

OCNA 28

Convention Committee
Guidelines

Purpose

Conventions are held by members of Narcotics Anonymous to bring our membership together in the celebration of recovery. Meetings, workshops and other activities are scheduled to encourage unity and fellowship among our members along with carrying the message. Because conventions are hosted by service committees of Narcotics Anonymous, they should always conform to the NA principles and reflect our primary purpose. The Ohio Convention guidelines do not supersede the Ohio Regional Service Committee guidelines. If the need for further clarification ever arises regarding convention policy, refer to Narcotics Anonymous "Convention Guidelines".

Convention Committee Meetings

Hosting a convention is tremendous responsibility that requires significant planning, dedication and effort. All Convention Committee meetings should take place at a regularly scheduled time and place and follow an orderly agenda. The purpose of these meetings is to gather and share information regarding the planning and carrying out of the convention. Effort should be made to encourage participation and support from all members. Care should also be exercised during the planning process to involve as many groups and individuals as possible. Prior to the first Convention Committee meeting, the Area elects a chairperson to preside over Convention Committee meetings and activities. Executive and Subcommittee chairpersons are usually elected at the first committee meeting. Election of officers should be based on qualifications and experience.

Voting privileges are extended to each member of the Convention Committee. Anyone who holds an office or participates on a regular basis at the Convention Committee meetings is considered a committee member. Subcommittee voting procedures are determined by the chairperson of the subcommittee. All subcommittees hold separate meetings prior to Convention Committee meetings. The subcommittee chairpersons submit reports, recommendations and other details concerning their areas of responsibility.

Convention Committee meetings are usually scheduled monthly until four months prior to the convention, at which time they take place every two weeks. At two months prior to the convention, meetings can take place weekly. It is advisable to schedule several hours to conduct Convention Committee business. An agenda or format should be prepared prior to meetings. Many Convention Committees use the agenda shown below:

Agenda

1. Opening: Begin with a moment of silence for all members to reflect on their involvement, thinking about who they serve and why. Follow with Serenity Prayer, Service Prayer, 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts for NA Service.
2. Read and approve the minutes of the last meeting.
3. Chairperson's report (review progress to date and relay recent information).
4. Vice-chairperson's report.
5. Secretary's report.
6. Treasurer's report (update on income, expenses and current balance).
7. Subcommittee's reports (includes goals and progress of each committee).
8. Old business carried over from last meeting.
9. New business to be undertaken before next meeting.
10. Closing Prayer.

CONVENTION COMMITTEE

The Convention Committee should be open to all members of the Fellowship. It consists of an Executive committee, Subcommittee chairpersons and attending members. The Executive Committee and Subcommittee Chair positions are identified as follows:

1. Executive Committee
 - A. Chairperson
 - B. Vice-Chairperson
 - C. Secretary
 - D. Treasurer
 - E. Vice-Treasurer

2. Subcommittee Chairpersons
 - A. Welcoming
 - B. Programming
 - C. Security (Serenity Keepers)
 - D. Arts and Graphics
 - E. Hotels and Hospitality
 - F. Fund-Raising and Entertainment
 - G. Special Needs
 - H. Merchandising
 - I. Registration

Duties and Responsibilities of Executive

Committee and Subcommittee Chairpersons

Effective leadership is highly valued in Narcotics Anonymous. Leadership qualities should be carefully considered when selecting trusted servants (4th Concept for NA Service). It is suggested that people holding key positions have two years clean time and five years or more for positions that involve handling large amounts of NA funds. We need to keep in mind that length of clean time is not the only qualification. Experience, dedication, enthusiasm and willingness to complete the required tasks are essential for those filling these positions. It is suggested nominees possess and demonstrate the following:

1. A good knowledge of the Twelve Steps, Traditions and Concepts.
2. The willingness to work hard and motivate others.
3. The ability to deal effectively with people outside the Fellowship.
4. Trustworthiness, especially where funds are concerned.
5. Willingness to give time and necessary resources.
6. Ability to exercise patience and tolerance.
7. Past or present participation in NA service structure.
8. Willingness to include all NA members in planning and hosting the Convention by informing the local NA community of regularly scheduled committee meetings.
9. Report progress of individual committees to the Convention Committee.

