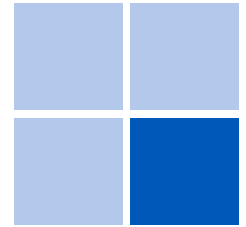


# Quarterly Report *from* GSO



## 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.*

*Third Quarter, 2024*

### General Service Board Meeting

The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc., held its quarterly meeting at the New York Marriott at the Brooklyn Bridge on Monday, July 29, 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 discussed the 2024 Conference Committee on Archives Committee Consideration concerning the suggestions to “add appropriate images to enhance the contents, where applicable, as determined by the General Service Office (GSO) Archives Department” to the Archives Workbook. In the section “What to Collect?” add “reference to digital materials in the suggested list of materials local archives might consider collecting.” GSO Publishing Director informed the committee that the Publishing Department is examining format, number of pages, and printing costs across all committee workbooks in light of increasing print production cost of goods. The committee posed other suggestions that the GSO Publishing Department might explore, including formatting, reduction of wide margins, and blank pages. It was the sense of the committee that images to enhance the content might be added conditionally when feasible and not cost prohibitive. Another condition to keep in mind is that proposed image content should not result in additional pages or an increased staff workload.

At a future meeting of the committee, GSO’s Archivist will present a draft Archives Workbook to include the 2024 Conference committee consideration regarding a reference to digital materials and proposed image content, as well as other updates, along with estimated costs.

The committee reviewed and discussed the GSO Archives draft Deed of Gift Form. Following discussion, the committee approved the revised Archives Deed of Gift Form with a suggestion to clarify circumstances whereby the donated materials might not be retained by the GSO Archives. Additionally, in the section “Material Not Retained by the GSO Archives,” change “GSO Archives” to “AAWS, Inc.” in the sentence “I transfer, convey, and assign any literary and copyright rights, titles...to GSO Archives.”

The committee received a report on Phase 1 of the Archives Audiovisual Preservation Project and considered the three discussion points outlined in the report. Following a wide-ranging discussion, the committee directed the Archives department to create Weeding Guidelines for the collection that will outline what to weed, what to maintain and other applicable conditions. It was suggested that the Archivist assess the collection and create a list of materials for future digitization and materials that might be discarded, based on the Weeding Guidelines. The committee looks forward to a progress report at the November 2024 meeting.

The committee reviewed a draft of proposed changes to the Archives “Digitizing Archival Materials Guidelines.” Following discussion, the committee expressed satisfaction with the proposed changes as presented and approved the guidelines with one noted amendment in the section “File Storage.”

The committee had a robust discussion on the proposed changes to the Archives Classification System and will continue their discussion at the committee’s next meeting in November 2024. Additional background to include examples of materials that might fall into the classification categories was requested by the committee to aid in their discussion.

## Cooperation with the Professional Community

The trustees' Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities Committee received an update on the progress of the pamphlet to mental health professionals noting the proposed length and working title as well as proposed content and look forward to an update at the November meeting.

## Corrections

The Staff secretary reported that a survey is being developed to address the committee consideration from the Conference Committee on Corrections to gather shared experience on how local corrections committees encourage and engage members in corrections service. A progress report will be provided in November.

The committee reviewed the draft service piece "Facilitating Online Meetings in Correctional Facilities" and asked the Staff secretary to work with Publishing to add this service piece to the Corrections workbook and kit.

## Finance

### GSO Financial Results

The committee reviewed the unaudited financial results for the six months ended June 30, 2024. Total operating revenue is \$9,708,502 which is 5% more than the year to date (YTD) budget of \$9,254,313. Total operating expenses before depreciation are \$9,179,004, which is 5% less than the YTD budget of \$9,642,506. Operating surplus before depreciation is \$529,497 compared to a budgeted YTD deficit of \$388,192. Literature accounts receivable is \$443,902, of which 44.9% is current, 20.4% is less than 60 days past due, and 34.7% is more than 60 days past due. The reserve fund is at 6.33 months of 2024 operating expenses versus a target range of 9 to 12 months.

