

Annual Meeting
ISO of COSA Board and Delegates
Day 1 Delegate Meeting Notes

Saturday June 3, 2023, 8 a.m. – 1 p.m. Pacific Time

This meeting was held virtually on Zoom.

PUBLIC VERSION FOR COSA WEBSITE

At the opening of the meeting, delegates were reminded to please fill out the Delegate Evaluation Forms, which could be found in the links provided in the emails previously sent to each delegate.

8:00 – 8:20	<p>Convene and Welcome</p> <p><i>Board chair welcomed all delegates, gave a general overview of how the meeting was laid out, instructions for using the chat function, introduced certain attendees that would be playing a role such as collecting votes, organizing sharing order on voting matters, taking notes, time keeping, keeping video on whenever possible, and other meeting guidelines.</i></p> <p>Opened with Serenity Prayer.</p> <p>Next:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Twelve Steps were read.● Twelve Traditions were read.● Twelve Concepts were read.
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8:20 – 8:30	<p>BOARD AND DELEGATE INTRODUCTIONS</p> <p>Each delegate was asked to introduce themselves and identify the group they were representing. The following groups each had one delegate representative in attendance:</p> <p>Minnesota CA Alamo Delegate Liaison South Carolina Houston Texas 23 ONL 13 Naples FL, Into the Light 23 Houston CA 13 Irvine ONL Let's talk about Sex, Fri 5 p.m. Madison Wisconsin, Sat a.m. group Texas 13, Houston ONL 20, Thurs Night Champions of Change, Cincinnati UK Intergroup CA ON 12, COSA Zoom room Toledo OH, ONL Tues night Step group Colorado O4 Boulder ONL 16, Thurs HIR meeting Tucson 01 meeting, Mondays N Utah ONL 46, Sat Step study meeting Tele Meeting Intergroup CA 09, San Francisco Long Beach CA New beginnings Mon 7pm</p>
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Telemeeting step 10 & 11
Houston, Sat a.m. meeting
ONL 2 and Wis 09, Mondays 4:30 Central
Houston Sun Eve meeting
Wed noon Palo Alto ONL 18 and CA 46
CA Monday South Bay, Monday night
Adult Child meeting

8:30 –
9:20

REVIEW OF DOCUMENTS

The Rules of Order were read.

The Guidelines for Participation were read.

The Guidelines for Safe Communication were read.

Concept Twelve was read and a short summary was presented to the delegation.

Concept Twelve Study presentation by Board member also representing ONL 16/HIR meeting:

The Annual Meeting shall observe the spirit of COSA tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government, and that, like the fellowship it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.

Presentation summary: Our fellowship is not about creating rules and policing. We are here to collaborate and guide. Our trusted servants do not govern. The wonderful thing about this program is we are not personally punitive, and we all make mistakes. We are prudent with our money, we do not have too much money, nor with strings attached. We have sufficient money so if unexpected expenses come up we will not fold. We make group conscious decisions. Public conflict is avoided as well. In COSA we remain self-governing and strive for unity.

Comments on Tradition Twelve

Delegate expressed appreciation for the acknowledgement related to governing including that the principles are key as a trusted servant. *“If I am not working my recovery, the default is to try and run things, go beyond guidance, direction, and rules. The fellowship has guidelines and structure, but to go beyond that would be to violate this concept. It is important to trust the process and let go”.*

Delegate appreciated the summary and key points in the concepts. She sees the concepts as spiritual guidelines for the fellowship and in her life. *“We are living the concepts today, we are an upside-down triangle, and as delegates we let the Board know what the fellowship wants to see as we go into the next year. This is the heart of how our fellowship keeps sober, growing and carrying the message to those who still suffer”.*

Additional Delegate Meeting Information

Timekeeper instructions were given. Short shares will get a one 1-minute warning. Longer shares will receive a 5-minute and 1-minute warning. Please acknowledge the timekeeper warnings as you speak.