Standard Questions for Nominees

- What is your clean date?
- How often do you attend NA meetings?
- Do you work the 12 Steps of Narcotics Anonymous?
- What is your service history? (Include current service positions)
- Have you ever resigned a service position? (Describe)
- Are you familiar with or have a working knowledge of the 12 Concepts and 12 Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous?
- Have you ever misappropriated NA funds? Did you make complete amends? (Describe)
- What are your reasons for wanting to serve in this position?
- What skills and abilities do you have that qualify you to fulfill the responsibilities of this position?

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee carries out (executes) the conscience of the overall committee. It functions as the administrative committee of the Convention and can hold separate, periodic and special subcommittee meetings. Its function is to ensure that the various subcommittees work together and to assist those that need extra help. However, it is not necessary for the Executive Committee to involve itself in the specific workings of each subcommittee. The members of the Executive Committee discuss the performance of subcommittees, as well as the convention budget and other matters that affect the Convention. The results of these discussions are included in reports at Convention Committee meetings. The Executive Committee drafts a meeting schedule. It is advisable to choose a regular day and time on which meetings will be held and schedule all meetings at that time throughout the duration of the planning period. Once the schedule is approved by the Convention Committee it is distributed to all members.

Responsibilities of Executive Committee

Chairperson

1. Organizes subcommittees and delegates major tasks to specific subcommittees. Also stays informed of the activities of each subcommittee and provides help when needed.
2. Helps resolve personality conflicts.
3. Keeps activities within the principles of the 12 Traditions and in accord with the purpose of the convention.
4. Monitors the flow of funds, overall convention costs and helps organize subcommittee budgets. Prepares a budget for Executive Committee functions.
5. Prevents important questions from being decided prematurely, in order to foster understanding by the entire committee prior to action.
6. Allows the subcommittees to do their jobs while providing guidance and support. Only major issues need to be brought to the Convention Committee meeting. Subcommittees should be given trust and encouragement to use their own judgment.
7. Prepares the agenda for Convention Committee meetings and Executive Committee meetings.
8. Votes only to break a tie.
9. Chairs the Convention Committee meetings as well as the Convention.
10. Makes regular reports to RSC and takes final donation check to RSC within 60 days of close of the Convention.

Vice-Chairperson

1. Acts as Chairperson if Chairperson is unavailable.
2. Coordinates subcommittees and attends subcommittee meetings as necessary to ensure they get the support needed to do a good job.
3. Works closely with the Chairperson and subcommittee chairs on problem areas prior to and during the Convention.
4. Is one of the members authorized to make deposits on the bank account.

Secretary

1. Keeps minutes of all committee meetings and subcommittee reports.
2. Distributes minutes of previous meeting within 10 days.
3. Maintains list of names, addresses and phone numbers of committee members for committee use.
4. Keeps extra sets of minutes for members who request a complete set.

Treasurer

1. Opens and maintains a bank account for the Convention Committee. (Opening and closing an account requires the involvement of the Corporation's Statutory Agent.)
2. Obtains signature cards and is one of four authorized signers on the checking account. (Signers are usually Vice-Treasurer, Chairperson and Registration Chair but can be other Committee members if necessary.)
3. Makes prompt deposits to convention bank account of all funds received prior to and during the convention.
4. Keeps accurate and updated records of all expenditures and receipts.
5. Writes all checks and pays all bills.
6. Submits a written financial statement at each committee meeting along with a copy of the balanced bank statement from the previous month.
7. Maintains separate records for individual revenue generating subcommittees (Registration, Fund-Raising and Merchandising).
8. Utilizes the WSC approved financial guidelines whenever possible.
9. Balances books at the end of the convention, submits final financial statement, and prepares final checks for donation to Ohio Region, Buckeye Region and Next Convention's Seed Money. (40%, 40%, and 20% respectively)
10. Keep records available for independent audit.
11. Maintains P.O. Box for the convention and distributes incoming mail to appropriate committees. (This responsibility is shared with Registration Chairperson.)

