a floor motion as something that is on the fly. I appreciate the work being done, but do not think this proposal actually addresses floor motions.
- My concern is if we do the floor motions at the business meetings, it would greatly affect getting business done. It takes months to organize the agenda for these meetings and

prioritize what needs to be addressed, and I think this could throw off the process of how we do our meetings. Also, there are very few time-sensitive matters and even less emergencies that I've witnessed, so we could maybe keep that in mind.

- This is a complicated issue as we are trying to incorporate elements of minority voting and world-wide voting into a floor motion situation. This is a group of volunteers who are generally delegates or who serve at this conference committee. This is not WSO's committee, this is all of us here and it's a very complicated thing that people are trying to work between difficult requirements we've put upon ourselves.
- This seems to be trying to address a couple of things that are not specific to floor motions. As I understand it, the overnight part of floor motions is because they are accepted after the close of the business meeting that day and then people have to come back the next day to do the floor motion. If floor motions were heard earlier in the day, it could probably be done the same day. It basically takes three days for a floor motion, because there's the overnight part, voting, and then minority opinion.
- A: There is an analysis of floor motions by a small group of people during that overnight process. In order to do that, it takes a great deal of time that cannot be managed during the middle of a business meeting. It is a difficult issue, it's not just points of order that can be dealt with by a parliamentarian, they are more substantive than that and therefore aren't really floor motions the way most people think of floor motions.
- When we were at one of the ABCs we had too many proposals to go over, we did a vote on how to take care of that. I think an extra day was needed or to take care of it at a quarterly business meeting. The data analysis committee was created at the end of a meeting and it ended up passing and it's been a very valuable asset. So is it really an emergency?

Literature Committee: Conference approval process and LPG status Link Presentation Discussion/Q&A

- Is there a focus on diverting attention from focusing on and improving ourselves and eliminating our functions as a way to change focus on how societal effects influence our dysfunctions?
- A: Not at this time
- Q: I know when I was on the Lit Committee, we wrestled with the question of how involved the original writers should be in the revision process, and is the process going to be largely handled by literature evaluation?
- Q: There is no literature committee, which means that the approval process that would normally be in place for anything decided by literature evaluation goes directly to the board and I would like to hear feedback as to whether that board process has taken place and how extensive it has been.
- A: Regarding the writers, Literature Evaluation is overseeing this project and we are identifying changes that could be made but we aren't doing the writing. The authors have also made recommendations to the feedback that has been received but again, they are not doing the writing.

- A: There is no literature chair, but there is still a literature committee, which is being headed by Tamara and Sue V and yes in my opinion, the publications that are currently coming through are definitely going to the board and going through a much deeper process of being reviewed than in the past.
- A: The board appointed the Literature assessment project team, and all the same procedures are in place and the project team is assessing all the workflows to make sure there are no gaps. We are building workflows where they are needed and working with the writer teams and walking beside them as they go through the process. There is not technically a chair as there has been in the past, but the team is the chair.
- Q: I saw from the report on the agenda that there would be an advisory poll taken about whether to bring the current Loving Parent Guidebook to conference for approval in 2026 as is without incorporating feedback or whether the conference would prefer waiting until 2027 to view a revised version that includes the Fellowship feedback. The feedback gathered during today's CBM will help guide the literature committee on how to proceed and now I am hearing we are not doing an advisory poll? Can someone explain why it changed?
- A: We had to submit this presentation over 3 months ago and there are certain things we didn't know then that we do know now. The biggest thing has changed the date making it impossible to bring it to 2026. There are publishing things that have come up that would require certain changes to the manuscript before it's published. So there's not only any corrections that we would make, but also publishing issues that require more time. Once it's at publishing, it needs to be turned into a source document and then into e-books, which will be nearly a year. So we are now saying 2028.
- I have been dropping into a lot of committees and the Loving Parent Guidebook is a gift as well as Connections and I don't think enough people have found out about it yet. Both of these publications go hand in hand to me. It seems like there is always this overarching thing about how reliant our primary purpose is to reach as many as possible. All the things that just came up about printing and how long it takes for something. I can put documents together, PDFs and make changes to them within hours and they can be sent across the world. We can make our material reach more and be less reliant on revenue.
- I was confused when you said you had to put this report together over 3 months ago and I wonder if things could have been updated because asking the conference for their opinion on these things is really a good idea. I wonder how much it costs to do the whole publishing process for fellowship as opposed to sending things out in PDF for review. The cost to publish it and then republish with revisions, seems to me like it should be conference approved before going through full publishing. It seems to be a book selling company that diverts from our primary purpose. What is the cost to republish?
- A: That's a publishing issue and not anything I can really answer
- A: In order to get a copy of the revision of the LPG out to everyone is going to require publication as an e-book and that will take up to 6 months in order to do copyright protection and set it up so that everyone can see it to actually talk about it at the ABC in which it is up for discussion. I don't think we can send out the PDF for different reasons including copyright protection.
- A: The context is that we have 70 books in publication right now and it's a huge production and regarding this publication in particular. We have been working on edits, but if there's

any substantive changes we will be coming back to the delegation. If there are big changes, everyone will know about it because we won't make the changes without you.