Cash increased \$155K year-over-year due to increased contributions. Accounts receivable, including the receivable from Grapevine, decreased \$541K year-over-year due to more effective collection of literature receivables and more prompt payment by Grapevine of shared services receivables. Accounts payable and accrued expenses decreased \$1.016M year-over-year as increased contributions and the January 2024 Reserve Fund draw have enabled more timely payments to vendors.

Contributions were greater than the 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. Cost of goods sold is less than budget. Overall, operating expenses before depreciation were below budget. Except for employee benefits and payroll taxes, all expense categories were less than budget. In employee benefits, medical and dental insurance, health reimbursement account expenses, and 403b plan employer match are over budget. In payroll taxes, our NYS unemployment insurance tax rate has increased.

As of June 30, 2024, operating cash on hand was \$474K versus accounts payable of \$710K (a short-term deficit of \$236K, a significant improvement from the \$1.126M deficiency on December 31, 2023). In comparison, as of June 30, 2023, operating cash on hand was \$457K versus accounts payable of \$1.768M (a short-term deficiency of \$1.311M).

### GSO 2024 Reforecast Budget

Total operating revenue is \$19,656,359. Operating expense before depreciation is \$18,973,513, and GSB support of La Viña remains \$569,512 for a bottom line after *La Viña* support (but before depreciation) of \$113,334. This is an improvement of \$64,901 from the original budget adopted in January. The improvement is due to a savings of \$148,644 in personnel expenses resulting from position vacancies and a revenue increase of \$14,000 offset by an increase of \$97,744 in non-personnel expenses.

The budget for gross literature sales is unchanged at \$16.817 million. This budget is based on unit sales remaining the same as in 2023. The budget for cost of goods sold is unchanged at 50% of gross sales. The budget for contributions remains \$10.5 million. YTD contributions are \$4.819 million, which is 18% greater than the YTD original budget of \$4.095 million.

The trustees' Finance and Budgetary Committee recommended that the General Service Board approve the re-forecast GSO budget.

### Grapevine & La Viña Financial Results

The average number of subscriptions remained similar to last month. Total circulation for Grapevine is about 2% below 2024 budget but 11% above last year at this same time. We continue to see gains in *La Viña* as well. June 2024 total circulation is almost 15% above last year at this same time and income is 18% above budget.

“Complete” income is a highlight with stronger than budgeted income, particularly for Grapevine. Income from the Grapevine app has had a slower start than expected but has been seeing solid growth the last several months.

Overall subscription income for both *Grapevine* and *La Viña* is improving nicely compared to the prior year. The price increase was rolled out later than planned, and due to the required notice period, the increase only initially impacts new subscriptions. Subscription revenue is expected to improve throughout the year as the price increase impacts on new subscriptions and renewals.

Overall, expenses are generally on target for the midpoint of the year. Expenses for subscriptions are lower than budget as would be expected with lower circulation numbers.

The editorial staff have significantly lowered costs for outsourced help. However, professional Fees in the Circulation and Business department are \$70K over budget due to outsourced accounting support, particularly during the audit. These costs and other outsourced professionals are being reduced for the second half of the year.

App development costs and website expense are \$48k and \$30k over budget respectively as of June 30th. However, some of these costs are considered investments and will be capitalized during July and then depreciated over three years. This will significantly reduce the total amount over budget. Office supplies, meetings and conference costs are being reviewed to improve these significantly by the end of the year.

### ***Grapevine & La Viña Reforecast Budget***

Average circulation for the *Grapevine* magazine online and complete is projected to be 3,360 higher than the original budget. Complete subscriptions are running particularly above budget, which is significant as this has a higher gross margin than the magazine. However, overall subscription revenue has been reduced because the price increase was rolled out slower than expected and will take longer than originally projected due to existing subscriptions continuing at the lower price.

The new app had a slower start in subscribers, but in recent months the number of subscribers and revenue is growing nicely. However, the annual 2024 subscriber average is expected to be 4,216 less than the original 2024 Budget and income reforecast is down \$130,053.