Vice-Treasurer

1. Assist and support Treasurer prior to, during and after the convention.
2. Assume Treasurer's responsibilities if the need arises.
3. Reviews financial records.
4. Make deposits to the convention bank account.
5. Maintains duplicate set of financial records.

Subcommittees

Subcommittee chairpersons should have general qualifications as outlined above. Specific service or vocational experience should be considered prior to election. It should be clearly understood that the subcommittees have specific service responsibilities to perform. Subcommittees are vital to the convention, and individuals should expect to be replaced if they are unable to serve for any reason. Naturally, relapse necessitates replacement; this is because we are as concerned for the member as we are for the service responsibility. In addition, OCNA Subcommittee Chairs as well as Executive Committee members may be removed by a 2/3 majority of the voting body for any of the following reasons:

1. Excessive absenteeism without notification.
2. Neglect of duties.
3. Misuse of any NA funds or falsification of financial statements.
4. Any act of theft, violence, or threat of violence against any member of NA.

Each subcommittee has only one chairperson who recruits committee members. In addition, the chairpersons hold regularly scheduled subcommittee meetings and, in doing so, ensure that the responsibilities of the committee are fulfilled. Subcommittee meetings as well as the Convention Committee meeting operate according to Robert's Rules of Order. This ensures that the meetings run smoothly and that business is conducted in an orderly fashion. Efforts of research and planning are submitted as proposals to the Convention Committee. All major decisions concerning the convention are made by the group conscience of the entire Convention Committee. Subcommittees are to maintain accurate records of all committee activities as well as all correspondence. All financial reports, including needs, expenditures and receipts are to be included with each subcommittee report.

Welcoming

In many ways, the Welcoming Subcommittee acts as the host of the convention. They are encouraged to welcome members as they arrive at the hotel. A warm personal greeting can set the tone for an enjoyable convention.

1. Welcoming Subcommittee members should make themselves available to those attending in order to provide appropriate assistance such as information and directions. For this reason, members of this committee should be familiar with the hotel layout including guest and meeting rooms, Registration, Merchandising, Hospitality, etc.
2. The Welcoming Subcommittee can also produce and distribute maps of the surrounding area marked with restaurants, stores and other points of interest.
3. The Welcoming Subcommittee may also take responsibility for providing and arranging table decorations for the convention banquet on Saturday night.

Programming

A good program is critical for every convention. The Programming Subcommittee is largely, but not solely responsible for the agenda available to those attending. A strong convention program will lay the groundwork for members to participate in and enjoy the process and celebration of recovery.

1. Propose a plan for all workshops and meetings. This would also include topics, times and locations. An attempt should be made to have a balance of workshops for newcomers, old timers, people in service and spiritual discussions. It is important to schedule similar workshops (or those expecting large attendance) consecutively rather than at the same time. This allows interested members to attend a series of workshops rather than having to choose between two or more they would like to attend.
2. Members of the Programming Subcommittee select potential main speakers for approval by the Convention Committee. The workshop speakers are chosen solely by the Programming Subcommittee. Speakers being considered should be people who identify themselves as addicts and attend NA meetings to sustain their recovery. These qualifications ensure NA members hear an NA message. The best speakers for conventions are those who address recovery as if their lives as well as the lives of the listener depend on it. Recognizing the diversity that exists in NA, it is strongly suggested that particular attention be paid to choosing speakers who represent the cultural diversity of the Fellowship.

3. Once speakers have been selected, the Programming Chairperson keeps in contact with them to ensure their attendance. A pool of qualified alternates should be established in order to select replacements for speakers who fail to arrive due to unforeseeable events. It is recommended that speakers and anyone else involved with the scheduled program sign-in upon arrival to assure Programming they are present and able to fulfill their commitment.
4. Arrangements for flights, travel expenses, reimbursement, and/or complimentary rooms for speakers should be made well in advance of the convention.
5. Finding and proposing options for recording services are also necessary several months in advance. Once services have been chosen, the contract and other arrangements should be handled by the Programming Subcommittee. It should be clearly understood that the Convention Committee holds copyrights to recordings.
6. Selecting and scheduling chairpersons for the marathon meeting and all workshops is the responsibility of the Programming Subcommittee. Executive Committee members and Subcommittee chairs usually chair main speaker meetings and handle clean time countdown and recognition of states.
7. Finally, a printed program detailing the convention's scheduled activities should be developed, produced and available to Registration for inclusion in packets and distribution at the convention.

