

Trustee Line - Current Issue

February 2023

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Thoughts From The Trustees - Current and Past

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The subjects listed below are themes that have been submitted by other Trustees. You may respond to any of them, or start an entirely new subject

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Subjects that receive submissions from at least 13 different people, will trigger an email blast to all the current and past Trustees, signifying a 'Hot Topic Alert' on the Trustee Line.

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1. 2nd Vote-. Guidance Code-Article VII, Section 4

Thursday, February 2, 2023

NOTE: This item is a continuation of a earlier discussion here on the Trustee Line. Full Discussion can be found in the [November 2022 Archive](#)

It may be helpful to refer to this discussion thread before replying to this new item
Renee G-Trustee Line Committee

Thoughts on Agenda item 37 - Guidance Code

I realize this is only hearsay, but it is my understanding, developed from a former Trustee who has been in the program for four decades, that the 39 meeting rule was initially written as a guideline for Trustees only and that the general membership was only included because the Trustees felt everyone should be held to that requirement. I can understand Trustees making a rule for Trustees to follow, but we don't rule the membership...we work for them! We should trust the groups to make a "conscience decision" regarding to whom they give a coin or celebrate a birthday. If they are having difficulty with that decision, they can ask their Trustee(s) for advice.

To my knowledge the terms "international level" and "room level" are not used in GA literature. There are no levels of membership. We are all compulsive gamblers.

What is onerous about the proposal is that by the author's own admission the proposed guideline can be ignored. Why make a rule when the rule diminishes a group's ability to govern itself. What needs to apply here is the Unity Program, numbers 2 and 4. The current language does exactly that.

Dave M.- Current Trustee- Area: 2G - Oregon/SW Washington

Friday, February 3, 2023

In response to Dave M's post, the 39-meeting rule was NOT originally put in just for Trustees, it was put in for everyone. The rationale behind it was sound and simple. They felt that birthdays/anniversaries, whatever you wanted to call them, were sacred moments and didn't want members to show up for one meeting, return one year later for another meeting, claim some sort of victory over their demons, and have it publicized in the GA Bulletin for the membership at large to see. They simply wanted to show that members who wanted their milestones formally acknowledged achieved those milestones through "regular attendance at meetings". Are 39 meetings arbitrary? Of course, and the Trustees are free to change that anytime they can muster up the necessary votes to change the Guidance Code. I would embrace such a discussion.

The real issue is how that rule presently appears in the Guidance Code. Because of the placement of the comma after the phrase "via group conscience decisions", many groups (including groups in my OWN Intergroup) have used that technicality not only to celebrate birthdays as a "group conscience" decision, but to have them published in the Bulletin. In many of these cases, the celebrant attended MAYBE 5-10 meetings in the span of

the intervening 52 weeks. Hardly an example of "regular attendance at meetings that you want the membership at large to honor. Group conscious decisions are great and I highly recommend them when logical but there is no place in the fellowship for bad decisions masquerading as group conscious decisions. IMHO, this is one of them.

Jack R - Current Trustee- Area: 1A -California

2. Fall 2023 International Conference

February 11, 2023

This morning I reviewed the costs for the Conference as I am planning to attend. The costs from South Florida to Chicago are (approximately):

Round trip from Fort Lauderdale to O'Hare including to and from airport \$700

Lunch Friday \$25

Hotel 2 nights \$533

Round trip from O'Hare to hotel \$100

Registration \$225

Breakfast Saturday & Sunday \$50

Misc. \$67

Total for 1 person, \$1,700.

If virtual, a registration fee could be set at \$25 per person, a savings of \$1,675. That is real savings. (If we add an additional \$25 per person, that would be designated to 3 separate choices, Gamblers Anonymous, if a member; Gam-

Anon, if a member or General Expenses if not affiliated with either program and are attending with someone else who is in one of the other 2 programs).

Imagine if the Trustees did not have to have any Group, Intergroup, ISO funding, how could most of them attend? The Trustees have additional costs as they may arrive Wednesday so they will be ready for Thursday's BOT meeting.