Overall, subscription revenue has a reforecast reduction of \$218,046 for 2024. The direct cost has a corresponding reduction of \$74,178, therefore the gross margin reduction for 2024 subscriptions is \$143,868. The Content Revenue and expenses reforecast are slightly lower than the original budget. However, the net change is an increase of \$2,017. The calculation of cost of goods sold for books and other content will be reevaluated and this may result in adjustments.

The reforecast Total Gross Margin for Grapevine has a projected decrease of \$141,851 for 2024, however this is an increase of \$532,664 compared to 2023 audited figures. Expenses for Grapevine are expected to be lower by \$51,975. The reforecast net loss for Grapevine is expected to increase from the original budget of (\$582,572) to (\$672,449). This is a \$184,867 improvement compared to the 2023 Grapevine results.

Total *La Viña* circulation has also been reforecast down by 449 and this is also related to the App. However, *LaViña* subscription income is reforecast to be higher than original budget. Direct Cost is reforecast to be higher, and the overall gross margin is a reduction of \$3,135. This is offset by the Content Revenue which is having an outstanding year for *LaViña* and expected to add \$3,359 to Gross Margin. As stated above, the Cost of Goods Sold for books will be reviewed and could have a positive outcome to this expense.

Total *LaViña* expenses are reforecast to be \$2,339 over original budget. The *LaViña* bottom line will have a loss increase of \$2,115. This is an improvement of \$184,123 from the 2023 audit final numbers.

The Trustees Finance & Budgetary committee recommended that the General Service Board approve the 2024 *Grapevine/LaViña* budget reforecast.

### ***Reserve Fund***

As of June 30, 2024, the Reserve Fund Assets totaled \$12.261 million consisting of cash and certificates of deposit. Less the liability for unfulfilled *Grapevine* subscriptions of \$540K, the Reserve Fund Balance was \$11.721 million. (The subscription liability was reduced to \$540K in January.)

Based on the expense budgets for GSO, *Grapevine* and *La Viña* (total \$22.212M) the reserve fund balance is equal to 6.33 months of operating expenses versus 7.11 months as of June 30, 2023. The goal range is coverage of 9 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.

### ***Conference Finance Committee Actions/Recommendations***

The committee reviewed the advisory actions/committee considerations that resulted from discussions of the 2024 General Service Conference Committee on Finance and accepted the report.

The two advisory actions have been implemented.

### ***Unheard Floor Actions***

The committee discussed unheard floor action #11, which states, “Reaffirming the 1975 Advisory Action that delegates in reports to their areas place more emphasis on group support. Delegates should emphasize to the groups the effect that inflation has had on the contribution dollar and the necessity for adjusting contributions accordingly to support services provided by the General Service Board.”

The Trustees Finance Committee decided to forward this to the AAWS Board for disposition to the Self-Support Sub-Committee of the Finance Committee.

### ***GSB IRS information Return form 990***

The Committee reviewed and accepted the draft IRS Form 990.

The 990 will be presented to the GSB at its October 2024 meeting. The Trustees Finance & Budgetary committee recommended that the General Service Board approve the filing of the IRS form 990.

The Committee noted that action on the AAWS and AAGV Form 990s is not necessary until those filings are approved by the respective Boards.

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

AAWS Nontrustee Director, Clint M., began his presentation by referring to the long form of Tradition One, “A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first....” It must, because without A.A. unity, our Fellowship would cease to exist and won’t be there for us or for future members.

Clint shared about the experiences in his homegroup working through issues that seemed to hopelessly divide the members into pro-ceramic mugs and pro-disposable cups. The measure of unity was reached, hours later, by giving the members the option to choose between the two.

Clint also reflected on the lack of options at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Several key components of A.A. life as he and many A.A.’s had known were stripped away. However, the uncharacteristically fast response of the Fellowship led into a mushrooming period for virtual meetings, which included the General Service Conference during that monumental year. We had not had the choice of following Bernard Smith’s advice of avoiding sudden and abrupt changes.

During that time, the Plain Language Big Book project had begun to take shape. To better unify the Fellowship, there was a great need for clear and transparent communication around the work that was being done. Clint attended online meetings to present information to members across the U.S. and Canada, though he acknowledged most of the time was allotted to give the opportunity for the Fellowship to ask questions. This new platform facilitated communication in a time of need for it.