Security

The Security Subcommittee also known as "Serenity Keepers" provides the convention with a staff of security personnel. Their responsibilities include assisting the Convention Committee as well as members attending the convention.

1. This subcommittee provides and uses a number of "walkie talkie" radios in order to communicate with Convention Committee members and each other quickly and quietly.
2. Assistance to those attending the convention may include but is not limited to, locating lost children or parents and providing directions and information. It is hoped that the mere presence of a security staff will discourage inappropriate behavior. However, problems or disputes may occur. It is suggested that another Convention Committee member be present before confronting such a situation. It is possible that urgency may not allow time for this in some cases. This is why those members chosen to serve on this subcommittee should be mature, even tempered and hopefully, have the ability to remain calm in a crisis. An alert and thoughtful "Serenity Keeper" could keep a small problem from becoming a large one.

3. The Security Subcommittee also assists the Convention Committee by providing crowd control when necessary. Monitoring large meetings, dances, Merchandising, Registration and the hotel in general is another duty of this committee. This is done in addition to the various Convention Committee members involved with each event. The need for more people during large events and someone during the night should be considered when scheduling security staff.
4. Escorts from the Security Subcommittee provide added safeguards during the transfer of funds within the hotel and to the bank. Since the transfers and deposits involve cash, they should never be pre-scheduled or announced over the radios. It is suggested that only one or two people are designated to escort Convention Committee members transferring funds.
5. Finally, every effort should be made to maintain harmony between the hotel and the convention in order to prevent negative reflection on NA or future conventions.

Arts & Graphics

The Arts and Graphics Subcommittee is usually comprised of members who are artistic, creative and energetic.

1. Arts and Graphics is responsible for developing and proposing designs for convention items. One month after the convention theme has been selected Arts and Graphics should submit these designs to the Convention Committee for consideration. Convention items include, but are not limited to banners, programs, flyers, signs and merchandise. Use of the convention “theme” in these designs is encouraged. The NA logo that may appear in these designs is the property of the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. Careful consideration should be exercised to ensure that the use of the NA logo and symbol is in good taste and in keeping with our 12 Traditions. Any NA service board or committee created through our 9th Tradition may use the NA logo and symbol.
2. Proposal of a variety of designs is suggested as well as an explanation of costs and services required.
3. Once the Convention Committee has made design selections, a budget should be submitted requesting funds for materials, supplies, services and other expenses. It is also helpful to develop priorities for when artwork is to be produced. First things first.

Hotels and Hospitality

This subcommittee has a number of responsibilities that are essential to the success of any convention.

1. Once the convention site has been selected, Hotels and Hospitality arranges the use of meeting rooms, other spaces and services of the hotel. Projected attendance should be taken into account when planning the meeting rooms and how they can be utilized most effectively. Good communication with Programming and other subcommittees will be necessary while planning and during the convention.
2. This subcommittee will submit for approval any catering proposal such as coffee, banquets and brunches. Close attention should be paid to the wording of any proposal. Beware of open-ends or additional charges. Final approval of all contracts is the responsibility of the full Convention Committee.
3. This subcommittee arranges for and operates a Hospitality Room within the hotel or convention site where members can take a break and relax. The Hospitality Room (or Area) can be operated continuously or during limited hours. It should be closely monitored or staffed at all times if possible.
4. If the Convention Committee chooses to provide coffee or other refreshments during the convention, Hotels & Hospitality is responsible for providing them (coffee pots, supplies and suitable location) or arranging it with the hotel.
5. Accurate financial records should be maintained at all times. Once again, good communication between this subcommittee, the host hotel, and other subcommittees is essential for a convention to run smoothly.

Fund-raising & Entertainment

The Fund-raising and Entertainment Subcommittee is responsible for generating interest and enthusiasm for the convention as well as raising funds to support it. It also provides entertainment activities during the convention. It is important to remember we never, under any circumstances, accept any monetary contributions from any outside source. We affiliate ourselves with no one, choosing to be entirely self-supporting through our own contributions. In Narcotics Anonymous, whenever we need to raise funds, we raise funds from our own membership.