Let's say 80 Trustees attend live @ \$2,000 each = \$160,000

Let's say 100 Trustees attend virtual @ \$25 each = \$2,500, a savings of \$157,500 for EACH CONFERENCE.

The \$2,500 would be used for expenses of the Virtual service provider and miscellaneous expenses.

Expanding the possible cost savings, an international conference can be presented virtually with concurrent workshops in different "rooms", I have attended virtual conferences in other programs and from other non-Gamblers Anonymous approved sites that were a most positive experience.

Another subject to contemplate is the lack of presentation at virtual meetings for members to financially support the GAISO and local intergroups. The GAISO continues to have expenses exceeding income; how much longer will the cash reserves support the ISO? In addition, there is a lease for the office in Upland, CA that is an obligation.

As an aside, we stress HONESTY in our recovery, could anyone explain why we need closed votes on any motion or election at a BOT meeting?

Bill B - Past Trustee - Central NJ, now live in Area 6A

3. Searching the Internet for help with a gambling problem

February 14, 2023- 2:00 pm

It is 5:30 AM on Super Bowl Sunday and I searched the internet (one of the major services) for results on "Problem Gambling". There were 464 million links available within 1 second. I reviewed the first 58 and there was no link to "Gamblers Anonymous", WHY?

We remain a hidden 12-step program with an archaic web site, no app or a presence on the internet, WHY?

Other 12-step programs have a vast presence in the virtual meeting area, we do not, WHY?

How are we reaching the suffering gambler today?

We can spend hours in changing a word or sentence in our literature; we can discuss the nuances of a minuscule interpretation, or we can implement the 21st century tools to enrich our program.

When?

Bill B -Past Trustee -Area: Central NJ -Now live in 6A Florida

4. Links allowed on Local Websites

February 14, 2023 - 2:15pm

Can any groups' Gambler Anonymous or ISO websites allow to have any link to a NA, AA, OA, or any other self-help group website other than Gam-Anon? Is this a violation? If so does that group get thrown out of GA by the Group Removal procedure?

Walter G. - Current Trustee - Area: 12 - New Jersey and Eastern PA

5. Monthly Assessment charges from meetings

February 24, 2023 - 11:00pm

Our intergroup assesses a monthly charge to each group in our area that meets in person based on the average monthly attendance for that group to cover its expenses. Our intergroup would like to charge an assessment to a group that used to meet in person before COVID-19 that presently meets on Zoom. Since our intergroup only assesses groups in our area that meet in person and since virtual meetings are still temporarily sanctioned GA meetings, our intergroup wanted me to ask and see if there was anything in the Guidance Code that would prevent it from charging a monthly assessment based on average attendance to a virtual meeting? Please respond by March 10th so that I can respond back to our Intergroup at our Intergroup meeting on March 12th. Thanks

James B. - Current Trustee - Area: 2B - California

February 25, 2003 - 10:00pm

Guidance Code Article X Section 5.8 states:

The Intergroup should be supported financially by the member groups.

How that level of support is up to the groups who appoint representatives to the Intergroup. A mandatory assessment of a Zoom meeting might be a bit controversial, but financial support from Virtual meetings is going to be required to keep this fellowship solvent. For some Intergroups who have lost live meetings due to Covid, financial support may be more difficult.

Bob C -Current Trustee -Area: 3A - CA

February 28, 2023 -5:15pm

I am writing in response to the post by James B. I was surprised that your Intergroup charges a fee to groups belonging to your Intergroup. I think this is a wrong way to get support. By charging groups a fee, you are by extension charging members a fee. This is in violation of Unity Step 3 and our Guidance Code in my opinion. Our Intergroup in New England runs on group and personal donations and all groups are welcome to participate, whether or not they can make a donation. I think what your Intergroup is doing should end immediately. Would love to hear what other people think on this subject.

God Bless all my brothers and sisters in the program and wish you a lifetime of recovery

Joe L -Former trustee- Area 11- New England
