

**WSC External Committee  
June 1992 meeting**

In attendance at this first meeting of the conference year, in addition to the trustees assigned to the External Committee we were fortunate to have conference committee chairs and vice chairs. The trustees assigned to this committee are: Donna M., Garth P., Kim J., Danette B., Bob S., and Pete C. (Pete was unable to attend this meeting) The additional members were: Mitchell S., WSC 2nd Vice chair; Rogan A. and Susan B., WSC P.I. Chair and Vice Chair, Ivan F. and Tim Sciore, H&I Chair and Vice Chair. WSO staff members were Mary V., Freddie A. and Carl P.

Kim J., outgoing chair, asked that elections for a new chair be handled as the first item of business. After nominations and discussion, Danette B. was elected to serve for the remainder of this conference year.

### **AGENDA REVIEW**

The committee began by looking at our meeting agenda and came to agreement on several items about our workload. The first item we discussed and decided upon was the expanded composition of the External Committee. It was agreed that this membership was needed to provide a broad world perspective while planning a long range public relations plan. We also agreed that all participants will have full participation rights (including a vote), if that ever becomes necessary. The adopted 1992 WSC BOT guidelines reflect our feelings about the importance of regular participation of all non-trustee committee members. Although the WSC's actions about some of the funding prioritization isn't clear, we think it is vital for the committee's efficiency and continuity to maintain the inclusion of WSC vice chairs and admin liaison member. This information was communicated to the full board and will be noted in a memo to the Interim Committee as well.

### **PRIORITIES**

After reviewing the agenda list and its relationship to WSC priorities, we agreed that almost all of our business can be categorized under the broad heading of a "Public Relations Policy and Development Plan." The committee agreed there should be a definite focus towards a unified effort for this development plan and its interrelationship with Additional Needs, H&I, P.I., the planned NA video, along with other World Service ideas and projects. The bottom line is that we cannot be productive with territorial attitudes.

Because we firmly believe in this project, we requested that the Board of Trustees adopt a public relations development plan as a priority item for this conference year and advocate the same to the World Service Conference. We believe that focusing on this broad category is absolutely vital for our fellowship to accomplish its related goals and projects.

Additionally, we asked the BOT to request time at the '93 conference for three panel discussions: a) Public relations policy and development plan; b) additional needs; and c) to address status and importance of collaborative efforts between WSC committees, the BOT and WSO.

We foresee the following items as impacting the *Conference Agenda Report* and the '93 WSC: a) approval by the WSC of a public relations policy statement; b) affirmation by the WSC

of a public relations development plan; and c) recommendation to the WSC for a non- NA event criteria/protocol/procedure. (all of these items are in initial development stages)

## REPORTING

In keeping with our belief that communication is the foundation for all successful service efforts, we requested funding for mailing of our reports as a separate item to all WSC participants. After discussion with the rest of the board, it was decided that inclusion of our report in mailings of BOT minutes would suffice. We welcome any comments, suggestions, questions and input about our work throughout the year. I strongly encourage your participation because our work results and ability to communicate is directly related to it.

## WORK PLAN

We used small work groups to address the agenda items. All work was, and will continued to be, reviewed and developed further by the entire committee as it progresses.

*Public Relations Policy/Development Plan* - Susan, Mitchell, Ivan

a) Assignments: To develop a P.R. statement for the Fellowship and for use in materials outside the Fellowship. After much discussion and drafting the group presented the one following statement:

*Narcotics Anonymous is a world wide self-help organization whose primary purpose is to help any individual stop using drugs. As part of our public relations policy, we cooperate with the public by providing information about recovery from drug addiction through the NA program. These cooperative efforts enhance our relationships with others and further our primary purpose.*

b) A public relations development plan (as well as continued work on the above statement) was assigned as an interim project to Susan. She will develop a first draft outline that will be further developed by the work group at our September meeting.

*Surveys* - Mary Kay, Rogan, Bob

a) Assignments: To develop a response about the New Jersey survey. Their response, after much revision, was agreed upon unanimously by the BOT. (Copy attached) Due to this action, I asked that the NJ Survey Ad hoc Group, which had been appointed during WSC '92, be terminated, and noted that I would draft a memo to that effect to those ad hoc group members.

b) Response to WSC P.I. questions about surveys--a great start was made on this, using the N.J. Survey response as a resource. It should be completed by September and will be used as the foundation/resource for developing drafts of the next item.

c) Survey bulletin - Using the above material as resource, we hope to have a first draft of an informational bulletin about surveys for the September meeting.

d) Internal Survey - WSC PI has a group working on a fellowship survey and the external committee anticipates working with them on their project.