1. Generally this subcommittee operates with two separate budgets. One budget for fund-raising events prior to the convention and one for entertainment provided during the convention.
2. This subcommittee proposes, plans and hosts activities prior to the convention. It is important to remember that fund-raising events should be held first to generate interest and support for the convention and second to raise money. Prudence and

caution should be exercised because unsuccessful activities place a financial drain on convention resources.

3. Fund-raising and Entertainment events prior to and during the convention should always be in good taste and consistent with our spiritual principles. Use of the convention theme during these activities is encouraged but not required.
4. Advanced planning of all events is critical. Communication and exposure within the fellowship is also very important. History has shown that successful functions are those which are well planned and publicized. Unsuccessful events and poor turnout can generally be traced back to a lack of planning and exposure within the NA community. It is for this reason that flyers announcing these activities should be distributed 6 to 8 weeks prior to an event. Assistance from Arts and Graphics in development of flyers is encouraged. Every effort should be made to coordinate pre-convention Fund-raising activities with other Areas activities subcommittee in order to foster a spirit of unity and cooperation.
5. This subcommittee also has responsibility for entertainment activities (DJ, bands, games, etc.) during the convention. As mentioned before, careful planning in advance is crucial. Since services are contracted months in advance, several choices should be proposed to the Convention Committee for selection in the early stages of the planning process. As with other subcommittees, exact costs and services provided along with any other significant details should be clearly understood by everyone involved before agreements are made and contracts are signed.
6. Maintaining accurate records of all expenditures and receipts is also important for this subcommittee. A financial statement (along with receipts) should be turned in after each fund-raising event, detailing all incoming and outgoing money. It is strongly suggested that all funds received from events prior to and during the convention be transferred to the convention Treasurer as quickly as possible.

Special Needs

It should be understood that all members of the OCNA Convention Committee will be aware of and sympathetic to the special needs of some of our members. The Special Needs Subcommittee will serve as the primary provider of attention and resources to meet those needs. Direct communication with and cooperation from other subcommittees will be necessary in order to ensure the members of our fellowship with special needs are able to fully participate in the convention along with everyone else.

1. Remain in contact with the Registration Chair to be aware of members with special needs that pre-register prior to the convention as well as those who arrive during the weekend.

2. Remain in contact with the Welcoming Chair to meet members as they arrive and help them through the registration process if needed.
3. Remain in contact with Hotels and Hospitality Chair to work with hotel on seeing - eye dogs, special diets, special access guest rooms, etc.
4. Remain in contact with Programming Chair to exchange information about needs i.e.: front row seats, access through aisles, etc.
5. Schedule interpreters for designated events.

Merchandising

The Merchandising Subcommittee is responsible for the acquisition and sales of all NA related items at the convention. The focus of the convention is the celebration of recovery. Efforts to generate funds through the sale of commemorative items should be based solely on what is necessary to ensure the convention is successful. The Merchandising Subcommittee should be fairly business minded and operate in accordance with the 12 Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous. Allowing commercial vendors to sell their products at an NA convention violates our 6th tradition and is strongly discouraged.

1. The Merchandising Subcommittee researches the costs and shipping charges of items to be sold (shirts, cups hats, etc.). Careful consideration should be made in negotiating purchase prices of items selected for sale. Three different bids should be submitted to the Convention Committee for consideration. Proposals should include information regarding price, quality and time of production/delivery.
2. Once items and quantities have been approved for sale, these items are ordered and paid for outright whenever possible.
3. Merchandising provides for the sale of items during the convention at a selected site (merchandising room). Selection of this space, setting it up and hours of operation should be done in conjunction with Programming as well as Hotels and Hospitality.
4. Merchandising also provides for the sale of pre-convention merchandise at various events (including fundraisers) during the year prior to the Convention.
5. Before, during and after the convention Merchandising is responsible for storage of all items in a secure place. The transfer of money and receipts to the convention Treasurer should be done as promptly as possible and as frequently as necessary during the convention.
6. Merchandising also handles requests by other NA groups (Area, Regional, other conventions, etc.) to sell items at the convention. This can be allowed as long as it does not conflict with our merchandising efforts. Arranging for and allowing other NA groups to sell their items in the merchandising room on the last day of the convention has been successful in the past and is recommended. It is important to

be reasonably sure that funds generated from such sales will benefit the fellowship and will not be for personal profit.