<p>9:20 – 9:40</p>	<p>EXPLANATION OF BOARD NOMINATION PROCESS & BOARD NOMINEE INTRODUCTIONS</p> <p>Board chair explained that voting instructions will be provided at each voting section, since they differ. Also noted was that the Board nominees were not running against each other. Bylaws call for up to a certain number of Board members and there were less than that. The votes would be yes or no for each candidate; all three nominees could be voted for, by each delegate.</p> <p>Board Nominees had two minutes each to present to the delegation. Each nominee spoke to the delegation before the vote was taken. The nominees were: Pat D. Vicky F. Julie P.</p> <p><i>Vote was taken via a Zoom poll.</i></p>
<p>9:40 – 9:50</p>	<p>Break</p>
<p>9:50 – 10:00</p>	<p>RESULTS OF BOARD ELECTION</p> <p>All three candidates to the Board were elected. Pat D. Vicky F. Julie P.</p>
<p>10:00 – 10:20</p>	<p>OVERVIEW OF BASIC TEXT CHAPTERS - DEVELOPMENT PROCESS AND TIMELINE. OVERVIEW OF LITERATURE VOTING PROCESS.</p> <p>Chair of Literature Committee presented the following: The Literature Committee had been working on the Basic Text for the last decade. A title for the book, which is not titled yet, should be presented at the annual convention. The chapters presented at this delegate meeting should be the final chapters for approval. The “life of a chapter” process was summarized. Chair of the Literature in Development Committee and the work that committee has done was acknowledged by the LitCom chair.</p> <p>The last year was a push toward assembling the book and going into the publication process, professional layout, and professional editing. The book is expected to be published in early 2024.</p> <p>In reading the book, one can see the voices changing. This is because the book is not written by one author. LitCom was presenting twelve chapters to the delegation for a vote on this day, and hopefully it would be the last time chapters will be up for a vote. There are a total of 61 pieces that will complete the book.</p> <p>It was noted that the “COSA story” was originally going to be included in the book, but it would have caused the publication date to be pushed out even further. However, there was a desire to have it added to a future edition or a part two. In the end, the “COSA story” was edited from the original table of contents.</p> <p>It was pointed out that the book will be a basic text, it will not be inclusive of everything COSA. There are other COSA literature resources that cover various topics.</p> <p>With that, an acknowledgement of the process and detailed explanation of what goes into each chapter was explained.</p> <p>QUESTIONS ON LITERATURE PROCESS FROM DELEGATES</p> <p>Delegate Question/Comment: If and when it is approved and gets assembled, will the delegates or fellowship approve everything as it gets assembled? Will the delegates or fellowship get to see the whole thing or is it just an editing process?</p>

LitCom Chair Response: It will be complete and done at the professional level. It will be all approved because it went through the delegate approval process already. If we were to go through this process again, it would add a couple more years.

Delegate Question/Comment: Will the Literature Committee have a role looking at the whole thing and finalizing?

Response by LitCom Chair: Lit Com will review for consistency.

Lit Com has been working behind the scenes, going through the book with a fine-toothed comb, looking at grammar, etc. The book will then go to professional editing.

LitCom acknowledged the Literature in Development Chair. She has been overseeing the basic text for almost a decade. We want to put out a professional looking book, and we are going to professional editors. Our committee is going through it to ensure the COSA-ness of the book stays intact.

Delegate Question/Comment: Is there going to be a chapter about the history of COSA?

Response by LitCom Chair: No, only "What is COSA?"

Delegate Question/Comment: Shared that feedback was sent back to LitCom where it was never acknowledged. To have not received an acknowledgement is difficult for people.

Response: LitCom Chair: Feedback is appreciated, and we do the best we can. Acknowledged we are a fellowship of volunteers and we do the best we can.

Response: Lit in Dev Chair: We do a general acknowledgement once the chapters are approved or not approved. It was noted that this year, chapters were sent in three separate increments instead of all at once, per feedback received from the delegates requesting this.

Delegate Question/Comment: With no acknowledgement we don't know our comment was received. Even an automated one would be appreciated.

Delegate Question/Comment: Delegate thanked any members present who worked on the literature and did their part. "It is a huge effort. Having worked in journalism for twelve years, plus in COSA for twelve years, it would be important to look at the idea of turning this over for proofing. There are always questions that come up that need to go back and forth including the need for continuity editing. There may be things from chapter to chapter that make sense, but seeing them all in a row, there may be a need for this type of editing."

Response: Lit in Dev Chair: That is what is going on in the background. Continuity across chapters has already been one subject mentioned by delegates over the last 10 years.

Delegate Question/Comment: Is there a professional to ask questions to at Lit Com?

Response: Lit in Dev Chair: Yes

Question/Comment by Delegate: Mentioned she found some continuity problems that may cause her to vote NO.

Question/Comment by Delegate: Asked that there be a chapter on history of COSA and also include the "Voices." Offered help on that.

Response: Lit in Dev Chair: When we are ready to talk with delegates, we will send out a survey as well.

Question/Comment by Delegate: Asked if an updated table of contents could be sent to all delegates? It had been sent a couple of years ago.

Response: Lit in Dev Chair: Delegate was asked to please send an email note to LitCom making this request. It was noted that the tool “acknowledging grief” was also added to the book.