Sustainability Sub-committee: Working Group to study conference structures on Other 12 step programs Approved ABC CBM Sustainability Presentation to the CBM 31 Jan 2026…

Discussion/Q&A

- There are currently 29 proposals that we are asked to consider. If we spend 10 minutes per proposal,that is about 5 hours. Is that sustainable?
- A: We are aware of the challenges and that is the whole point. Sustainability has a wider range of concerns than just the conference structure. For that reason, we're asking people to step forward to do the study so we can look at things like that, because the proposals are obviously unmanageable and unsustainable. We are looking for participation and volunteers to step up so we can look at these challenges from a sustainability perspective.
- I think most of us acknowledge that there is a need for more volunteers to do the work. One source of these volunteers would be a conference committee and there are many of us delegates who are willing to serve on a conference committee to work on these issues, including on how a conference committee should be structured. Yet it seems that the committee is unwilling to consider that the delegates themselves are capable of creating such a structure themselves. I believe that delegates can form a committee and decide what the structure and the procedures need to be all by themselves. Many of us are willing to work on doing that but not on a board committee.
- The thing that we keep running into is the place to communicate. I hear that we want to do it, but we don't want to be part of it at the WSO, so I want to find out what issue is going on here. We do need a place and a platform to communicate and it's like blaming the critical parent. We don't have infrastructure like AA does, but yes use the AA 300 page service manual. Use the people that have written the Loving Parent Guidebook and Connections because they get it. It's in there. In Chapter three of the Loving parent Guidebook and Connections talking about support sponsors and not making sponsor a dirty word and bringing back the home group. We are virtual and can go into a huge number of meetings.
- I'm not sure what precludes the conference from standing up and the point of the conference is to take half of the workload off the WSO so the WSO can get on with what it needs to get on with and work together. As somebody else pointed out here there are a lot of people ready and willing and able to do that. To work lovingly and respectfully, and helpfully. If you look at the structure of AA, there are about 11 conference committees and 9 standing committees for the WSO.
- Q: I'm concerned as the way we are structured now precludes people who are working and others from participating, which makes me worry about the future. Would the issue of structures include things like how we might use the conference committee? How would this committee be set up? How long would it serve? How would it be reported out?
- A: First, identifying the lack of conference committees today is identified as a major gap, and for this study, the conference committees will be a major part of that study. It may also include additional things beyond what conference committees are part of, like conference

structure, but conference committees would absolutely be in there. In regards to the question about the nature of the committee, it's not entirely determined whether it would be ad hoc or a standing committee. That is all yet to be determined. We just know we need to start studying this.

- A: We have a very immature structure compared to other fellowships and conference committees are a natural evolution from a strong service structure which we currently do not have. Service is a major issue throughout this fellowship. We also need to be looking at these things in the context of the broader challenge. We want to look at not just conference committees, where it started, but it has become a much more serious job looking at the bigger picture and scope of work. We are specifically talking about a task team and I will remind you that every person doing service here, or almost everyone in the committee that I work with is a delegate and they're in that committee for lack of any other structure.
- There were a few ballot proposals over the last few years and I helped author them and each time WSO did not support it because they were already doing the task. So WSO was volunteering at that point to take on these additional tasks that some of us were willing to handle because the whole point of the conference committees is to share responsibility. I haven't seen WSO support that until they decide how it's going to work and the Sustainability sub-committee was created because of this issue. The sustan\inability scope keeps growing so they can't even sustain themselves. Too many committees and not enough volunteers is a fact and the scope keeps widening.
- I agree that there aren't enough people volunteering to do this service work and having an in-person ABC would create more interest. I know other fellowships have had more ABCs since the pandemic and they have had an enormous amount of participation and people being interested and excited.
- There are a lot of new delegates and the turnover is really high so the concepts are not really known. Concept One states that final responsibility and ultimate authority for WSO should always reside in the collective conscience of the fellowship. I think what's happened is that WSO is comprised of a board and it's usually only 5-10 people representing the world of ACA members. There have been times when there haven't been enough members in all these committees. The board is being too dictatorial at this point. Even with recommendations from committees,the board is making decisions that aren't necessarily following what the membership would.
- Regarding volunteers, I know I would rather just email somebody and ask them if they'd like to volunteer for something and they never email me back. I know the answer is personal contact and connection that we all long for as adult children. Pick up the phone and use the meetings as part of our solution. I believe that the solution to get more volunteers is just one phone call away to somebody you want to make friends with and work with together. I believe it's working my program.

- My concern is that it matters how we do this work and how we treat each other. However the role of the conference expands, it doesn't need to be done in a polarized way where it is "us vs them". WSO and its committees are seen sometimes as the enemy. I don't want to do my work that way anymore, as that's my dysfunctional family way. I think it's really important that each of us look at our service traits when we do service work and make every effort to do this out of love. We are in this together, and we can mature and move forward together as one fellowship.
- Point of Info: This is just an answer to all of these very valid and large concerns. I am sorry to hear that there are different perceptions, and the board seems dictatorial. We really do support building the conference. All of the ABC committees that are out there now are there because the delegates created them via motions in past ABCs. The board is working diligently to create the committees that the delegates are asking for. This is big work and we are 47 years young, and we are trying to follow in the footsteps of older fellowships. We are doing a really good job. We do need more people. I want everyone to click the volunteer button to build this conference.
- People that I met in person before the pandemic are people who have stayed and sustained service, so we need more ways to meet in person, and I think that's where confidence comes from. There is so much downtime to learn when you are at in-person events. I also think that visiting committees to have some of that confidence and learn what committees are about. To have people come in and observe without derailing the work. I would like to see a survey of what would help people get into service. What gets in the way, and how to change it?
- I want to add that even eliciting service in my own meeting has been difficult. So with 29 proposals, there is tremendous pressure on trying to get it right, but not perfect, and there is a point where I have to draw a boundary on what is sustainable. I have time that I can chair, but I'm opening up the meeting, sharing email, sharing what's coming down from WSO, and I only have so much time.

