

World Service Business Conference

2023

The World Service Business Conference (WSBC) was attended by 176 delegates, forty-two less than last year. They represented fourteen countries seven less than last year. They represented the following countries:

Australia	Greece	Russia	United Kingdom
Brazil	Iran	Spain	United States
Columbia	Italy	Ukraine	

The purpose of the conference is to elect new trustees, vote on literature changes or new publications, vote on changes to motions that effect policy and vote on by-law changes. Staff were present to answer questions. Time was permitted for pro and cons and questions to each motion, by-law, and amendment. In addition, there was a “Meet the Maker” session where questions could be asked of the person proposing the change. There is also a Reference Subcommittee that attempts to combine similar motions or by-laws and works on motions and by-laws that receive more than two amendments. This saves time on the floor. Eleven total motions and by-laws passed by consent. This means everyone was in agreement to pass the motion or by-law. Eight items were withdrawn by the makers for several reasons but some were due to running out of time. There is also an opportunity for emergency business, that had not been reviewed by the intergroups prior to the conference. There were no emergency issues.

There were six members that ran to be a Trustee. Five were already a Trustee. All were voted in without opposition. Despite the elections there will still be vacancies the Trustees will have to fill.

Finances

Financially 2022 was not as good as the previous year but similar to 2020. Donations were down \$200,000 amounting to \$970,001. It was felt that local intergroups and groups are starting to hold more events and money is therefore not available for donation to World Service. Sales from literature also decreased by about \$150,000 totaling \$616,690 and digital and audiobook income amounted to \$143,842. They did note the donations from 2019 and 2020 had surpassed significantly the donations of the past sixty years. They ended 2022 with a net loss of \$251,532,52. They stated this was due to a \$101,168 penalty from cancelling the contract with the hotel for a face-to-face conference that year. World Service believes that it would have cost more for them to hold the conference as they did not believe they would have met the number of rooms required. The rest of the loss was because of the stock market.

Their investments' loss amounted to \$185,024.02. There is an Automatic Recurring Contributions (ARC) program that allows persons to make monthly or quarterly contributions.

There are four other funds and they are as follows:

General Funds: Contributions are used to fund items such as public information, translations, literature, video ads, oa.org and Find a Meeting, staffing, equipment, and administrative needs.

Restricted Funds which include: Delegate Support, Professional Exhibits and Translation Assistance. Their balances are as follows:

Delegate Support \$35,911.84 down about \$2,000 dollars from last year
Professional Exhibits \$106,724.34 down about \$6,000 dollars from last year
Translation Assistance \$341,520.10 up about \$16,395 from last year

Board Designated Funds which are used by the Board for projects, events, creating Public Service Announcements and updating the World Service Office. This fund has been possible due to a surplus the last several years. World Service is having a new Public Service Announcement made.

There was a seventh tradition collected at the WSBC and \$2,477.75 was donated.

Overeaters Anonymous by the Numbers

In 2022 OA decreased by ninety-nine meetings but service bodies increased by two. It is not known how many of these groups may be on-line meetings. We now have 6,467 groups and 339 service bodies.

Literature

One new piece of literature was created and passed this year. It is "Diverse Voices: A Common Solution." The new Sponsorship pamphlet was not passed and will be going back to the literature committee for further revisions. Basically, delegates were upset that the thirty questions were removed. There is a new publication in the works on mental health, medications, and recovery. They will be requesting stories from OA members. Hopefully, it will be ready for a vote next year.

Two manuscripts are now available for purchase that were approved at the 2021 and 2022 WSBCs

The Twelve Traditions Workbook of Overeaters Anonymous
Voices of Recovery, Second Edition

The following are Board-Approved Literature reviewed and revised this year:

Where do I Start

Fifteen Questions for the Young Person

The Twelve Concepts of OA Service

Service, Traditions, and Concepts Workshop Manual and presentation, including OA Group Inventory, OA Intergroup or Service Board Inventory, OA Region Inventory, and Strong Meeting Checklist

OA Region Map

Young People's Letter to Intergroups/Service Boards and Regions

Suggested Lifeline Meeting Format

Videoconference Meeting Training and Security/Preventative Measures (new)

Embracing Our Differences (new) See attached

World Services also produces the Bulletin, and the Professional Community Courier. A Step Ahead has been discontinued as a downloadable PDF. It has been merged with the existing News and Events blog.