Question/Comment by Delegate: Would the delegates have input on the title for the book?

Response: Lit in Dev Chair: LitCom sent a survey to the fellowship and received responses. Will announce the title at 2023 convention. All had the opportunity to vote.

Question/Comment by Delegate: Why is the name of the book not out there now? Why are we waiting?

Response: Lit in Dev Chair: The Literature Committee did not meet in May; we were not 100% on the title. We are confident in the title but thinking about subtitles. Want to wait until the convention at the end of June.

Question/Comment by Delegate: An alternate delegate asked to check in on the final draft. For information purposes only. Asked for clarity.

Response: Lit in Dev Chair: These chapters had already received fellowship feedback. This process has already happened, and fellowship feedback had been applied. Information piece was to highlight that.

END OF QUESTIONS

VOTING

The delegate meeting moved on to the voting procedures. A diagram was presented on Zoom screen, known as the “cloud diagram.” When voting on literature, the final vote is yes (to pass each chapter) or no (not to pass).

No amendments or changes can be made, these chapter votes are to approve or to not approve.

RED, YELLOW, and GREEN voting procedures were explained.

100% GREEN means approved and done discussing chapter.

A RED or YELLOW vote would allow delegate to speak to a chapter. In order for a chapter to pass, it would need a 75% vote of the delegates.

LitDev chair explained that the book will go to a professional copy editor/proofreader; if there is a grammar issue, comma, etc. it will be caught in the editing. It was requested that these issues are not commented on, to keep the process going. Please send editing notes directly to LitCom; these notations can be lost during the delegate meeting.

10:20 –
11:30

VOTES ON PROPOSED CHAPTERS OF BASIC TEXT

INTRODUCTION TO THE TWELVE CONCEPTS

30 GREEN 1 YELLOW RED

No discussion

PASSES

INTRODUCTION TO THE TWELVE TRADITIONS

30 GREEN 0 YELLOW RED

PASSES

Initial vote 30 GREEN 1 YELLOW- initial vote

Opened for Discussion- no YELLOW discussion request.

Discussion on GREEN votes – no requests for discussion

INTRODUCTION TO THE TOOLS

2nd vote

26 GREEN 2 YELLOW 2 RED

PASSES

Initial vote: 29 GREEN 2 YELLOW

Discussion

Delegate expressed concern about the document. Not making it clear enough how COSA is a fellowship concerned with other peoples" compulsive sexual behavior (csb). Doesn't make it clear enough that we are primarily a fellowship of others affected by another's csb. Don't want to muddy the waters too much.

Delegate stated that they realize it is an up or down vote, and this part of the book "had a deep meaning to me". Third paragraph "setting boundaries"- delegate asked that the words "close to us" be removed, since we need to set boundaries with people close to us as well as others toxic to us.

CONCEPT 10

27 GREEN 2 YELLOW 1 RED

PASSES

Initial vote: GREEN 29 YELLOW 2 RED

Discussion

YELLOW

Delegate - Paragraph 4, in middle "with the principle." The authors, book writers were given a lot of authority, but at the same time provided with guidelines. Suggested that the second clause was extraneous.

Suggests: "Every COSA member had an opportunity to give feedback on the book".

Delegate will send her comments to LitCom.

CONCEPT 11

29 GREEN 1 YELLOW RED

PASSES

Initial vote GREEN 29 YELLOW 1

Discussion

NONE

CONCEPT 12

28 GREEN 1 YELLOW 1 RED

PASSES

Initial vote:

28 GREEN 2 YELLOW

Discussion

Delegate- Yellow. One sentence beginning of para 5. Not sure if it is meant. Concept 1 and 2 remind us to seek unity and a group conscience if possible. "Is conscience meant to be "consensus?"

Should say "through" a group conscience. This is related to the meaning, not just grammar.

Comments will be emailed to LitCom.

CONTINUED: VOTES ON PROPOSED CHAPTERS OF BASIC TEXT

WHAT IS COSA

25 GREEN

2 YELLOW

2 RED

PASSES

Initial vote GREEN 25 YELLOW 2 RED 1

Discussion

RED

Delegate – *Chose to object to this specifically, in what was brought up earlier. If there were one chapter to not get the up or down yes, it would be this one. I believe COSA is not clear on how important our mandate is to those affected by “another’s csb”. It fails to create a safe space for those xxxx.*

Specifically, we say in paragraph 2: Community of people who share feelings around csb. Want to make sure we are here as the traumatized targets of csb. Concerned about washing down this chapter, it affects us, and newcomers.