Establish Quorum-56 delegates

ABC Study: Voting rights-section 3 Presentation
Report Other 12 Step Comparisons Other 12 Step Charters Section 3

There will be a vote to see if Delegates are ready to vote on a non-binding informal poll, as information was not provided in advance on the questions this committee will be asking in a poll after this presentation.

Discussion/Q&A

- One of the purposes of building up the conference is to regain trust between the board and the conference, and I support including votes, and I love the numerical limits you set up. I support including votes because ultimately that's going to lead to a better result, which is our goal to support each other in recovery with gentleness, humour, love, and respect.
- I agree with the previous speaker

- I feel strongly that the trustees should have votes and a voice and the same rights as the delegates, unless there is a conflict of interest. For the paid staff, I don't necessarily agree and I think they should be a little different. The trustees are strictly ACAs. I'm not sure I feel the same way about paid senior staff. I feel like they work for us, and the trustees work for us for free.
- I find the most informed group conscious decisions come from the board, the special workers, and the committee chairs, so I'm a little concerned because delegates change a lot and often do not come very well informed. My question is, have you made any decisions different from what's being done in other fellowships? I also think the special workers are much more informed in terms of the things that are most needed and they are very committed in my opinion about what is best for the fellowship.
- A: The thing about trustees having a vote, is most other 12 step programs do give trustees a full vote. I don't believe there have been decisions made that are a significant deviation.
- Q: If we are giving a percentage of trustees a vote, then it would depend on how many trustees we have? We can have 20 trustees, but if there are only a few?
- I don't understand why we wouldn't give trustees who are working this program a vote? Paid staff, I agree no votes. Is there some reason why the trustees shouldn't have a vote? I support a limited voice for paid staff, but no vote. The trustees are smart folks and if they wish, they can ask leading questions to the paid staff and they can get whatever answers are needed to be on the record.
- I'm not saying I have it all mapped out, but this situation is the way it is, because of the fundamental misunderstanding. The whole structure isn't like the one developed by AA, and that is the only fellowship I care about as far as following a model, because there's nobody else like them. And that's what I'm saying. Go to their service manual and their concepts. But if you say upside down pyramid, you say the group, the district, we have this whole district, the area, the general service rep, then you go down to the delegate, the conference, the trustees. So who here understands. If I could put everything on AA's manual up on the screen, I'd do it. I know I'm out of time.
- A lot of this is pointless as long as there is little or no discussion and debate of these issues. Delegates are limited to one-minute comments. Don't get to follow up and don't get to debate. An example is that I posted a message to fellow delegates in the chat, and that message was deleted by SSD (Point of Safety).
- Chair -So I'm gonna go back to you one more time, if you don't limit it to what we're talking about, I'm gonna have to move on.
- I think that's an example of the dictatorial behavior of the board committees.
- We have a policy that if you want to put something in a business meeting, you have to be there. I have no problem with paid staff person coming to a meeting that we are having and having an opinion and a vote. I have no problem with authority figures. I have learned through this program how to work with people that are different from me.

- Voting privileges should remain with volunteers who serve without compensation and are therefore free from any real or perceived conflict of interest. Paid employees have a fiduciary relationship with our organization that differs from volunteers, delegates, and just to preserve the integrity of the process. I don't believe that paid staff should have a vote. For the trustees, I feel like one delegate is from one group so maybe one trustee can vote from the group of trustees as opposed to however many individual trustees meet at the time. Also, delegates get to speak for one minute on each topic, so if anybody is going to get a voice, I believe it should be very similar to the delegates at this time.
- Is there a draft of this charter anywhere that we can look up, and a table of contents so we can look up and understand what this committee is thinking about?
- A:*Josh W screen shared the committee report from the last CBM - link*; [Approved Final] ABC Study Subcommittee Report to the Sept 2025 CBM. There is a high level summary of where we are at from the last CBM assembling the draft charter. There is not a full thing drafted yet, as we are working section by section.
- I'm in favour of the board having a voice and vote with limitations with conflict of interest. I think all the trustees are members of ACA, and they are vetted through a committee. For paid senior staff, they should be members of ACA in order to vote. I feel uncomfortable with people voting at the conference who are not members of ACA.
- This presentation is in the spirit of working together and starting a discussion on how that happens, and I appreciate it.
- Q: Have you considered adding in if committee chairs could not vote on their committee issues? The people working on these committees and the boards have a much better idea because they're putting in the time.
- Point of Information regarding senior paid staff being in the fellowship. They are all ACA members. I believe it is one of the requirements for them to be in the fellowship.
- I feel like the senior paid staff and trustees have earned their right to participate.

Informal Poll: If ⅔ or greater, the committee will use as a directive from the conference for this purpose, 50% but less than ⅔ would be treated as a strong suggestion

Vote: Are delegates comfortable doing a non-binding vote now? 54 in favour.
Who wants to wait to vote? 0 votes
Abstain: 1 vote

Will go ahead with the non-bonding votes:

A) Vote: Should trustees have a vote?

59 ballots submitted of 171 eligible voters (3 opened) -- 35%
0 notices queued

Should WSO Trustees have a VOTE at the World Service Conference?