As such, Clint remarked how “Providing reliable information quickly and frequently, I believe, is essential in the fight against misinformation and for unity within our service structure. Where there’s a lack of reliable information it seems misinformation, usually travelling at the speed of a few mouse clicks, quickly steps in to fill the gaps.”

He closed with a quote from Bernard Smith from his talk at the 1970 International Convention. In referring to our structure he stated that “human frailties being what they are, we have to make certain, as time passes, that the structure of our society is strong enough to continue the unity which we have so far carefully nurtured. We must steadily re-examine the structure of our Fellowship to determine whether it needs to be shored up, and if it needs it, to have the courage, the skill, and the inspiration to do what is found to be necessary...”

The presentation was followed by Marita R., Trustee-at-Large. Marita shared how it is “one of our most cherished ideas within Alcoholics Anonymous: ‘A. A. Unity — Our Common Welfare.’ Bill W. warned of the dangers of taking this gift for granted — ‘The unity of A.A. is the most cherished quality our Society has. Our lives, and the lives of all to come, depend squarely upon it. We stay whole, or A.A. dies. Without unity, the heart of A.A. would cease to beat, our world arteries would no longer carry the life-giving grace of God.’”

She shared her own initial experience with examples

of unity when her group arrived at a group conscience around a disruptive member. It would then take some time, through personal trial and error, to really understand the principle in action. Each individual's participation, including her own, was necessary and useful. The individual was second to the greater whole, and it was a lesson in tolerance to see votes sway differently than she wanted and to watch how A.A. continued to flourish.

"My experience has been that unity is best achieved by a full hearing of all points of view, followed by some time for all of those involved to step back from emotional responses to the issue, as well as careful consideration and prayer for that which will best serve the group or Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole. I've also learned that when a decision is reached which doesn't work, it can be changed. Nothing is set in stone, and we can learn from our mistakes in sobriety."

Extensive time abroad in service to Alcoholics Anonymous has lent an additional layer of perspective, wherein she noted, that issues that we have faced are similar if not directly resonant to those experienced in Mexico or Great Britain, for example.

The answer is always the same: "When we need to make a decision or a plan, I need to allow the group conscience to work (however slowly) and to trust in the process of applying the Twelve Traditions in making our decisions. When I can do this, I feel that I'm a part of the Fellowship and that we are united in our common disease, our common solution, and our common purpose."

After the presentations, moderator and General Service Trustee David S. invited all in attendance to share on the theme. The following includes some of the sharing from attendees.

A General Service Trustee shared his experience that what helps him when there is conflict at any level is to have compassion for others. As a trusted servant, hearing about personal challenges that fellows are facing helps him to feel more unified. It serves partly as a reminder of his own struggles and that we are all on the same team. In that way personal strengths and weaknesses harmonize to serve the greater whole of the work that is being done.

A GSO Staff Member talked about staff correspondence as being an excellent example of unity. On the one hand, GSO Staff work collaboratively to develop responses that are based on principles rather than personal opinions. There is a comforting perspective for viewing

correspondence from members that are upset or voicing a disagreement: "Your love for the program of A.A. is obvious and for that we are very grateful."

A GSO employee talked about servant leadership as a way in which we operate and how we work together. Unity is intrinsic to the key habit of seeking to understand what other folks are feeling. This helps us to carry out the principles. He mentioned another aspect of unity that had been talked about over the weekend, charitable assumption, which reminds us that beyond the specifics of our discussions is the faith that we all want the best for A.A. He noted that there is a synergy when two different perspectives come together to form masterful conclusions based on a respect for A.A. principles.

A General Service Trustee expressed his appreciation for the fellows that received him with a kind and loving heart. He spoke about a recent international trip where he had been invited to speak about unity. Afterwards, in sharing, the attendees believed they had a problem with unity in their country, as if it were a finite point to permanently achieve. He explained how conflicting views are inevitable, and unity serves as a tool for group conscience to be achieved.

