

WSBC Delegate Report - Cheryl Y.

Neill M. And I split up writing about the WSBC. My report focuses on the motions - *New Business Proposals* and *Bylaw Amendment Proposals*.

2023 WSBC Theme: Concepts of Service - The Heart of Fellowship

Thursday, April 27th — Saturday, April 29th

Business Meeting Overview

During the chair's opening, all of us were asked to listen without judgment — to remove our personality so that we could accept and support the outcomes even without our personal agreement. To let go and let God. To show sensitivity, respect and patience. (Paraphrase).

There was an AM and PM session on Thursday and Friday and an AM session on Saturday. At the beginning of each session, a daily reader was read and at the end of each session, we stood holding hands while the Serenity Prayer was first spoken by 1 or more international members in their native language and then was repeated by all in English. By the end of the business conference, the Serenity Prayer was said in Greek, Persian (Farsi), Hebrew, Russian and Ukrainian. It was very powerful, especially when the Ukrainian and Russian members stood up front holding hands —each taking a turn to speak it in their language.

The conference started on Thursday with 176 Voting Members and ended on Saturday with 174

One of the first items was the 10 Open Board of Trustee positions and there were 6 candidates vying for election. Each candidate had the opportunity to speak of their service and experience and then fielded questions asked by delegates and the Board members. As a Green Dot (first-timer) I sensed this is a high level of service and

commitment that is very important to OA — it is a very time-intensive service position. Based on each candidate's shares — they all had strong recovery and were so passionate to be selected for the service. I personally was touched and inspired by all of them asking to be elected. It was humbling. The formal vote was on Friday and on Saturday it was announced that all 6 nominees were accepted.

There was a lot of business to get done in 2.5 days. The agenda included **2 pieces of updated literature, 22 New Business Proposals (NBP) and 18 Bylaw Amendment Proposals (BAP)**. And the items were handled in that order.

As Neil provided earlier in his report - 1 pamphlet was adopted, the 2nd defeated. Of the 22 New Business Proposals — 20 were adopted either by consent or by majority vote — 1 defeated and 1 referred to the BOT.

The final set of motions were the 18 Bylaw Amendment Proposals — and when it was clear that not all could be discussed — motion makers withdrew 8. Of the remaining 10 — 2 were passed by consent, 2 were adopted by majority vote, and 1 was defeated. The remaining 5 BAPs went undiscussed due to time running out.

Some motions required a Quorum 2/3rd majority vote while others 50% although as a Green Dot (first-timer) I don't know why. I will learn next year. Everyone showed up passionately and participated fully. There was lots of discussion and differing arguments. It was wonderful, scary, exciting, frustrating, stressful and amazing for me. There were many close votes and often the chair was asked to request a 'count off' for those in favor and against throughout the 3 days to confirm for sure if motions were adopted or defeated. Also, we said the Serenity Prayer quite a few times — it was always welcomed.

The final item I want to mention about the conference before I move onto the motion section is that the very last act of the business conference is for the 'first-time' Green Dots to go to the front and as a group remove our Green Dots and I was a newbie. We

did not do a count-off but as I looked back at the empty seats — it seemed to me that we Green Dots were way more than half. It was hopeful and exciting to be part of the ‘new blood.’ There was lots of smiles and applause from all.

Personally, I want to thank the intergroup for allowing 2 members to go as delegates. I feel it is important for our area to be represented. I did my best to represent our intergroup to the best of my ability. I voted with the group, the traditions, and God in my mind and my heart.

WSBC NEW BUSINESS PROPOSALS (NBP)

Here are some highlights of motions we felt worth mentioning:

I felt that there was a big movement for tolerance of adversity and inclusion — including international.

Thursday’s afternoon session was spent on the 2 pamphlets which Neill spoke about.

Pamphlet — Diverse Voices: A Common Solution (#265) — Adopted

Pamphlets — Combining Sponsorship in OA: Guiding Others into Recovery (#200) and Sponsoring Through the Twelve Steps (#220) — Defeated

**Once an updated piece of literature is adopted - the older version is retired and is no longer considered CAL. Members were concerned and asked the chair what to do with the outdated version that were non-CAL. The chair said that ‘they’ (BOT/WSO?) only spoke to what was CAL. That each group should do a Group Conscience to decide what to do with the outdated literature. Perhaps the literature could be used for outreach.*

There were motions related to our international community that focused on translation and communication challenges.

NBP A was adopted so that all official documents and communications from World Service level avoid wherever possible the use of acronyms and abbreviations. The abbreviation 'O.A.' and literature were exempt.

NBP C updated policy was adopted and the purpose is to make it easier for service bodies to obtain permission for translations of literature into other languages and the intent is to offer the opportunity to anyone in our fellowship.

NBP E's motion was to update WSBC Policy definitions for Open/Closed meetings and to add new terms with definitions for 'Focused' meeting and 'Topic' meeting. The controversy was that the word 'Special' had been removed from the term Special-focused and Special-topic. To keep it simple, a motion carried to split NBP E motion into 2 items.

Motion Part 1 - Adopted *(Official language version will be provided by WSBC)*

Group meeting definitions:

MEETING WITH VISITORS (OPEN)

Open to everyone. All meetings are considered open unless otherwise indicated.

MEETING WITHOUT VISITORS (CLOSED)

Open only to those who desire to stop eating compulsively. This includes newcomers, OA members and others who think they have a problem with food.