PLURALITY 59.0 votes tallied and 0 abstentions

Full -- Restricted from voting on topics where there may be a conflict of interest. -- If there is any vote, there will be a max percentage (across Trustees and Sr Paid Staff)	**42.00 votes 71.19%**
Limited -- Same restrictions as Full (above), plus additional restrictions tbd: e.g., weight of Trustee votes, limiting number of Trustee spots, etc.	7.00 votes 11.86%
None -- Trustees have no vote at the Conference	7.00 votes 11.86%
Undecided -- I do not currently have enough information	3.00 votes 5.08%

Full -- Restricted from voting on topics where there may be a conflict of interest. -- If there is any vote, there will be a max percentage (across Trustees and Sr Paid Staff) wins with 71.19% of the votes which meets the requirement of the most votes.

<u>Vote:</u> Should trustees have a voice?

(GMT-05:00) EASTERN TIME (US & CANADA)

Ended Administrator Closed Early

55 ballots submitted of 171 eligible voters (2 opened) -- 32%
0 notices queued

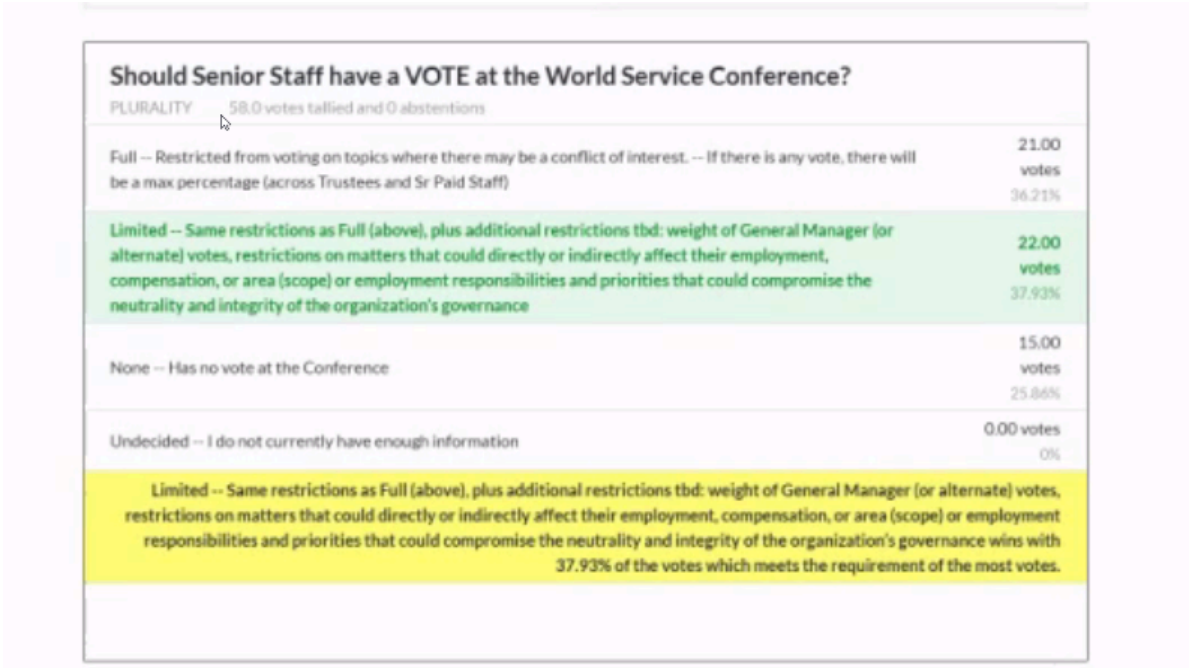
Should WSO Trustees have a VOICE at the World Service Conference?

PLURALITY 55.0 votes tallied and 0 abstentions

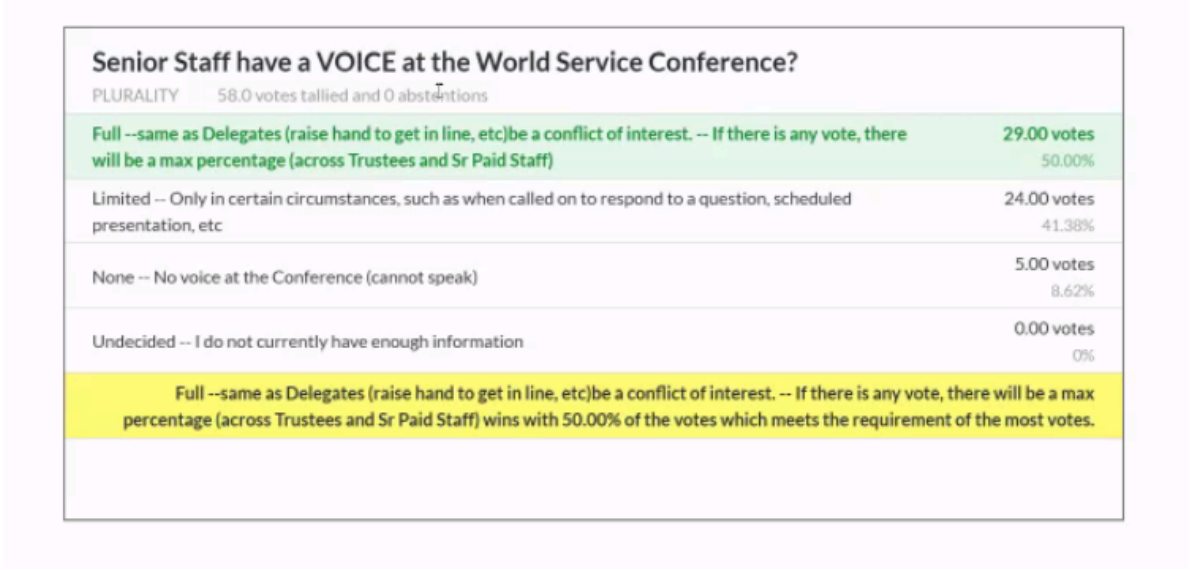
Full --same as Delegates (raise hand to get in line, etc)be a conflict of interest. -- If there is any vote, there will be a max percentage (across Trustees and Sr Paid Staff)	**42.00 votes 76.36%**
Limited -- Only in certain circumstances, such as when called on to respond to a question, scheduled presentation, etc	9.00 votes 16.36%
None -- No voice at the Conference (cannot speak)	2.00 votes 3.64%
Undecided -- I do not currently have enough information	2.00 votes 3.64%