A General Service Trustee shared her gratitude for A.A., as she had recently had the privilege of "pretending to be a Trustee-at-large" and visiting another service structure. Despite the multi-faceted language barriers, at the meetings they spoke the language of the heart, and the topic of unity kept coming back. This structure had not attended their regional meeting or the World Service Meeting in many years, and they had begun to talk about returning. She noted how we all tremble when we hear of the first meetings starting or the Big Book being translated, as we should, because alcoholics will be saved, but we should tremble when we hear about a service structure evolving because that's how we know that A.A. will stay; it is so critical to the survival of A.A. and alcoholics around the world.

A GSO Staff Member spoke of the importance of not sitting on unspoken thoughts or anticipating the other person's response, but rather having the conversation. He shared how unity reminded him of recent conversations with the Deaf A.A. community around how events are planned for accessibility. They shared how meaningful it would be to have interpretation not only for the program itself, but also for the Fellowship before and after.

An Appointed Committee Member shared how one of the best examples of unity for him comes from nature: a murmuration of starlings. It's just beautiful to watch. Similarly, unity is a fluid, living process — something that you move with; it's not a place you go and sit. "If you think about those starlings, each one is aware of what is going on around them, and they're in tune with what's happening, and together they create this work of art in the sky. I see how it applies to my life in recovery, and how I live in the world. I have to be aware of where I am in the process of the greater whole, and how I am serving it and consistently choosing to be a part of it."

A GSO Staff Member expressed her gratitude for the presenters and the shares. She welcomed the idea of unity as something distinct from conformity. The vibrance of the Fellowship, seen for example in Chapter 7 "How it Works," as the layers and paradoxes of so many of the suggestions — it all depends on where you're at — she agreed with the idea of ebb and flow, of rising and sitting. She reflected on how, in service and in professional work, she had noticed a shift towards encouraging others and being open and supportive of their ideas and inspiration.

A GSO employee offered the insight of clarifying "What's my personal responsibility?" in the development of the group conscience, and once it is decided, upholding it — in and out of the group setting. She spoke about a rather humbling experience years back, getting caught talking about her boss. While it was certainly a big opportunity for growth, she reflected on how her actions hurt someone as well as herself. In the end our actions inform our spiritual integrity. As she had heard in A.A., some see by the light and others by the fire.

A GSO Staff Member was reminded of his sponsor's suggestion that, while you don't have to like everyone in A.A., you have to learn to love them. Once you love them, you end up liking them more. We grow by meeting people where they are. Unity requires a degree of open-mindedness, patience and consideration, so that the greater good can prevail in our process of trial and error. He shared about his experience with starting a group and how, at some point, the coming of age involves accepting that there will be differences and uncertainties. Understanding our primary purpose, first and foremost, is a way of navigating through.

The meeting adjourned at 2:55 pm.

## General Service Conference

The committee recommended to the General Service Board that the Proposed Agenda Item submission date deadline for the 2025 General Service Conference be September 30, 2024. The committee discussed two October deadlines that were proposed to accommodate some area committees that have had to hold area assemblies before the September 15 deadline and acknowledged those challenges. The committees discussed the coordination and costs involved with routing and reviewing proposed agenda items, holding the October feedback calls with Conference Committees, and translating Conference background materials simultaneously in three official languages.

The committee discussed the 2024 Report and Charter Committee Consideration:

"The committee noted that there may be policy implications associated with Simple Majority items and suggested this question be referred to the Conference Committee on Policy and Admissions for further consideration."

The committee noted that Simple Majority items follow a process where they are forwarded to a trustees' Committee as a consideration and agreed to forward to the 2025 Conference Committee on Policy and Admissions.

The Improvements Subcommittee was asked to work on the following 2024 Committee Consideration from the 2024 Conference Committee on Agenda:

"The committee discussed opportunities to give more time to complete Conference business and felt that reinforcing the mechanics of the Conference agreed to by Conference Members would be useful."

The committee heard from the General Manager and General Service Board Chair in their role as co-chairs from the General Service Conference and agreed with the idea of a policy to rely on for decorum to address floor actions brought to the Conference floor. The committee noted the many concerted efforts to help produce an engaging, productive schedule including "How the Conference Operates," and the mechanics of the Conference.

## International

The committee acknowledged the many World Service Meeting attendees who will be observing the next Trustees' International Committee meeting.