YELLOW

Delegate – *Same concern, noted she would be changing her vote to RED. If there is any place we need to include “another’s” it would be here.*

GREEN

Delegate – *Offered her perspective on the feedback.*

It is important to stick to the language of the 3rd tradition. Two sentences after the 1st make it pretty clear we are an inclusive fellowship made up of partners, children, parents, friends, etc. and we are diverse in the ways we have been affected. It would be difficult to not understand what we are, given the examples that are clarifying. It does not imply we are a program for sex addiction, and it is made clear.

Delegate - *I did not think the language stated in draft was mutually exclusive. Affected by csb does include others, it is not mutually exclusive. I don’t think it is vague.*

Lit In Development - *My understanding is that the way the Third Tradition is written, it is a decision that has been made in the past. We are not writing policy at LitCom, we are simply doing service.*

Lit Com Chair – *We are compelled to keep with the Tradition and could not write it as suggested, therefore, the feedback was given great consideration, but the direction in the following sentences offers clarity.*

Delegate - *We should hear the title of chapter “What is COSA?”*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

29 GREEN

1 YELLOW

1 RED

PASSES

Initial vote GREEN 29 YELLOW 1 RED

Discussion

None

WELCOME

26 GREEN

3 YELLOW

1 RED

PASSES

Initial vote GREEN 27 YELLOW 3 RED

Discussion

YELLOW

Delegate – 7th paragraph “a path towards self-discovery”.
“As newcomers we sought to change the addict in our lives.....!”

It is clearly said here (another’s) csb. It is another place the phrase “many of us” would be appropriate, as well as change addict to “addicts.”

Will share and send comments directly to LitCom.

No other YELLOWS.

INTRODUCTION

FINAL VOTE

23 GREEN

1 YELLOW

6 RED

PASSES

Initial vote GREEN 26 YELLOW 3 RED 1

YELLOW

Delegate - *Doesn’t seem there are any legitimate ways to modify without having to wait a year. Would like to know how this type of feedback could not be democratically addressed.*

RED

Delegate - *Red because of the comments that were made today. Haven’t heard before, this does need to go back to LitCom. We are adult enough to put together a survey and perhaps revisit electronically through email or survey and show the results. In Balance, CITK. Will show concerns are being addressed.*

Delegate – *Prior point was what I was going to say.*

Delegate - *In procedures there is a way to ask questions. Would like earlier delegates question answered and addressed and see if a suggested solution is possible.*

Lit Com Chair - *Can’t address procedural questions on delegate meetings. If we were having one in Nov there is that proposal. Don’t see how we can have an online discussion and voting procedures. If it is voted down, it could be not to include at all or postpone, as procedures currently are.*

Delegate – *As an individual COSA, this process was created by COSAs for COSAs. The process can be changed by COSAs for COSAs. Have an item on the delegate meeting tomorrow. Delegates can use the form to voice concerns and ideas.*

Lit Com Chair - *We do not have a delegate process that allows votes between delegate meetings. Would need a delegate proposal to be brought to the meeting. If approved, we could change the process. Currently that would need to be in two months before a delegate meeting. Looking at two months prior to the next delegate meeting, that is where we stand process wise. LitCom has made clear what their process is.*

Delegate – *If voted down, is it possible that the editing, etc. could go forward? Heard that the process at some level had already started. I am confused. It seems to me, if this was voted down, would Lit Com be able to continue their work on assembling the book, looking for continuity? Could it be tucked in and not delay the book much.*

Lit Com Chair - *If chapter is not approved, all other aspects will be moved ahead. This will be delayed until next year, we could still continue in this process with no delay on book.*

Delegate – *This came up last year, people were passionate about something. It was said we are not rubber-stamping things. If there are things a number of people are concerned about, I hoped we'd find a way after last year to modify this voting structure. If we have to wait one more year, so be it.*

YELLOW

Delegate – *I see a process issue in sum. That is what brought us here. In delegates meeting this weekend, groups send comments to LitCom, members don't receive acknowledgement. We haven't had any interactive feedback, chapters come out, comments not included. Because of the black box, at this crossroads, I am more concerned about our meeting. We need to ensure we have incorporated a broad sense, not just acknowledge receipt of feedback.*

Delegate – *On the process. I am not clear on the answer to the earlier question. Lit Com Chair said she didn't have the answer, so what is the answer?*

Board Chair - *The Literature Committee needs to decide.*

Delegate – *Pointed out there have been tons of opportunities to give feedback throughout the process.*