Full --same as Delegates (raise hand to get in line, etc)be a conflict of interest. -- If there is any vote, there will be a max percentage (across Trustees and Sr Paid Staff) wins with 76.36% of the votes which meets the requirement of the most votes.

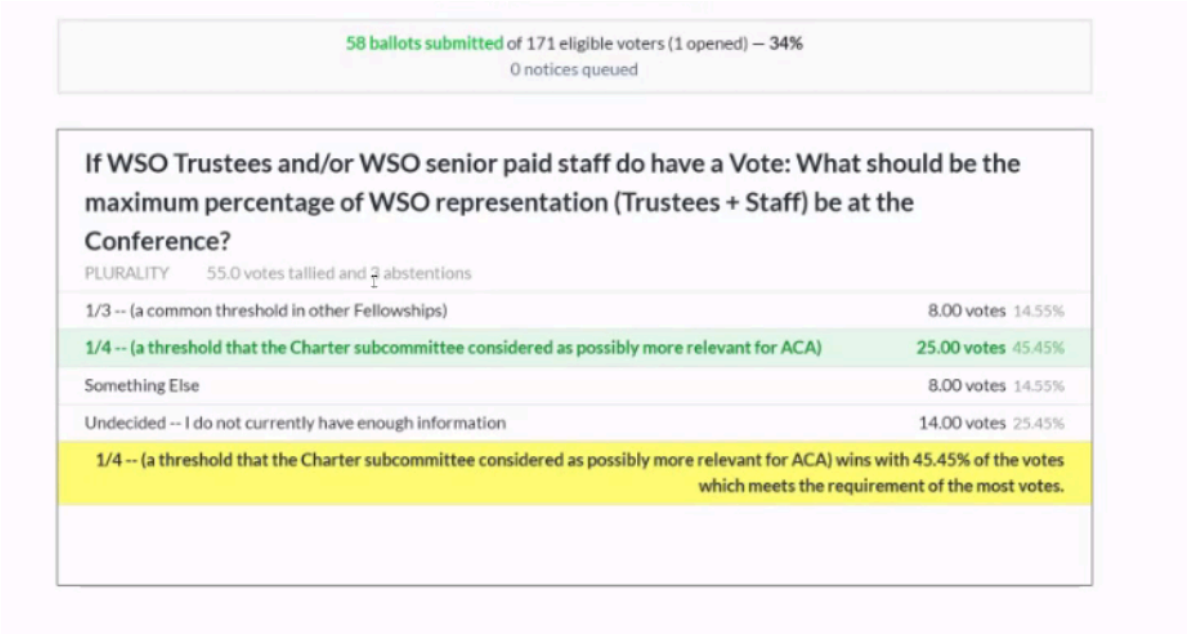
<u>Vote:</u> Should WSO Senior paid Staff have a vote?



Vote: Should WSO Senior paid Staff have a voice?



Vote: If Trustees and/or WSO paid Senior Staff do have a vote, what percentage?



Ballot Prep Committee Update on Ballot Process & Request for Feedback

Presentation

Discussion/Q&A

- Could there be a cap put on the number of proposed ballots? As a delegate trying to read and understand some of the details and explain it in a group conscience is very challenging. So a summary would be helpful.
- A: The idea of a cap is intriguing and understandable, and would be a great idea for a ballot proposal to be presented to the fellowship for consideration. The ballot process is the one vehicle that we currently have for the groups to present business for consideration by delegates to the fellowship. This is what ballot voting is all about. Capping the number of proposals on an annual ballot would have a significant impact on the fellowship as a whole, and I think the best way to present this discussion would be via ballot proposal. Regarding summaries, the proposals themselves are already fairly brief, and maybe AI can help with developing a summary of them.
- Are the proposals crafted by the groups they represent or is it the group's delegates? I can't imagine the group that I represent coming together and coming up with numerous proposals. Maybe if a group is submitting numerous proposals, we can group them together to get a sense of where they are coming from.
- A: Each group is autonomous, and while the proposal is the result of a group conscience within each group, each group has its own approach to doing that. Maybe one person develops a proposal and presents it to the group for discussion, or maybe there is a committee within the group that is developing a proposal that is finally adopted and submitted on behalf of the group. There are different approaches. It's an interesting point to group proposals together, and it's something to consider.