The Trustees-at-Large for the U.S. and Canada shared about their experiences at General Service Conferences in Mexico and Paraguay noting that structures worldwide are addressing local issues guided by our shared A.A. principles.

## International Convention/Regional Forums

The committee reviewed a 2024 Conference Committee on IC/RF Committee Consideration concerning virtual programming for the 2025 International Convention. The committee agreed that we should consider having a virtual hospitality space or interaction with attendees and that virtual technology support be provided. The committee accepted the report and looks forward to a progress report at the November 2024 meeting.

The committee reviewed a 2024 Conference Committee on IC/RF Committee Consideration to develop a new declaration to be adopted at the 2030 International Convention. The chair appointed a subcommittee to consider the request. The committee looks forward to a progress report at the November 2024 meeting.

The committee reviewed the 2025 International Convention 2024 Member Engagement Survey Results and requested the Staff secretary to consider future updates to the FAQs and other planned IC communications to support providing attendees with answers to their questions, as needed.

The committee recommended to the General Service Board that a one-day online Special Forum for A.A. members who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing be held after the 2025 International Convention in December 2025 or the beginning of 2026.

The chair appointed a Subcommittee on Regional Forum Improvements to include Gail P. (chair), Paz P. and Nikki O. to continue the work identified in the following scope: 1) To refine and improve the agenda for forum weekends for greatest effectiveness and 2) To identify all opportunities for cost savings in terms of scheduling, participation, accessibility, and translation needs and 3) To explore opportunities to more effectively communicate with the Fellowship who are outside the Regional Forum room through hybrid or virtual options.

The committee reviewed a 2024 Conference Committee on IC/RF Committee Consideration encouraging participation at Regional Forums that included six suggestions. Of the six, the Staff secretary shared two new

suggestions: 1) Consider creating short current anonymity-protected videos about Regional Forums that can be shared on our communication channels. 2) Consider adding the use of current technology including streaming, virtual and/or hybrid components to the Regional Forum; and the possibility of using local A.A. resources. The Subcommittee on Regional Forum Improvements will discuss these suggestions and provide a progress report at the November 2024 meeting.

## Literature

The subcommittee on the Fifth Edition of Alcoholics Anonymous has developed a timeline for the tasks needed to conclude this project. Story submissions have been narrowed from approximately 2,500 to 159. Selected stories are receiving additional review to identify approximately 50 stories for presentation to the trustees' Literature Committee. The subcommittee reported that work on expanding the existing ideas in Appendices III and V continues. Current and past Class A trustees are being contacted for professional references and content development.

In review of the Advisory Actions of the 74th General Service Conference, the trustees' Literature Committee has sent two memos to the trustees' Nominating Committee requesting ACMs to begin the development of a pamphlet for the Asian and Asian-American alcoholic, and a pamphlet for the transgender alcoholic.

## Nominating

Announcements were sent out in early July about filling vacancies in 2025 for two nonalcoholic Class A Trustees to the General Service Board. The Fellowship was notified by email; "What's New?" on aa.org; and on the Meeting Guide app. The deadline to submit a résumé is August 31, 2024.

In total, seven Trustees will rotate off the General Service Board in 2025 and searches are in progress to fill each vacancy.

## Public Information

*2024 GSC Advisory Actions and PI Committee Considerations:* The committee reviewed a list of 2024 GSC Advisory Actions related to Public Information and the 2024 Public Information committee considerations.

*Working group on Analytics Reporting:* The chair appointed an analytics working group composed of Kirk H. (chair), Morgan B. and John W. (with staff support from Julie

Gonzalez and Misha Q.) to work with the Communication Services Department on the analytics reporting dashboard and other analytics projects as they evolve.

*Membership Survey Working Group:* The chair appointed Reilly K. (chair), Joyce S. and Sister Judith Karam with support from the Staff secretary and GSB trustee Deborah K. to serve on the Membership Survey Working Group; the scope of the subcommittee is to review research related to the Membership Survey Pilot and develop a plan for the next Membership Survey.

