

International Service Organization of COSA

For Publication

Board Meeting Minutes

Sunday, Sept 8, 2024

**12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. Pacific, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Mountain,
2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Central, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time**

Our mission is to serve the fellowship of COSA by fostering the growth of individual groups and facilitating the communication of COSA principles and ideals through the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.

Tradition Two: For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as expressed in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

Present: Chair, TechCom Liaison, Vice-Chair/Outreach Chair, LitCom Liaison, Board Member D/ConCom Liaison, Treasurer, Secretary

CONNECT:

Serenity Prayer

Check In

Request volunteer timer

CONSENT AGENDA:

Approved August Board Minutes for Dropbox and publication

ACTION ITEMS:

Note: COSAs in the Know = CITK, Delegate Working Group = DWG, Delegate Meeting = DM, SEO = Search Engine Optimization, BWW = Board Working Weekend, TechCom = Technology Committee, LitCom = Literature Committee, ConCom = Convention Committee

PERSON	Due Date	ACTION ITEM	Done?/Comments?
TechCom Chair, TechCom Liaison (& COSA member M)	Monthly	See if a trusted servant can figure out analytics for Mailchimp to SEO (search engine optimization)	Done
LitCom Liaison & TechCom Chair	Ongoing	Create a plan between LitCom & TechCom to “Carry the message forward” for COSA	Done
Treasurer, LitCom Chair & TechCom Liaison	Oct 6	Have a conversation to communicate clearly regarding KDP (Kindle Direct Publishing)	In Process
Everyone interested in carrying the message forward (Chair writing in CITK about field notes. A COSA addressed the North Calif. groups	Ongoing	Each regional retreat/conference can send in their “Field Notes” These can be the cover story for quarterly Balance; word of mouth energy to generate positive attraction. We can have keynote addresses/speaker shares recorded and offered in the store...then at the BIG convention, we may have some more energy.	In Process

LitCom Liaison, Vice-Chair/Outreach Chair & ConCom	Oct 6	Create a "Retreat Outline for Sustainable Use"	In Process
Chair will speak with Office Manager	Monthly	Regular inventory of COSA items, and literature in the office	In Process
Everyone interested has a say: Treasurer, TechCom Liaison, Chair will follow up	Oct 6	BWW hotel(s)/location <i>suggestions</i> for 2025	Continuing
Vice-Chair/Outreach Chair: copy of contract sent to Treasurer and Secretary	Oct 6	Look at the contract for Spanish translations (is it current?) and follow up with the translations and payment/status.	In Process
Vice-Chair/Outreach Chair	Oct 6	Updated Letter to Professionals needs to be edited and redistributed.	Received from Chair. In process

Chair, Vice-Chair/Outreach Chair, NomCom Chair, COSA MJ + prior delegate liaisons	Oct 6	Create a proposal writing workshop to present to delegates to facilitate communication and make improvements (Vice-Chair/Outreach Chair will reach out to COSA MJ).	In Process
LitCom Liaison, Vice-Chair/Outreach Chair, Office Manager	Oct 6	Work on flow for CITK with Editorial Review and Outreach Committee	In Process
LitCom Liaison, Vice-Chair/Outreach Chair, Treasurer & Office Manager	Oct 6	Office Manager requests a process to address and update the Office Manager's job description, using a monthly workflow and generating a chain of command and plan for the future.	In Process
Treasurer, Past Treasurer, also possibly DL and others	April	Ad hoc committee to look at timing of fiscal year Jan 1 - Dec 31	
LitCom Liaison, LitCom Chair, and Treasurer	Dec	Plan for updating Service Guide	In progress

Treasurer, Secretary	Ongoing	Update Rosetta Stone (a living document)	In Process
Secretary	When RS is more updated	Make a Rosetta Stone/General (no sensitive info) for use by the Committee, and other board members. Store under Yahoo Files	In Process

CONTENT:

Concept Five: Secretary: Throughout our structure, a traditional “Right of Appeal” ought to prevail, so that minority opinions will be heard and personal grievances receive careful consideration.

Shares

CONVENTION SURVEY UPDATE: Chair

In regards to in-person conventions, a survey was created to ask about the importance of in-person conventions to our fellowship and a member’s personal attendance. To date, we’ve had 66 responses.

The top two reasons for not attending were: cost prohibitive, and the responder is new in the program. It’s exciting to see there are so many new COSAs, and they are making their voices heard.

Another question was asked about funding for conventions. Most so far have responded that as long as expenses are not extravagant, the bottom line should not be a priority.

For half of the responders, future in-person convention attendance is linked to what a person’s life looks like at the time. For the other half, most attend every other year, followed by those attending every 3-5 years, followed by those attending every year.

A great majority believe regional in-person COSA events are both more beneficial to the COSA fellowship and to personal growth. Most so far want to alternate ISO in-person

conventions and regional in-person events, with an increase in support for regional events given by the ISO.