Motion Part 2 - Adopted *((Official language version will be provided by WSBC)*

SPECIFIC-FOCUSED MEETING:

SPECIFIC-TOPIC MEETING:

This motion went to Reference Committee and they suggested the word ‘Specific’ in place of ‘Special’.

One of our diversity groups is neuro-divergent (those with autism, ADD, ADHD, Asberger, etc.) There was a movement to remove the word ‘Special’ from ‘Special-focused/Special-task Meetings’ due to negative association of ‘Special Needs’. There were those of diversity speaking in opposition of the term ‘Specific’ and spoke strongly to keep the term ‘Special.’ The second PRO speaker who had spoken in favor of changing the wording to ‘Specific’ was neuro-divergent and shared passionately about how they spent their whole time in school affected by being described as ‘Special Needs’ and how painful it was. It was quite an emotional debate and as this PRO person was finishing their share, the CON person who had just spoken prior against the motion — walked across the room and **was the final PRO share** — changing their position in favor of the word ‘Specific’ as she said it was important for there to be inclusion. It was so powerful to watch people come together for the good of the group.

Once we adopted the word ‘Specific-focused’ and ‘Specific-topic’, it helped ‘grandfather’ in other motions like **NBP I**.

NBP M — Adopted

Updated the maximum amount a person could donate per year from \$5000 to \$7500. The update based amount on cost of living calculator and the limit also supports Tradition 7 of being self-supporting.

NBP S — Adopted

It was voted to add new year medallions for the years 45 and 50. So currently medallions can be purchased for the years 1 to 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, and in the near future years 45 and 50 will be available. The large, heavy-duty medallions can be purchased and engraved for ‘in-between’ years (*ie: 21st*).

NBP T and NBP U were created related to a long-standing concern regarding a faction in OA that only uses the Big Book/AA Literature and is violating the Traditions by also speaking negatively about the OA literature saying it has no value and members are unable to get abstinent. (My thoughts are of Tradition 4 that says groups are autonomous as long as they do not cause harm to other groups or OA a whole.)

NBP T – Defeated

NBP T's purpose was to focus OA members on literature developed for and adopted by OA by removing all AA books for CAL except for AA's Big Book. The reference committee suggested amendment added back in AA's 12 and 12. One long-time OA and Board of Trustee member spoke in favor of **NBP T** for 2 reasons — the first is that there is a faction in OA that only uses the Big Book and speaks negatively about OA literature which causes harm. And the second is that OA has it's own literature and that we should use it letting go of the AA literature. She referenced a letter AA sent to WSO back in 1980's — WSO had reached out to AA asking if we could use their Concept literature and AA's response declined the request saying that since OA was established and it was time we created and used our own literature. It was a unanimous decision to defeat — 90 No; 68 Yes

NBP U – Adopted

Updated WSBC Policy 2010 a by adding '*Although groups may choose to focus on only one piece of OA-approved literature, individuals and groups are encouraged to use any and all OA-approved literature.*'

The chair and BOT stayed neutral throughout the business conference only responded when asked questions by delegates and BOT members which is the process. When asked by a delegate if the BOT supported this motion, the chair confirmed yes and added that there has been an on-going concern of this group of people speaking against OA's literature for the 5 years that she has been on the board. The BOT

supported this motion **as a gentle way to address the concern** focusing on ‘rogue behavior in certain groups that belittle OA literature that violates the traditions.’

I understood the message to be that *‘it is okay to use whatever literature works for my recovery. It is my responsibility to refrain from commenting negatively on any other conference-approved literature.’* It was a unanimous decision to adopt — 103 Yes; 54 No

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WSBC BYLAW AMENDMENT PROPOSALS (BAP)

During the final Saturday AM session, 3 BAPs were discussed. My last remarks will provide an overview for the two that were the last items the delegates voted on before the business conference adjourned.

BAP 13 – Adopted

BAP 14 – Defeated

I will do my best to provide accuracy about these two proposals while ‘keeping it simple.’

In the US, we have Regions that our Inter-groups align with. Internationally, the Regions are known as ‘National Service Boards’ (NSB) and the NSB serves the international intergroups in a more broader sense than our US Regions providing bank accounts, legal support, etc.

The BAPs were a result of an intergroup in Greece that connected with the Virtual Region and received a lot of support with virtual resources, community, etc. This Greek Intergroup wanted the choice to leave their National Service Board to join the Virtual Intergroup. They wanted to be part of that group and be part of the service.

Each ***BAP 13 and BAP 14*** were each submitted by two different international groups. Both motions were about the same issue but had opposite outcomes.

BAP 13 — the proposal was to amend the bylaws so that intergroups could choose their Region/NSB and **BAP 14** — was to make it a requirement that the IG stay with their ‘assigned’ region.

Since the 2 groups could not agree, proposals were created to be considered at WSBC and they said a decision needed to be made. During the discussion, a motion was made to refer to the BOT versus the delegates voting on an outcome. And when questioned, the chair shared that the issue had already been discussed with the BOT - they could not come up with a resolution which is why the motions had been made. The motion to refer to the BOT was defeated.

Another motion was made to hear both BAP 13 and BAP 14 before making a decision — the motion was accepted and passed.

Once both was heard - debated - questions addressed — the delegates voted on which Motion to consider.

BAP 13 had the majority vote to move forward with consideration. And when the delegates voted on **BAP13** it was Adopted.

This is the end of my WSBC report.

In loving service, Cheryl Y, Delegate