*Subcommittee on 2025 Comprehensive Media Plan (CMP):* The committee chair appointed a subcommittee consisting of Teresa J. (chair), Morgan B., and Charlie H.; the scope of the subcommittee is to review all suggested updates and develop a 2025 CMP for review by the full committee.

## Treatment and Accessibilities

The committee reviewed a draft of the revised flyer “Where Do I Go From Here?” (F-4) and provided the Staff secretary with a list of suggestions. The committee looks forward to a draft flyer or progress report at the November 2024 meeting.

The committee reviewed the progress report on collected shared experience from neurodivergent alcoholics and requested the staff secretary update the flyer “Serving All Alcoholics — Making the A.A. Message Accessible (F-107)” with highlights from the shared experience. The committee looks forward to an updated service piece or progress report at the November 2024 meeting.

## AA Grapevine

### Overview

The AA Grapevine Board of Directors met four times since January’s quarterly meeting, on the following dates:

- March 9, 2024: AAGV Planning Meeting
- April 18, 2024, and April 20, 2024: 74th General Service Conference
- June 22, 2024: AAGV Director’s Orientation & Planning Meeting

### Strategic Planning

Over the past year, the board, publisher, and Grapevine staff identified 13 tasks to attract AA members to subscribe to the magazine—online, in print or through

the apps. We developed clear roles, goals, and task accountability for the board and staff. We continue to focus on how we can better serve our La Viña customers. We’re in process of developing a five-year business plan for La Viña.

### Board Committee Activity

*Nominating and Governance:* The Chair reported two AA Grapevine Board of Directors (AAGVB) vacancies coming at the end of the 2025 Conference — one Regional Trustee (RT) and one General Service Trustee (GST). The nominating and governance committee met once on June 27 to address filling these openings.

Interviews for the RT vacancy are scheduled this GSB weekend. Both candidates are also invited to attend an AAGVB dinner following the Q3 AAGVB meeting. This year’s candidates are Charlie H., West Central Regional Trustee, and Gail P., Western Canada Regional Trustee. We look forward to getting to know our new colleagues better.

Only current and past non-trustee directors (NTDs) from either corporate board are eligible to apply for the upcoming GST vacancy. To gain as diverse an applicant pool as possible, this committee informed current and past NTDs from both corporate boards of their eligibility to apply. Notification letters have been sent out. The application deadline is September 15, 2024. Please note: the list of past AAGV NTDs only included the past six rotations off the board. The committee will discuss if we want to send notification letters to additional past NTDs.

The committee chair recognized the outstanding work of new Office Manager Kimberly Lobasso.

Kimberly has made it possible for us to receive applications digitally for the first time in the history of AAGV. She researched which software or apps would be required, learned how to use them, and got everything set up and working for us.

*Ad hoc Director’s Handbook:* The new Handbook is considerably shorter and easier to use. There are still aspects that require work, principally the board committee scopes and procedures for the Strategic Planning Committee and Finance and Budgetary Committee.

*Ad hoc 2025 Convention:* Publisher discussed recruitment efforts for Board members and volunteers to help at booths and convention floor. Logistics need to be discussed and finalized.



## Grapevine Board Actions

The Board took the following actions at its meeting March 9, 2024

- Approved December 2023 Unaudited financial statements for Grapevine.
- Approved December 2023 Unaudited financial statements for La Viña.
- Approved January 2024 financial statements for Grapevine.
- Approved January 2024 financial statements for La Viña.
- Approved the revised AAGV, Inc., Whistleblower Policy.

The Board took the following actions at its meeting June 22, 2024

- Motion 1: To accept treasurer finance report for Grapevine
- Motion 2: Motion to accept treasurer finance report for La Viña
- Motion 3: To set up a La Viña ad hoc committee
- Motion 4: To authorize the audit of the 403(b) Plan for the year ended December 31, 2023 and request that the Trustees Audit Committee engage AA's independent auditor, BDO, to perform the work for an expected fee of \$3,780. The AAGV Board of Directors further requests that the Trustees Audit Committee coordinate and supervise the work of the auditors and report the results to the AAWS Board, AAGV Board and Retirement Committee

The Board took the following actions at its quarterly meeting July 25, 2024.