*Non NA Events* - Donna, Garth, Tim (Kim has since replaced Donna)



a) **Assignments:** Make short term decisions about which events would be most productive to attend this year and begin discussions regarding long term criteria for choosing and attending non NA events. It will probably take some time to become proactive regarding non NA events by investigating, targeting and selecting them. Fortunately, we already have what seems to be a few fruitful relationships with certain organizations. We feel that continued attendance at these events is important in maintaining our credibility. In keeping with that, the following short term recommendations are: 1) Jamie and one other European member to attend the ICAA(Int'l) Congress on Alcohol and Addictions) 2) IFNGO 3) World Federation of Treatment Centers (to be attended only if cost is minimal) 4) The Next Step Conference on Deafness and Substance Abuse (which was attended by Darwyn in July).

b) We will not focus on attendance at, or cultivating relationships with new organizations until we develop a more responsible method of doing so. This development will include: selection criteria, a review panel, resource group of members to attend these events, categorized group of events (additional needs, correctional, medical, etc.), presentation materials, and training materials.

c) We realize that there are some international groups or organizations which, due to their nature, may not be greatly influenced by whether or not we attend so, these may not be the choices for our resources. These include treatment centers and correctional facilities that interface with and draw most from US experiences, procedure and policy. Other international organizations (such as medical or psychiatric), may be more significant for us to target particularly since they provide the forum within which highly respected and reputable experts in their fields exchange information from various cultural perspectives. In addition, these same types of groups are those which historically have proven to be the most difficult for us to impact in the regular course of PI efforts. Another consideration for choosing non NA events is the aspect of additional needs.

A major focus of the BOT and the entire WSC this year has been to become more responsible with our planning for work projects. We all worked on developing project planning forms, with time lines and actual allotment of funds and work hours which will be required for every single project. Doing that and really seeing how much is required was, at least for this chairperson, very overwhelming. But, it certainly made me feel more responsible and knowledgeable. I believe we've begun building the foundation necessary for a successful project. Although it may seem to take a lot more time in the beginning to do things this way, I firmly believe that it will serve us well. Next, we identified items for full board attention at our September meeting, which are:

- a. Review/input draft of P.R. Development Plan
- b. Review/input draft of Survey Bulletin
- c. Review/input 2nd draft of H&I response re: awards recognitions ceremonies (see H&I/P.I. Interaction section)

Additionally, some long term needs were identified which we felt are vital to the ultimate success of activities planned within the scope of the P.R. Development Plan. Those include:

- a. Survey Data

- b. Bulletins for the Fellowship re various aspects of the Traditions and public information
- c. Mailing list/data base of professional contacts
- d. Bulletins for non-Fellowship re: our relationship with A.A. and our H&I/P.I. services, including position statements, policy statements, goals.

During our discussions, it became apparent that all of these items are interrelated and interdependent. We think a public relations development plan is the key to the completion of these projects. An integral part of the development plan will be the broad perspective offered by the collaboration of *all* world service board and committees.

### **ADDITIONAL NEEDS**

Additional needs was discussed by the full committee. We first agreed that the BOT acts primarily as an advocate for the needs and work of this group, and that the External Committee probably won't have much "hands on" work with their projects. Also, some of their work must interface with the Literature Review Committee and the WSC Translations Group. Donna will act as the External Committee's coordinator with the two non-trustee members, (Darwyn and Betsy) who were appointed previously to Additional Needs. We requested funding for them to attend our future meetings.

**NOTE:** Subsequent review of the project planning forms for Additional Needs in a conference call with Donna, Darwyn, Betsy and staff revealed much more work than I had first realized. It includes: criteria for and translation of currently approved literature and speaker tapes (including criteria and choosing of review panel); development of an I.P. for the member with additional needs; an additional needs resource package; research about braille/word processing equipment to produce laminated braille literature; and continued participation and co-ordination of additional needs workshops. We will definitely take a close look at how best to get this work accomplished considering the time and money available for all of our projects.

### **H&I/P.I. INTERACTION**

This topic is something which was begun almost two years ago at an External Affairs Committee meeting with reps from both WSC H&I and P.I. and WSO staff. From that, developed an H&I External working group, which continued on with plans to develop a comprehensive network of contacts and information throughout the criminal justice system. This process would result in a better understanding of exactly who we're reaching, who we're not and how we can reach more addicts within that system.

*Interviews* - At this meeting, we reviewed and agreed to the interview questions to be used with various levels of correctional administrators in five different states, CA, TX, NE, NY and TN. The questions have been pre-tested and all related info. was considered in our review and finalization of them. The interviews will be conducted by volunteer members in each of the five states with a total maximum of 30 people interviewed. Info. packets will be developed and available for those people and will also, further down our timeline, become the basis for developing Informational Bulletins for use by members in their ongoing contact and work with H&I and P.I.

*Awards/recognition ceremonies* - We developed a first draft memo in response to a request from WSC H & I regarding concerns/questions about NA or NA members accepting recognition for services provided to H&I facilities. Our first draft represented the view of the



External Committee and was, with some comments, presented to the full Board for information only. A second draft will be developed and mailed out for full Board review and hopeful finalization at the September meeting. The External Committee members agreed that the gist of the discussion could be shared with concerned members until such time that a full Board response is available. That discussion was generally supportive of participating in such ceremonies as an important part of our public relations. However, certain points need to be considered: anonymity at the level of press, radio and films; recognition as a committee or NA in general, not as an individual.

*Conferences with Professionals* - Since the External Committee met, two different, and very important, contacts have occurred between our fellowship and the treatment and correctional community. In New York City, two members, one from the External Committee, met with treatment professionals as a first step in collaboration for a planned licensing procedure that will include NA meeting attendance as part of the state's licensing requirements for all substance abuse counselors. Their influence will likely impact other state's programs. In Sacramento, CA, one trustee and two WSO staff members met with state correctional officials for a brainstorming session in preparation for a National Correctional Conference scheduled for November. It is planned for the express purpose of accelerating the use of NA and AA panels as a regular part of correctional rehabilitation programs throughout the prison system in the US. These happenings are prime examples of the need for a comprehensive and integrated approach to our public relations.

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