- Grouping these by topic is excellent. I echo the desire for Cliff Notes (A summary of a much longer work designed to allow a student to quickly learn the key points of the longer work).
- My home group submitted 9 proposals because many of the issues we addressed in these proposals have been brought up to the board committees or to the board before and little action has been taken on them. In AA, their conference even receives proposals from individual AA members but the proposals don't all go back to the groups for them to vote on which ones go on the agenda for their conference to consider. Instead, a conference committee vets all the proposals and studies the issues and makes a recommendation to the conference who then decides which proposals make it to the agenda.
- I see that there is a lot of commonality and overlap in some of these proposals and I would love to see a committee that could streamline them together. Maybe there should be a limit on the number of proposals a single group can submit because that's a lot to ask of the groups around the world and for the ABC to address all of them. An intergroup could have a higher cap on proposals than an individual group.
- I want to commend the ballot committee for coming up with these suggestions, especially the ones regarding a summary or Cliff Notes (A summary of a much longer work designed to allow a student to quickly learn the key points of the longer work).
- Regarding the groups that are putting in so many proposals and members that are feeling overwhelmed, looking at the Loving Parent Guidebook, mirroring with others, and finding out what they are trying to say? Why did they put in so many? I don't think it's to cause trouble, and doing what they can to get their voices heard. Run it through AI to find the commonality of what they're trying to say.
- The WSO and its committee are service arms of the conference so the Ballot Prep committee is not in a position to make decisions about limiting ballots. This is how the fellowship presents ideas, thoughts, wants, and wishes. This is more delegate involvement and engagement and as a result people have more requests. My group gets together, approves it when we take the ballots for voting and there is always an option to abstain if my group feels they aren't informed enough.
- Regarding the Cliff Notes summary, I provide the full ballot proposals and then I give them Cliff notes. The proposal process is one of two ways the fellowship is able to communicate up and down the fellowship. If we can put back representatives of the meetings being able to vote at the intergroups and the intergroup reps being able to vote at the regions and the regions able to have voting members on the WSO board, the ballot numbers would drop considerably.
- I agree with the importance of how we give people a voice, because I would support a proposal that would limit the number of proposals a single entity could submit. Last year we had 17 or 18 and it frustrated the meeting and made them feel like they couldn't meaningfully participate. If we don't figure out some way to limit the proposals then we are discouraging participation and we are making people feel like they don't have a voice,

because we have to spend so little time on each item. The reality is people aren't really willing to spend a lot of time in advance or extend a meeting. I want to add a different way of thinking about how we get people meaningfully involved.
- When submitting a proposal, maybe they should include the number of people involved in compiling the ballot proposal. The idea of grouping by subject is excellent. I would consider using regions, where submissions went to the regions first, to put things together more and make ballots more complete.
- I would like to see the number of people participating and putting the proposals together in the proposing group.
- This provides background for me into the existing issues. There is probably a wealth of information to look at metadata to look at what is actually going on at a local level if you want to extract that kind of information.
- I acknowledge the challenge of all these proposals. I like the suggestion about limiting the number of proposals that can come from a single group in a single year. It's important to remember that we can't just change the process because there was a motion that passed last year that came from the ballot proposal committee, that went through the ballot proposal process and was approved and passed at the conference and passed minority opinion. It said that only the ballot proposal process itself can only change with conference approval so there needs to be a motion to come to the conference to actually change anything. If you want to see a change here, bring a ballot proposal.

How can BPC support your Meetings in going through this year's ballot proposals? *(This was a question proposed to the Meeting looking for feedback)*

- It's frustrating when submitting authors of proposals don't show up to town halls to explain their proposals. It doesn't seem fair to the fellowship to be expected to vote but not get any clarifications or questions answered because not all proposals are 100% accurate
- Before town halls existed, it was very difficult to understand the proposals. Since the town halls started, the process has been clarified. There were many instances when terminology was not understood by the ACA members. The conversations are extremely useful and I would say it's essential for the process.
- There were a couple of instances where proposals were very similar, could you list those and suggest a combined proposal and showing what are the similarities and differences?
- Being a relatively new delegate, I was very grateful for last year's town halls. I like the fact that they are broken down by topic. I feel like the ballot proposals themselves are much clearer to understand. Maybe ask groups who submitted multiple proposals to hold their own town hall and invite the membership to attend because I think they would be best able to answer questions related to their multiple proposals.

- It is difficult to present all these proposals to a group because it can take weeks to cover them all. For proposals that are similar, maybe they need to meet and decide if they can turn that proposal into one?
- Town halls are very important. In another 12 step fellowship I'm in, their equivalent of regions will hold their own town halls to do the education and discussion of topics.
- The town halls are super helpful. Schedule the town halls and give the groups one week to respond or they won't get a spot. It's reasonable to have a boundary as opposed to keeping it open-ended for too much time. Regions and intergroups that have multiple proposals can have their own town halls as long as it's well communicated on the website, through the ballot prep, and Slack so everyone knows. If the proposals are too similar, the groups have to take some responsibility in deciding which ones they might want to abstain from and which ones they understand enough to vote on.
- The qualifications to have a meeting listed, or a delegate or any service position states they must be familiar with the traditions, concepts of service, the commitment to service. [Reading from AA' service manual]: Membership in a home group is one of the keys to continuing emotional sobriety. Referring to AA's GSR (General Service Representative), who is the link between the group and AA as a whole, which becomes a channel through which news information, opinions, and ideas flow back and forth. Importantly, this also gives the group voice in affairs of the fellowship. The GSR is that voice. There's more than one way for GSRs to express their group's thoughts and wishes, their conscience, in the general service. When GSR is present at assemblies, the group voices are heard. The presence of the GSR says their group cares about what's going on in the fellowship and wants to learn and make its concerns, suggestions known. That's why that and the other parts of it are why it works. I'm here to try to help do that.
- I like the idea of regions doing parts of this, but I have concerns if they're the submitter of their proposal and I'd like to see some balance in that. The thing is that there aren't many regions, so I'm not sure that's a great tool right now. Abstaining also doesn't change the denominator which is a problem because it doesn't really give you much information unless you know why they abstained. I would not feel comfortable abstaining from some of these because they need a yes or no.
- I submitted the idea of each proposing group to do a video or power point placed on the WSO ballot prep committee website. People could send direct questions to the proposing group.
- One of the proposers said that the reason that so many ballots were proposed from one group is that they had been submitted in the past and it had not gone through. Is there a way to keep a record if the same group submits the same thing over and over again. If it fails, it fails.
- Because I'm not in North America, it's not always easy to attend a town hall because the timing doesn't always work. There are often communication issues around the information. It would be good to have some kind of channel on the WSO website to ask questions and