- Motion to accept the Grapevine Financial Report
- Motion to accept the La Viña Financial Report
- Motion to accept the Grapevine Financial Reforecast Report
- Motion to accept the La Viña Financial Reforecast Report
- Motion to accept the Rolling Cash Flow Reforecast for Grapevine

## Editorial Advisory Board

Grapevine's Editorial Advisory Board (EAB) last met on July 23. The Grapevine EAB is looking for two new members, and Eastern Canada, Central U.S., and Northeast U.S. need representation. La Viña's EAB last met on May 9. The team is helping with story selection for the fall book *The Best of La Viña*.

## Management Report

The board was updated by the Publisher on the following:

### Apps

- Grapevine downloads: 48,903 compared with 40,654 in June
  - » Total in-app subscriptions: 6,110 compared with 5,755 in June
  - » Total subscribers with app access: 14,392 compared with 14,033 in June
- La Viña downloads 2,052 compared to 1,689 in June
  - » Total in-app subscriptions 280 compared with 210 in June
  - » Total subscribers with app access: 440 compared with 345

Income to date from Apple Store and Google Play: \$125,784.25

### Print Magazines subscription averages first half of 2024

Grapevine	45,943
La Viña	6,782

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

Grapevine	59,032
La Viña	7,158

### Book Publishing

Trade through Ingram: January through June overall Net Sales = \$112,427 (Print \$94,695, Digital \$17,732). Net Sales track closely with same period in 2023 = \$113,327.

Best Sellers on Online Bookstore January through June 2024

Emotional Sobriety	1,751
Our Twelve Steps (new)	1,667
Language of the Heart soft	937
Emotional Sobriety II	976
Prayer and Meditation	904
El Lenguaje del Corazon	289

### New Media

- *Podcast*: 885,284 total downloads — up 27,884 since June report. Averaging 868 downloads per day, 6,075 per week and 23,300 per month. On track to exceed one million downloads in 2024.
- *Instagram*: GV has 12,666 followers, up 265 since June. LV has 1,737 followers, up 40 since June.

- *YouTube*: 13,600 subscribers, up 300 since June. 273 videos, up 11 since June. 213,962 views, up 8,421 since June. Three ASL videos released on July 7, one on July 12—3,124 total views to date. New playlists in the works: Sober Women in AA, Familia Audio playlist (LV), YPAA Audio project

### Updates

- Reducing billable hours at vendors in second half of year.
- Working with International Convention Desk to coordinate order section of registration form. We're including souvenir book and magazine subscriptions. We're also coordinating with AAWS for book, app, and magazine sales at the event. A Grapevine theatrical play is also in the works.
- Darwin, our new fulfillment vendor, is developing middleware, so we don't have to rewrite APIs for apps.
- *La Viña ad hoc*: We met in June and July. Improvements made include shrink wrapping bulk orders, updated order forms, and greater manpower for customer service. We're pleased to be receiving positive feedback from customers.

### Financials & Reforecast

The chair reported the AAGV Finance committee met on July 18, 2024. They reviewed and approved the June 2023 YTD Financial Statements for Grapevine and La Viña and reviewed the 2024 Budget Reforecast for Grapevine and La Viña and forwarded all to the full board.

### La Viña

La Viña total circulation has also been reforecast down by 449, but this is also related to the app. However, La Viña subscription income is reforecast to be higher than original budget even with the Prior Year Revenue Adjustment of (\$6,177). Direct Costs are reforecast to be higher and the overall gross margin reduction of (\$3,135).

However, this is offset by the Content Revenue which is having an outstanding year for La Viña and expected to add \$3,359 to Gross Margin. As stated above, the Cost of Goods Sold for books will be reviewed and could have a positive outcome to this expense.

Total La Viña expenses are reforecast to be \$2,339 over original budget. The La Viña bottom line will have a loss increase of \$2,115. This is an improvement of \$184,123 from the 2023 audit final numbers.

### Cash Flow

The cash balance was \$292k on June 30, and we will continue to monitor it carefully going forward. AAGV cash flow is tight even under the best circumstances and 2024 is no exception. It is projected that cash will be less than \$50,000 as of December 31.

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