

Item F: Consider guidelines or parameters for deadlines to submit conference agenda items. Should there be a deadline?

Background material I reviewed:

1. Request from past GS Trustee that the General Service Board (“GSB”) affirm that the 9/15 deadline for proposed agenda items does not include motions to censure (that is, formally express disapproval) or reorganize GSB
2. GSO Archives Dept research and response to the above request
3. Information regarding results of survey of Area Delegates done after the 73<sup>rd</sup> GSC regarding challenges Areas experienced due to the “earlier” 9/15 deadline; and correspondence regarding a proposed agenda item (“PAI”) from Happy Hour Group in Area 65

The background material provided was limited, so I also reviewed relevant sections of the AA Service manual.

NOTE: Current deadline to submit PAI for Conference consideration is 9/15

This issue arises in response to GSB decision not to forward a PAI from the Happy Hour Group which was submitted (late) on 3/15/23. The group requested consideration of the resignation of 2 GSB members. GSB discussed forwarding the PAI despite its late submission, but decided accepting this late PAI would be unfair to others whose late submissions were not accepted. Importantly, a proposal can be brought before the Conference even if it is not initially accepted as an agenda item-either as a Floor Action or after a successful Appeal.

Under certain circumstances, there is available a Concept 5 Right of Appeal. This was not available in the instant case (for reasons unclear to me).

Also, Floor Actions can be introduced at any stage of the Conference except during Sharing Sessions. This allows matters to be introduced at Conference which were not accepted as agenda items. Significantly, the Happy Hour Group concern was not raised as a floor action.

You may wish to read Appendix U of our AA Service Manual. The path for an idea to become an agenda item is a detailed process which requires time. Our Delegate made this Appendix available to all for today’s Day of Sharing.

Read Appendix W (How the Conference Operates) description of Floor Actions on page 167, and see Chart (Summary of Conference Procedures) on page 168.

Upon review, the background materials reveal the following:

1. GSB changed the deadline on occasion to allow more time to prepare background material for GSB 1<sup>st</sup> Quarterly Meeting (on or about 1/15); and to allow time to meet the February 15 mailing deadline for Conference materials.
2. Translations of background materials require time to be prepared
3. Deadlines for agenda items have been under discussion since 1968 and periodically adjusted

4. Area Delegates in general believe that the EDW (Equitable Distribution of Workload) is facilitated by imposition of current 9/15 deadline
5. 4/19/23 submission of PAI (Proposed Agenda Item) by a past GS Trustee/AAWS Director was as follows: Confirm the 9/15 deadline for Conference agenda items does not apply to motions for censure or reorganization of the GSB
6. 8/3/23 GSO Archivist response to the above request: after review of relevant records, it is clear that there was no decision by the Conference to exclude any class of PAI from the deadline

Conclusion: The agenda item process was not designed to handle emergencies but rather to provide a framework to promote smooth flow of information and ensure that the voice of AA groups is heard. Perhaps in the future we will see the submission of a broader PAI, requesting a review process of matters characterized as “urgent”. For example, a request to consider wider availability of the Right of Appeal and/or changes to the Floor Action process. We may benefit from changing our review process to permit review of late-breaking emergency concerns, but how would we decide whether such concern is of an emergency nature?