

Highlights from A.A.W.S.

December 11, 2020

The A.A. World Services Board met via videoconference on Friday, December 11, 2020. Chair of the A.A.W.S. Board, Beau B., welcomed all in attendance and opened the meeting with a moment of silence.

General Manager's Report

General Manager Greg T. provided the following report:

Archives

The Archives staff have answered approximately 900 requests for information so far this year. Work continues on the COVID-19 digital newspaper collection which works to collect information on how groups, districts, and areas are coping with the pandemic.

Human Resources

Craig W. joined the GSO. Staff Services team as a GSO Staff member on the Group Services assignment. Alexandra Rosenman (nonalcoholic) joined the Communication Services department as Digital Media Creator. Scheduled to begin employment in the months of December 2020 and January 2021: Amy B., GSO Staff; James H., GSO Staff; and Bruce Hartley, Senior Project Manager.

Operations

My Portal Release 2.0 is scheduled to launch Monday, December 14. At the last My Portal Task Force meeting on November 23, the Technology Services Director, did a demo of the reports and the key functionalities that will be delivered in December. The My Portal Task Force gave positive feedback and were impressed with the functionalities and the ease of use of the newly redesigned My Portal. The French and Spanish versions of My Portal will be deployed in the first quarter of 2021.

Technology Services

The Technology Services team continues to play a key role in several projects: ERP Project Core Workstream; the aa.org Content Development and Design Review project; the Corrections Correspondence System revision project. The Technology Services department is working with the Finance department to plan for technology initiatives for 2021.

Administration

Return to the Workplace – The Return to the Workplace taskforce continues to follow updates regarding the COVID-19 health crisis in preparation for a modified voluntary return. The taskforce hosted an Epidemiologist at a recent meeting; he gave confirming feedback and guidance.

Senior management visited the office to assess their space, plan and prepare for their department's return related to social distancing, staggered shifts and scheduling. A communication will be sent to inform the office will not be returning prior to March 1, 2021.

Compliance and Legal – Administration and HR are reviewing and updating job descriptions to ensure they meet both the practical and legal reasons for a job description. HR will revisit the current A.A.W.S., Inc. Personnel Policies Handbook to develop a simpler employee handbook by providing a true policy and procedure manual. HR will conduct a request for proposal the first half of 2021 to explore employment counsel.

Staff Services

The first virtual World Service Meeting was held November 28 – 30. Members in the Services Department provided some of the resources for this herculean effort by serving either behind the “tech” scene or as staff secretaries to the committees. All were moved by the unbounding love and gratitude that permeated the three-day event.

The Corrections desk continues to work with the Technology Services department and our consultants in the overhaul of the Corrections database.

Finance

Revenue and Expense:

Individual/group contributions revenue as of November 30, 2020 is \$8,868,455. With 92% of the year elapsed, 90% of the expected amount has been received. Since contributions tend to peak in December, contributions appear to be on track to meet or exceed the reforecast.

Gross literature sales revenue as of November 30, 2020 is \$8,681,943. With 92% of the year elapsed, 88% of the expected amount has been generated. Since literature sales tend to peak in December, sales appear to be on track to come close or to meet the reforecast.

The revenue split between gross profit on literature sales and contributions remains about 41% literature/59% contributions this year, whereas historically, the split is 58% litera-

ture/42% contributions.

Payroll and benefits expense as of November 30, 2020 is \$10,354,423. With 92% of the year elapsed, 88% of the expected amount has been spent. Personnel expense is on track to incur at the reforecast amount or slightly lower.

Total expenses as of November 30, 2020 are \$15,131,971. With 92% of the year elapsed, 91% of the expected amount has been spent. Total expenses are on track to spend in the range of the reforecast amount pending reclassification of balance sheet items.

As of November 30, 2020, there is a surplus of \$369,000. The reforecast anticipates a deficit of \$337,000 for 2020.

Cash Flow:

Cash on hand as of November 30, 2020 was \$1,134,969. The department has caught up on A.A.W.S. cash account bank reconciliations; the G.S.B. cash account is reconciled only through June, so this number is not exact.

The bank balance as of the close of business December 4, 2020 was \$1,078,797, which represents about three weeks of expenses, about the same as a month ago. Having converted to Bill.com, there have been very few outstanding checks, so the bank balance should be up to date on the disbursement side. However, since a lockbox has not yet been implemented, there may be a lag in depositing cash receipts, so the true balance is likely higher.

Publishing

Audiobook recording update: *Living Sober* is now posted at no cost on aa.org in English, French and Spanish. These audiobooks join *Alcoholics Anonymous* and *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*.

Holiday Special Offers: On December 1, an announcement letter was posted on “What’s new on aa.org,” and email blasts announcing December 1, 2020 – January 31, 2021 special offers:

1. Spend a minimum total of \$100 or more and receive a 15% overall discount.

2. For each copy of *Our Great Responsibility* ordered, you will receive a free copy of *Alcoholics Anonymous Facsimile First Printing of the First Edition*.

A Visual History of Alcoholics Anonymous: An Archival Journey: On December 1, the 2020 International Convention souvenir book announcement letter and pre-sale offer flyer was posted on “What’s new on aa.org,” with email blasts announcing the pre-order offer at a special early bird discount of \$1 off the list price of \$12. The book’s release date is scheduled for February 14, 2021.

Technology/Communication/Services (TCS)

The committee reviewed the minutes of G.S.O.’s Website

Committee, along with progress reports and updates on on Google-For-Non-Profits projects.

The senior manager of the Communication Services Department noted the newly filled positions of digital product manager and digital media content creator. The senior manager noted the first pages for aa.org were approved.

The director of Technology Services gave an update on Fellowship Connection, previously known as My Portal. The Fellowship Connection taskforce, now including area registrars from most regions, conducted user application testing. The taskforce scheduled a soft launch in preparation for the go-live date of December 14.

Progress report on Website design and Meeting Guide app – Staff Services, Finance and Publishing teams are engaged in content review for the website. The primary focus of the content team is to complete all high and medium priority webpages by year end. Next priorities for the Meeting Guide app, once approved, include adding additional contribution options of PayPal and Square. The project to include the Online Intergroup is in the beginning stages.

YouTube – The digital media content creator has made significant progress through fixing the closed captioning on *Alcoholics Anonymous (Big Book)* for the ASL videos.

Google Ads – October 19 Google informed the Communication Services department that A.A.W.S.’s Google ads were disapproved. The certification and technical issues have since been resolved. A new campaign began December 9 and has been approved for Google grants with all of A.A.W.S.’s trademarks. The A.A.W.S. Google ads are in a five day learning period for the Google algorithm ending December 16.

Internal Audit

The committee recommended that the Finance RACI Matrix, as reviewed and amended by the committee be submitted to the A.A.W.S. Board.

Additional Activities

A.A.W.S. Ad Hoc Committee on Pricing, Discounts and Distribution (Delta committee): The committee will continue its data analysis in collaboration with G.S.O., with additional reporting to follow.

The board approved the following recommendation brought forward by the committee:

- That A.A.W.S., Inc. conduct a mixed unit discount plan on a three to six month trial basis.

Safety and A.A. service pieces: GSO staff shared a proposed new service piece Safety and A.A. flyer and proposed updates to existing service pieces: “Safety and A.A: Our Common Welfare,” and the yellow Safety Card for A.A. groups. These items will be forwarded for editing and legal review.