get information and have clarity. Having a forum that is accessible to people all over the world would help a great deal.

- A delegate said we have submitted proposals and they haven't been accepted in the past, which isn't the case. The issues in the proposals that we submitted have been submitted to the board and board committees in the past and no action has been taken and that's the reason we submitted ballot proposals because they keep telling us to do that.
- The town halls were very useful, it would be helpful if they were posted for those of us that are in different time zones who are unable to watch them live. It would be helpful to hear not only from the proposer, but also a response from WSO or the board. Also have a process where the delegates can submit questions in advance if we can't be there in real time.

How does the ballot process serve the unity and common welfare of the ACA fellowship? How effective is the ballot process in getting fellowship input in ABC agenda planning? How can we streamline the process? *(These were more questions proposed to the Meeting looking for feedback)*

- The whole point of the ballot proposal is for agenda setting. How to get ideas about what will be talked about at the conference from the fellowship. This also gives a sense of how much support from the fellowship there is to discuss an idea. The purpose of determining what from the fellowship should end up on the agenda for the conference to discuss. For years we had the single ABC and now we have multiple conference meetings a year with the same rights and responsibilities. So, how does new business that is not necessarily time-sensitive get on the agenda for non-ABC conference business meetings like today and how can the ballot proposal process adapt?
- Regarding the second question, the last CBM or the one before, where certain ballots that did make it onto the agenda were pushed aside because of committee motions and to me that totally goes against what we're told about the ballot proposal process. Anything that makes it onto the agenda should be made a priority. Maybe the committee motions should be moved to the board teleconference time?
- I have been collecting thousands of ACA documents and I've been contacting members that have served on various committees who have written papers and there is phenomenal work from different periods in time. As far as the solution here is to get it out there, and like the sponsorship thing, bringing someone new in and showing them the ropes before they leave or get burned out. Our former service members should maybe rotate out of that position.
- I have been in different local meetings. Not every meeting even brings the proposals to the meeting to be voted on. There are more proposals than can be accommodated because with 26 proposals it's a lot of time to truly understand them and share with the group and to make a determination on how to vote is not humanly possible.

- My group did put in one ballot proposal and we heard back from the committee and they asked what would it take for us to be satisfied to release the proposal? I did respond that there was a way in which I could withdraw my proposal and unfortunately we didn't, but there is a way to negotiate on some of the ballot proposals. Ask the person who presented it what their underlying goal is. Also, when I'm discussing ballot proposals with my home group, I send them an email first so they have the information and the opportunity to read about it before we get together in a meeting.

Establish Quorum- 56 delegates

Board Report: Updates Presentation

Report

Discussion/Q&A

- Q: About EDOVO - is there any way intergroups or regions can be of help and to have somebody help in those prisons or help with the course you are trying to put together?
- A: Well, of course, everyone and anyone who wants to can join us, we're calling it the EDOVO ACA course, you can find it on Slack, and you can join us there. We actually have a really good core group of people who are developing that class. What I would think would be most important in your area, regions and intergroups is spread out to your local, prisons and jails, and get involved there. Help educate people about EDOVO, that's probably the best support that intergroups and regions can give, is get… get more H&I meetings set up in institutions and jails. That's a huge need.
- I want to make sure that if only 50% of our meetings gave 25$ a year we would meet our budget? Is this correct? Then with EDOVO, I'm excited to hear about it and its possibilities. I know we have members who are blind, or have learning disabilities, and if there was some kind of way to expand that… I don't know. I'm just thinking about the possibilities and excited about it.
- A: If half of the groups contribute 25$ **more** per year we will meet our 50,000$ goal.
- A: We are developing this ACA course as a template, and we're hoping to be able to then use basically the same ACA course on Edovo, put it on our social media outlets, and then eventually get it set up for closed-captioning.
- Q: What percentage of groups participate in 7th Tradition, and what percentage of donations comes from groups versus individuals?
- A: I can't give you an actual percentage for right now, but for 2025, 7th tradition donations comprised about 20% of our budget and that is approximately split in half with 10% coming from groups and 10% from individuals. I should thank both the individuals and selected groups who contributed last year. And I guess I would say, if you're a member of an intergroup, or region, or other group here, you might want to just go back to your group and say, how much do we actually send in terms of 7th tradition to World Services?
- The Edovo program sounds wonderful and it sounds like there is a lot of learning coming in and who is there to listen to the incarcerated individual? I was hearing that maybe some

meetings would start up, and I just wonder what avenues at the end of the EDOVO course do they have towards making contact with other people in ACA. Thanks.