Lit Com Chair - *As LitCom chair, many suggestions are helpful. Want to reiterate how extensive our process is. One of the things is how often we go back and forth. We open it up for formal feedback. We acknowledge it is not a perfect document. What I want to exhort is that there are truly things that will prevent us from going forward in the next year, where we have been waiting 10 years. The LitCom is getting worn out. The past five years we've put out between nine and twelve chapters per year. Are these concerns so specific as to prevent us from moving forward? Please think of COSA as a whole.*

RED

Delegate - *I too am concerned about the delay if this was voted down. The issues brought up are deal breakers, if we don't want newbies reading this. As codependents, we want to please. If you don't feel comfortable, vote that way so it doesn't go out in a way that would be a problem. The content is very important.*

Delegate - *I will vote GREEN. I read the paragraph about being exposed to, and that chapter brought it out. A stranger impacted her life as well. Could relate to a lot looking back at her life, and what this means to her now in this fellowship.*

Lit in Dev Chair – *This book has taken a decade to write, there are people on this call who were not delegates at the beginning. Think about the process and carrying the message. Many of us were not at the delegate meeting when the first chapters were passed. The language for one person isn't the same for another.*

GREEN

Delegate - *Let's leave something for the second edition. Thinking about the lack of carrying the message by not having a book. It can't do good if it is not in circulation. Much of the book is not available and accessible. Like to see sooner rather than later.*

Delegate - *Honor the concerns expressed at the meeting today. Been on the docket to be looked at for a long time. Things come up, but unless the process has not changed, my choice as a delegate is that I want to serve COSA as a whole. I was present when LitCom started the conception of the book. I came back and the book hasn't happened yet. Reiterated that if these concerns or corrections could be shelved, it does not affect the 75% of the book. If we are using 75% as a threshold.*

Delegate - *What are the two issues with this chapter? (actually 3)*

Delegate - *There are actually 3.*

1- Delegate - *Questions the word prostitute – should be changed with “sex workers” to be all inclusive.*

2- Delegate - *Phrase - long before we encountered csb as adults.*

Point: this is not inclusive also

3 - Delegate - *someone exposing themselves.*

Delegate - *It would feel better to come up with a process to address these issues. Can we have some process to address these things?*

Delegate - *We are voting on these individual pieces as individual pieces. Had opportunity to look at the book as a whole. We are pulling those together as one COSA book. Important to see the book as a whole. Each chapter has its own distinct way, adding to the book as a whole. I appreciate what the LitDev committee has done soliciting feedback. We are surveyed in advance and are exposed to the material a couple of times requesting very specific feedback. Grateful for the book as a whole. They have the COSA message rippling through each chapter.*

Delegate - *Will continue. The book has to be complete enough to serve all COSAs and to carry the message. We will find new things to incorporate for the next editions. This is a book that captures all experiences, not all details can be included. At some point if we want to be extremely detailed, we can be in danger of losing the key message of a chapter. Congrats for work that has been done and will be very useful for us to carry the message.*

Delegate - *In reading the Concepts of service, there is a balance between trusting trusted servants and having input. There has been input, there has been much deliberation between servants. The process has been approved by the delegates. If you read the full book as a whole, it is overall very powerful, important, and necessary.*

Discussion

RED

Delegate - *To be inclusive to all, word prostitute should be replaced with sex workers.*

Sex workers are not paid.

In the section finding hope healing. "Long before we first encountered csb...". This is not inclusive of all COSA experiences.

YELLOW

Delegate - *Commended LitCom for their work. The book doesn't go far enough. We are still quite muddy.*

I want to take a look at our language and muddiness to make it absolutely clear to a newcomer that we are a safe space.

Delegate - *99.9% wonderful. Alarming part gives her pause at "identifying the trauma"; it reads: having our frozen feelings suddenly thaw and break open.*

Or

"We have been subjected to someone exposing themselves to us...."

Suggestion: Rather than saying "exposing..."...

"Or perhaps we have been subject to unwanted of sexual advances, violence or abuse." Gave additional concrete examples of how to reword this.

ABSTINENCE AND CELIBACY

SECOND VOTE

29 GREEN

1 YELLOW

1 RED

PASSES

Initial Vote

GREEN 29 YELLOW 1 RED

Discussion

None.

WORKING THE 12 STEPS ON A TOPIC

SECOND VOTE

28 GREEN

1 YELLOW

RED

PASSED

Initial Vote

GREEN 29 YELLOW 1 RED

Initial vote

Discussion

12:55 –
12:58

EVALUATIONS Delegate Liaison Please do not complete more than one survey. Thank you.

12:59 –
1:00

Close with the Serenity Prayer