DELEGATE MEETING SURVEY UPDATE: Chair

We had 32 responses to our survey about Delegate Meeting dates. The highest were Oct 20, 27, and Nov 17. We need to keep in mind our timeline for submitting and posting any proposals and records to be viewed by the delegates, therefore it was agreed that Nov 17th would be the best day for our Delegate Meeting.

LitCom Liaison: I'd like to have a conversation about going back to one delegate meeting a year. Maybe we could have some options. Typically, at the spring/summer meeting, we have more material. That meeting will be on a Saturday, and I know many people can't come on a Saturday.

Chair: Well, that could be a proposal to bring back to the delegates, but they had asked for the meeting to be split into 2 meetings per year so that meeting length wouldn't be excessive.

ROTATION OF SERVICE – CHAIR IN TRAINING: Chair

Ideally, the Chair will have a person being trained, and then the next year the new person is Chair, while the Past Chair is still around for one more year to help guide. That's what the Past Board Chair had in place, which was awesome. The other thing I learned is that the Board Chair is supposed to be nominated by the Nomination Committee. I've not ever seen it happen that way, but that's what was supposed to be happening. I will be serving as chair for the remainder of this year. After that, there will need to be a new Chair while I serve as past chair. The Vice-Chair/Outreach Chair has said that she would think about it, and if anyone else on the board is interested in being a chair, and train for that position, please let me know.

FISCAL YEAR START:

Chair: Might we want to change the fiscal year? It seems like this would solve a lot of issues with delegates.

Treasurer: I agree it might be better to change the fiscal year, but I'd prefer to wait, and not do this year. Our general ledger needs some work. The biggest thing is how it would line up with the tax return. I want to get the Past Treasurer's opinion on that. Since this is already fall time, it definitely will not change this year. Currently, our fiscal year is July

1 – June 30. (That is a hard thing for many to understand, as people are used to thinking of Jan 1 – Dec 31.)

LitCom Liaison: When a person is thinking about scheduling, typically it's best to schedule the most difficult thing first, then fit the rest around that. Budget/Finance are one of the most critical things we have. It has to stay in stone, whatever that may be, and everything else gets wrapped around it.

Chair: What if we started on January 1 in 2026, is that doable?

Treasurer: We would need to plan ahead so the Tax Preparer/Past Treasurer has enough time to prepare for our tax returns. Also, in regards to how the convention expenses are shown, I'd want to have all of that cleaned up before we switch the year.

Chair: Another question is: Do the delegates need to approve financial things within a certain timeframe? Could we form an ad hoc committee – (Treasurer and Tax Preparer/Past Treasurer, possibly Delegate Liaison and others) to look at changing the timeframe of the fiscal year from Jan 1 – Dec 31?

Treasurer: A big part of this is to make sure we do the budgeting in advance.

Vice-Chair/Outreach Chair: It just seems to make sense to vote on the budget in November for the fiscal year that would begin in January.

LitCom Liaison: For any committee with a budget, I think the chairs of those committees be advised on all of this too, so they can weigh in.

Chair: So, the order of this would be: 1. See what it would take to change the year, 2. See how that timeframe would affect others.

Chair: Would anything tax wise change if we switched it from summertime to Jan 1 – Dec 31? Treasurer: We would just need to know way in advance. Treasurer would like to have all cleared up around convention expenses before we think about changing.

Chair: Is there a time frame legally, where it has to be approved within a certain time? Treasurer is not aware of one.

Chair: Could we form an ad hoc committee to look into starting our fiscal year in Jan 2026? We should ask: Treasurer, Tax Preparer/Past Treasurer, Delegate Liaison, and any such as: committee members having a budget that would be affected by this change. Treasurer said that this timeframe does make sense if we're voting on the budget in November.

FINANCIALS: Treasurer Balance for July 2024

Total assets	\$126,815	
Total Liabilities to date	\$61,229	include: payroll, reserve for COSA text, a prudent reserve for operating expenses
Profit and Loss		
Total Income	\$3,144	
Total Expenses	\$13,004	include: board and staff travel, convention expenses, outreach, COSA products, printing, office expenses, payroll, technology fees.
Net Income/Loss	- \$9,860	Note: we still have more convention expenses coming in. The largest part of our loss was due to the in-person convention.

VOTE TO APPROVE FINANCIAL RECORDS

RED 0 YELLOW 0 GREEN 7

APPROVED

Comments:

Treasurer: We knew we would lose money on the convention. Mostly it was a room problem. (When we reserve the hotel, we commit to using a certain number of rooms. We lost money on those un-occupied rooms and on other convention expenses.)

Chair: We also had travel expenses that we will not have each month.

LitCom Liaison: I'd like to see items color-coded.