- A: At the end of this course, we are adding the link to the office, whoever is the Hospital and Institutions Chair. Any incarcerated member can request our literature - a BRB or YWB, etc. In the BRB, states that inmates can set up yard meetings of up to five people, but for official ACA meetings it has to be brought in by an outside group of ACA members. This leads me to another program in H&I, and that's the Correspondence Outreach to Institutions. All of us here right now can connect with an incarcerated ACA member, and you can sponsor someone who's incarcerated. And I have done that, I've got several incarcerated sponsees, and it's an amazing experience. Most of them are on their tablets or can make phone calls. So, in 15-minute increments for whatever reason they have it set up that way, it's a free phone call they can make. What I've been doing is read through the yellow workbook, and it is amazingly rewarding. I am absolutely blown away at the level of recovery that some of these incarcerated people have. You can sponsor incarcerated inmates. All of us can get involved in sponsoring an inmate.
- Q: I spent the first 5 years of my professional life working with inmates, but I am also aware that there are individuals that have less than pure intentions… Are you involved in doing backup as far as people getting involved with felons as that can be a hairy situation?
- A: You can visit the Correspondence Outreach to Institutions document for more information on the Public Services webpage. It is all listed there and it is not about getting involved romantically or otherwise. There's a whole list of criteria for people who are interested in sponsoring inmates.
- So I'm part of the finance committee with Al and Bill and some others, and just want to say I joined that committee after the whole book pricing discussion last year, because rather than complain, I decided to join the committee, and just to see what it is, what our finances really are, and I am just so pleased to report that I think Bill and Al and the team, Sylvia, do a fantastic job of managing our finances. I do want to answer one question that was asked earlier. They asked what percentage of the groups participate in WSO 7th Tradition contribution? It's roughly 25% of groups that participate in donating money to WSO. So, for all the intergroups and everybody that's out there, if you can promote the idea of donating to WSO, I think that would be fantastic. Thanks.
- EDOVO sounds like a really great program. Do you have tracking numbers on how many inmates are responding and taking the program? Also, what's the inroad to the institution? Is there an education program for institutions?
- This kind of dovetails with the previous question. That's the kind of inroads that we all need to make in our local jails and institutions is that prisons and institutions have something called the Community Resource Manager. That's the person who decides whether they are going to allow an ACA meeting in the institution. So, if you go to a local institution and start a talk with the community resource manager, and maybe bring your BRB, a few of our tri-folds. If there's interest with your group in taking an H&I meeting in, now that institution

will make it an official H&I ACA meeting. That's when you and some other people from your local area bring an ACA meeting into the institution. The other way to have an ACA meeting is a yard meeting, and that's where inmates on their own get together and read the BRB together. All institutions can do yard meetings, there's no restrictions on that. The outside meetings coming in, that's an official meeting, you have to go through official channels. If you really want to get a meeting to a local institution, talk to the CRM, the Community Resource Manager, sometimes it's the chaplain, usually it's the CRM.

- The Correspondence Outreach to Institutions document specifically talks about safety protocols when you are planning on sponsoring somebody that is incarcerated.

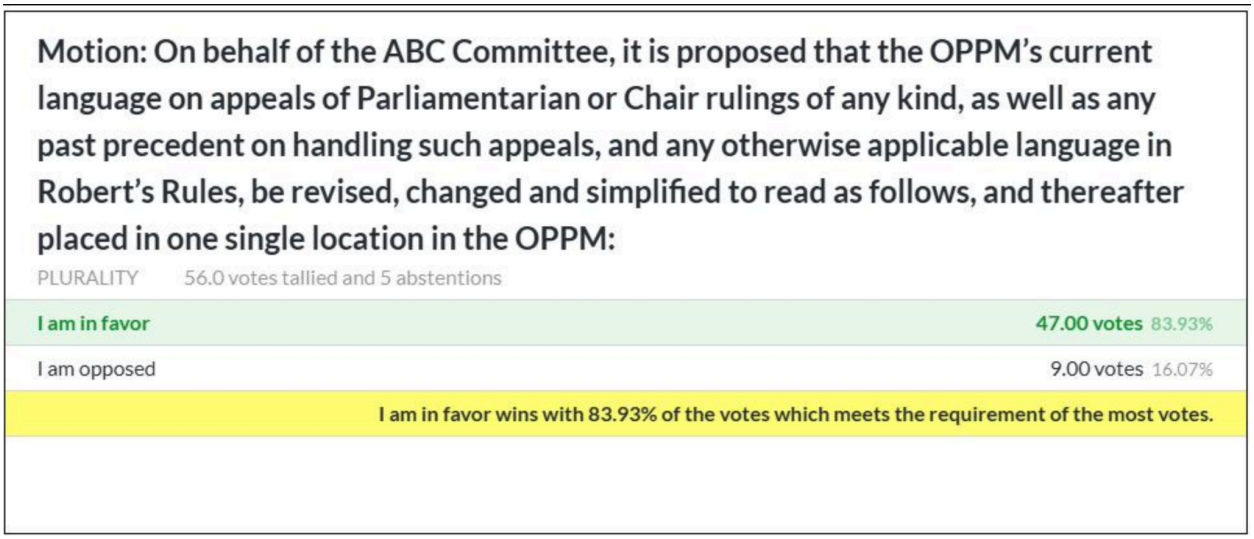
Closing & Reminders

Worldwide Online Voting (will be available within 2 hours)

- Website - information that will be available (recordings and main discussion points about each motion)
- Reminder about saving Chat and the transcript
- Serenity Prayer

Optional- Decompress Dance Party (Inner Family Welcome) Link

RESULTS OF ONLINE WORLDWIDE VOTE:



[Minutes approved at the 2026 Annual Business Conference]