Motions and By-laws

Motions and By-laws passed by consent are as follows:

- By-law Proposal 2 was that a Conference Committee established by a WSBC can only be suspended by an act of the WSBC instead of by a Trustee as in the past. If a committee has been found to now be working or meeting outside of the WSBC, a Trustee can place on the agenda for a vote at the next WSBC.
- By-law Proposal 3 changes wording from "Intergroup and Service Boards" to "Service Bodies."
- Motion D deletes addresses from the contact information in the Final WSBC Report to protect privacy.
- Motion G deletes WSBC policy 1992e which gave a job description for General Service Trustee. This position no longer exists.
- Motion H removes language that required the Trustees to mail to all service bodies requesting donation for the Delegate Support Fund since all correspondence is now done by email.
- Motion J removes the amount of \$65 as the delegate registration fee. This has not been the fee for many years. It allows it to be adjusted as the Board of Trustees (BOT) deems necessary.

- Motion L adds The Twelfth Step Within Day to the rest of the list of OA events for consistency and to make it easier to find.
- Motion N allows for conference committee reports to be submitted four weeks instead of two weeks after the WSBC.
- Motion O rescinds WSBC Policy 2017a which was passed to establish a Spanish language service board. It has been established, recognized, and is giving service. This policy is no longer needed.
- Motion Q was rescinded. It was regarding a policy that requested that we apply, if approved, accept non-profit status from Google at no cost. This has already been accomplished.
- Motion R was to remove specific examples of diverse and underrepresented populations with reference to including more diverse stories in literature published by OA. It was believed that listing diverse populations it might inadvertently exclude other diverse populations.

Withdrawn Motions and By-laws are as follows:

- Motion U would have added language to the statement on literature encouraging groups to use any and all OA approved literature even if their group only focuses on one piece of literature such as the Big Book. This issue was sent to the BOT to address. There had been problems with some people bad mouthing OA approved literature and advising members to only use Alcoholic Anonymous literature.
- By-law Proposal 1 would have the WSBC held as a hybrid meeting with the BOT live in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and the delegates virtual.
- By-law Proposal 5 would add the word “service” to the special-focus boards.
- By-law Proposal 6 would remove the words, “place within the United States,” and add the words, “manner, or method,” with regards to meetings with the delegates.
- By-law Proposal 7 would add the word, “sole,” judge of the Trustee’s recovery including abstinence and maintenance of a healthy body weight.

- By-law 8 would remove the words, “special needs” and replace it with the words, “additional needs.”
- By-law 9 would remove the words “prepaid mail and/or” with reference to notices being sent to service bodies for the Annual Conference. It is now sent out by e-mail.
- By-law 10 would change the entities that can submit amendments. It would remove Trustee, Region Chairs Committee and allow amendments by a registered service body, BOT, and Conference Committee before December 1 prior to the WSBC.
- By-law 15 would change the words, “other special needs” to “additional support needs.”

Motions passed without Amendments:

- Motion B was to replace four WSBC policies with one concise policy regarding Public Communication Policy. In addition to reference existing guidelines that were written after the original policy.
- Motion C is to update a policy written in 1978 regarding other countries being able to translate OA literature.
- Motion K rescinds a policy that requires the World Service Office (WSO) to provide templates for websites. This is no longer done and most service bodies already have websites.
- Motion M increase the amount a member can donate from \$5,000 to \$7,500 per account per year. The policy had not been updated since 2013.
- Motion P rescinds a policy that sought to research, upgrade and expand the OA website. This has already been accomplished.

Bylaws passed without Amendments:

- By-law 13 allows for an intergroup, that affiliates with a national service board to choose to affiliate with the nation service board’s region or remain in their current assigned region.

Motions defeated:

- Motion T This motion was to only approve OA literature and the Alcoholic Anonymous (AA) Big Book. No other AA materials would be approved.

Bylaws passed as amended:

- By-law 4 deleted the word, “special” and replaced it with specific.

Bylaws defeated:

- By-law 14 would have an intergroup who chooses to affiliate with a national service board, to also be affiliated with the national service board’s region.

Motions passed as amended:

- Motion A requires all official documents and communications to avoid, wherever possible, the use of acronyms and abbreviations except for OA for Overeaters Anonymous. Acronyms and abbreviations cause difficulty when making translations.
- Motion E This motion provides the following wording when it come to describing open and closed meetings:

Meetings with visitors (Open)

Open to everyone. All are open unless specified otherwise.

Meetings without Visitors (Closed)

Open to those who want to stop eating compulsively

This includes newcomers, OA members, and others who think they may have a problem with food.

- Motion F These changes refer to correct pro nouns being used. It removes the word, “any” and add an s to member and deletes the words “his or her” and replaces it with their. It refers to members sharing their experiences.
- Motion I This motion changes the words “special focus groups” to specific focus groups. It also removes examples of specific focus groups. It refers people to oa.org for a list of these meetings.
- Motion S This motion as passed, would have tokens made for every year up to twenty and then every five years up to fifty.