Chair: Is it possible to color code so that if something is paid monthly, it's in a different font color?

Vice-Chair/Outreach Chair: Maybe we could put these documents into an Excel spreadsheet? It might be easier to understand. It's difficult to see when things are paid, especially for people who are not accustomed to financial documents.

Treasurer: Convention expenses were spread out over a three-month period, as they did not come in all at once. Changing the general ledger needs to be thought out and done appropriately.

Secretary: People need to see that although they want a convention every year, look how much money we are losing.

Treasurer: projecting forward in August, we will have more tech expenses – to pay back what the Tech Committee Chair has paid from his own personal account.

VIRTUAL CONVENTION DATE SELECTION:

The Treasurer has offered to chair the Virtual Convention. Office Manager, TechCom Chair, and others are interested in participating.

Vice-Chair/Outreach Chair: Last year our virtual convention was in February. We need to avoid Valentine's Day weekend, also Superbowl weekend.

Chair: Our virtual convention can be anytime. We will have one every year. Preparing for a virtual is pretty straight forward. Based on the survey so far, an in-person convention would likely occur every other year.

Board Member D/ConCom Liaison: I'm the Convention Liaison. Is there just one committee for ConCom?

Chair: The majority of people on a committee would help both the in-person, and also for the virtual convention, although planning for both does not take place at the same time.

Secretary: Based on the survey, we won't be having an in-person in 2025, correct?

Chair: Well, the Convention Committee can decide whatever it wants to do; however, ISO funds would be needed. The survey shows there is much more support for a convention every other year.

Local, regional retreats have shown great impact on a person's personal recovery, so we can give information about those. Chair will personally put out a proposal on using flyers and graphics provided by events to inform the fellowship of those events.

VIRTUAL CONVENTION EMAIL TO: PAST VIRTUAL ATTENDEES LIST, CITK LIST, BALANCE LIST: Chair will send out this email, also to ask for assistance on a committee to help.

BEST WAY TO CREATE MINUTES FOR DISTRIBUTION:

Secretary: Last month I had difficulty with listing portions of the minutes. Is everyone ok with how I'm listing financials as I've done above? (Total assets, liabilities, profits and losses?) How do you feel about listing the emails of all of the various ways to contact us? All were agreeable to both items. Treasurer is also agreeable to listing the financials along with each month's minutes on Dropbox. (They are also listed in the Finance and Budget file).

VOTE TO LIST FINANCIALS AS TOTAL ASSETS, LIABILITIES, P&L, ALSO ADD EMAILS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

RED 0 YELLOW 0 GREEN 7

APPROVED

CONSENT AGENDA

For last month's minutes – **APPROVED**

MEETING UPDATES TASKFORCE UPDATE :

Board Member D/ConCom Liaison: At the last meeting, there was much discussion about how to work through this process. We are coming to terms with all of the email templates to contact meetings.

TechCom Liaison: We had a bit of a hitch in working through Gmail and the forwarding system with ...@cosa-recovery.org. If we copy back to ourselves, it creates a loop. When someone responds, it is sent to ...@cosa-recovery.org, and emails are duplicated

and forwarded. Gmail put a stop to this, so we had to reconfigure everything, and not do “copies to”. The first series of emails have been sent out or are getting sent out.

Vice-Chair/Outreach Chair: Are we able to use Mailchimp?

TechCom Liaison: We did use Mailchimp and some meetings have responded. We’re using Gmail as we’re trying to honor anonymity. So many details need to go into these emails (some meetings have ONL listing, some TEL listing, some a particular state listing).

Vice-Chair/Outreach Chair: Just take this suggestion to your committee to see if this is something we could use with some modifications.

Board Member D/ConCom Liaison: These emails are not going out to every meeting. It’s sent only to the meetings who have not updated this year, or last year. We are going all the way back to the ones that have not responded. This group is still working out how to manage these things.

ORIENTATION MEETING WITH LITCOM CHAIR:

Board Member D/ConCom Liaison – LitCom Chair introduced her to LitCom., and advised her of the several committees that make up LitCom. COSA has so many moving pieces.

SETTING ONE “STANDARD” DELEGATE MEETING DATE AND ONE “FLEXIBLE” DATE

Vice-Chair/Outreach Chair: In trying to figure out what day is most advantageous for the delegates to have a delegate meeting; we have to work back to look at dates for submission of items to be reviewed. It would be great to have one meeting that’s a standard, and the other that’s flexible. Maybe we could even have that flexible meeting be optional, and only have if there are proposals, or other things that come up for vote.

Chair: We currently have 3-month windows for both meetings. The delegates decided on two meetings per year because there were so many things that were coming up for vote. Since I’m in the process of writing a proposal, I’m keenly aware of submission dates. We also do want to have more definitive instructions on proposal writing.