- Motion V was proposed to form a digital lending library where materials could be taken out for ninety days. It was amended to refer this to the BOT to determine investigate and determine the viability.

By-laws never heard due to time:

- By-law 11
- By-law 12
- By-law 16
- By-law 17
- By-law 18

None of the motions pertaining to how future WSBC should be held were heard. Next year's WSBC will be held face to face and in 2025 it will be virtual to allow people to attend the World Service Convention.

Committees

By-laws

The By-laws Committee developed a seven-minute video on "What Do Bylaws Have to Do with Recovery?" It was sent to the Materials Approval Committee (MAC). All proposals must be sent to the MAC for approval.

The committee reviewed the Bylaws and the Business Conference Policy Manual. They submitted thirteen motions on the By-laws and fourteen on the Policy Manual for consideration at the 2023 WSBC.

The committee developed a checklist to assist service bodies when they are preparing By-laws. It was sent to MAC for approval. They also prepared a letter to go to all region chairs reminding them of these available documents. It was sent to and approved by MAC.

Conference-Approved Literature Committee Report

This committee developed the new "Diverse Voices: A Common Solution" literature which was presented and passed by the 2023 WSBC. They also developed the "Sponsorship in OA: Guiding Others into Recovery" This was presented to the 2023 WSBC but did not pass. It will be sent back to the committee for revisions.

They will work on "The Twelve Traditions Workshop and Study Guide" and the "OA Handbook for Members, Groups, and Service Bodies" next year.

Unity with Diversity

This committee offered a two-hour workshop on July 23, 2022, entitled “Men Share Their Experience in OA.” They held a second workshop, with fellows sharing their experience with overeating and bariatric surgery, December 18, 2022. Each workshop had forty-seven people in attendance.

They drafted a Welcoming Quiz made up of nineteen questions to promote inclusivity among groups, individuals, and newcomers. This was sent to MAC for approval.

The committee prepared a four-question questionnaire to inquiring how they can assist specific focus groups. This was sent to MAC for approval.

Twelve Step Within

This committee held a Twelfth Step Within Day on December 12, 2023. They developed a flyer that can be sent out prior to the twelfth of the month encouraging members to call someone they have not seen awhile. This was sent to MAC and recently approved. (See attached)

They received a document from the BOT regarding “Do’s and Don’ts” when trying to assist someone who is struggling in program. This document was revised and submitted to MAC and is believed to have been recently approved.

This year they have three subcommittees. The one I am on is preparing a power point presentation on recovery assistance and informing people of available resources to do twelfth step work. Another one is on promoting twelfth step work. A focus will be on social media. And the third will work on translations.

Young People

This committee updated the “Young People” meetings on Find a Meeting by contacting each meeting to validate information.

They are working on a document on how service bodies can attract and retain young people in OA.

They compiled a list of OA service bodies that host young people focused meetings and have young people focused resources on their website.

Pubic Information/Professional Outreach

This committee developed a letter to go to medical and healthcare students and medical professionals to ask if OA information can be sent and/or to offer to be a part of a panel of

presentation about the solution OA offers in a classroom setting. This was sent to MAC for approval and hopefully be put on oa.org for others to use.

The Public Information and Public Outreach manual was finalized and sent to the BOT for approval. It is being finalized to be available for sale at the bookstore.oa.org.

The "Welcome Room" has been in development since 2020. More work continues in hopes that the next set of documents will be approved by MAC. The "Welcome Room" plan is to have a 24/7 virtual room where people can call to obtain information regarding OA. Much has had to be accomplished to make this idea a possibility. It is hoped that all OA websites will have a link on their websites guiding people to this resource.

Thank you for allowing me to represent SpaceCoast Intergroup at the WSBC. I was honored to serve and learned a great deal. I found the face-to-face experience very rewarding. I made contacts and collected e-mails of people that I believe can enhance our program here. I learned new ideas that are being used other places and it was wonderful to interact with foreign members from all over. It is amazing how worldwide OA has become. I liked the opportunity to meet and talk with trustees and meet our trustee. Some of the previous barriers were not present when held in person. Meeting committee members face-to-face allowed for much better communication. It has been a good experience that I would encourage everyone try at some point in their recovery.

I know this is a lot of information to digest. I have only prepared the highlights and would be happy to entertain anyone wishing additional information on any subject or anyone who has questions. I have a book including all the information I reported on and more. Anyone is welcome to borrow it for additional information or more details.

In Service,

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