Board Member D/ConCom Liaison: I know that a meeting delegate can change from year to year, board members less so. Where is this decision about delegate meetings made?

Chair: The delegates make this decision. That's why the survey was sent out, to find the best date.

LitCom Liaison: We did not send out a survey in the past when it was a one delegate meeting per year. We split because we had so many things up for voting. Now that we don't have as much, maybe we can set a timeframe around the finances. Those are very time sensitive.

Chair: We also split so more the delegates could have more interaction with each other. We've also added delegate quarterly update meetings. Vice-Chair/Outreach Chair, would you be interested in starting an ad hoc committee to get an idea if people like 2 meetings per year, also ask if a certain time of year is better, (like in a one-month time frame).

LitCom Liaison: This also must go through Editorial Review.

DROPBOX PRO:

TechCom Liaison: I keep getting prompts for Dropbox Pro. It says we must make a decision by September 19th, otherwise the files will all go away, and we won't have access. Dropbox recommends we get a "business plus" membership. A plain business costs \$15 per user per month. If all of the board members are to get on this account, it would be $\$15 \times 7 = \$105/\text{month}$.

We've never paid a fee before. Originally, a Chair from some years past set this up, and it was changed when the Chair changed. That person is always rotating. When the last Chair switched it, that triggered something. Dropbox now sees that we are a business, not just an individual using Dropbox for our files.

VOTE TO PAY FOR DROPBOX FOR 3 MONTHS WHILE WE INVESTIGATE FURTHER

0 Red 0 Yellow 7 GREEN

PASSES We will pay for a 3-month period so we don't lose our files, and can investigate further.

OUTREACH:

Vice-Chair/Outreach Chair: Outreach has gotten three different requests from the UK.

One is that they have a new face-to-face meeting. It does meet our policy of registering as a new meeting. Normally, we would send out a “meeting in a bag” which is worth approximately \$100. They do have plenty of literature. Could we just send them \$100 for start-up costs? That would be more cost effective than sending them a bag.

There’s a \$500 Outreach grant request for setting up a UK trademark. There’s nothing in the outreach and scholarships that point to business practices.

Vice-Chair/Outreach Chair: Well, CZR (Cosa Zoom Room) got their own little trademark, and are fully self-funded.

LitCom Liaison: I do feel that this is a bit of a larger issue than just outreach. We need to have a concerted response from the board. I also think that the grant form needs to be updated to include something that will honor that language.

Chair: The general response in the past was that we (ISO) are not going to cover anyone else getting their own trademark. If someone wanted to apply for a grant for this, that condition wasn’t actually realized, and we could not have foreseen that. I think there was a related issue that someone else was going after the COSA name in the UK. There was a domain issue which is separate from the logo.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

Budget & Finance Committee	budfincom@cosa-recovery.org
Central Office	iso@cosa-recovery.org
Convention Committee	convention@cosa-recovery.org
COSA-Teens	Supportcosa-teen@cosa-recovery.org
Delegate Liaison	delegateliaison@cosa-recovery.org
Information on	info@cosa-recovery.org
ISO of COSA Board	Chair@cosa-recovery.org

The COSA Literature Committee

Your “One Stop Shop” for Editorial Review (ER) editing and publishing:

- ★ *Balance* Newsletter
- ★ Board Meeting summaries

- ★ *COSAs in the Know* weekly emails
- ★ Delegate Meeting summaries
- ★ Convention programs & information
- ★ Literature
- ★ Website content

Simply email us your article (as a *Google document*) along with your contact information, and tell us where and when you'd like it published. That's it! We will facilitate the process of moving your document through ER and contact you if we need further information. If your article is to be published in multiple outlets, please send one email, copying all pertinent email addresses.

Here's where to send your article, and how to reach us if you have any questions:

→ <i>Balance</i> Newsletter		balance@cosa-recovery.org
→ Board Meeting summaries	and	er@cosa-recovery.org litcom@cosa-recovery.org
→ <i>COSAs in the Know</i>		er@cosa-recovery.org
→ Delegate Meeting summaries	and	er@cosa-recovery.org litcom@cosa-recovery.org
→ Literature		litcom@cosa-recovery.org
→ Website content		litcom@cosa-recovery.org
Meeting Mentors		meetingmentors@cosa-recovery.org
Meeting Updates		meetingupdates@cosa-recovery.org
Men in COSA		COsAmen@cosa-recovery.org
Nominating Committee		nominations@cosa-recovery.org
Outreach Committee		outreachcommittee@cosa-recovery.org
Sponsorship Help		sponsorshiphelp@cosa-recovery.org
Technology Committee		techcom@cosa-recovery.org
Volunteer Committee		volunteers@cosa-recovery.org
Webmaster		webmaster@cosa-recovery.org

CHECK OUT

NEXT MEETING: October 6, 2024

SERENITY PRAYER