7. As mentioned before, it is critical that the Merchandising Subcommittee maintain up-to-date and accurate records throughout the process as well as making prompt deposits of funds received to the convention Treasurer. In addition to this, a final report should be made to the Treasurer immediately after the convention, detailing the total expenditures, receipts and remaining inventory.

Registration

The Registration Subcommittee is one the busiest subcommittees of any convention. Although most intensive work is carried out in the weeks just prior to and during the convention, its responsibilities begin with advance planning.

1. Development of registration form and convention flyer in conjunction with Arts and Graphics. This should be done at least a year before the convention. This allows for review by the Convention Committee and distribution. (Note: the concept and design of flyers is important because they may represent NA to the public. Appropriate use of language and graphics is strongly suggested.) In addition, the purpose of the flyers is to communicate to all concerned persons that the convention is forthcoming. This is done in the spirit of providing information rather than promoting NA or its activities. The Registration Subcommittee has the sensitive task of encouraging attendance without abandoning the principle of attraction rather than promotion.
2. Distribution of convention flyer/registration form. This includes but is not limited to mailing to other Areas, Regions, individuals, hospitals/institutions and delivery by Convention Committee members to meetings and other conventions. Personal anonymity should be considered when mailing information to individuals. Mailing lists should not be provided to other groups or committees. (Note: Completed registration forms can be kept and utilized for a mailing list for the next years convention.)
3. Because pre-registration is often encouraged at fund-raising activities, coordination of efforts with that subcommittee is very important. Records of pre-registrations should be carefully maintained and all money received should be transferred to the convention Treasurer as quickly as possible (1 to 3 days). Not only does this help prevent loss of funds, but it keeps the Treasurer's records updated allowing an accurate appraisal of the conventions financial status throughout the planning process. The use of confirmation cards is recommended.
4. The Registration subcommittee also proposes items to be included in registration packets and orders them upon approval by the Convention Committee.

5. Scheduling and staffing the Registration table during the convention. This also includes selecting a location and arranging for the use of a cash register.
6. Maintain separate records for registration, pre-registration, as well as banquet and brunch sales.
7. Registration packets for NA members who are unable to pay are sometimes provided by the Registration Subcommittee on a limited basis as determined by the Convention Committee as a whole. It is important to remember the registration fee is designed to defer the costs incurred for the facilities and functions of the convention. These costs can vary and will at times be unpredictable. Registration fees are not intended to be a charge for meetings. Keep in mind that no convention has indicated that they have turned away on addict who is unable to pay. However, there are methods by which this can be handled. The most popular method is to provide a place at the registration table where an individual with no money may go and a committee member responsible for making this type of determination can be found. Members of the committee can be instructed to send people to this area to solve these problems when they arise. However, specific reference to this is generally not announced or written. Policy on this matter should be developed by the Registration Subcommittee and presented to the Convention Committee for approval long before the convention is held. Prior notification from a hospital or institution of the number of residents planning to attend who may not have the ability to pay would be helpful and should be encouraged. Due to the sensitive nature of this issue, it is essential that all members of the committee working in the registration area be informed of the procedures involved and know the Convention Committee members who are authorized to discuss and act on these requests.
8. Setting registration and banquet prices. The registration price should be set after careful examination of budgets and estimated attendance. Once this has been established, committees should consider the possibilities of under-budgeting and incorrect attendance projections. If this should occur and the registration price was set too low, the ramifications could be devastating to the committee and the fellowship. Careful consideration of the price for registration and meals cannot be overstated. Banquet prices are usually formulated from a fixed amount negotiated with the hotel. A common problem which can occur is that hotels may negotiate a price for the meals and not include the tax and gratuity which accompany catered events. Careful focus on this is essential in determining the price of banquet and brunch tickets. Once the price of the meal, tax and gratuity are established, attention should be placed on the possibility of not making the estimated banquet/brunch count. Hotels require prior notification of the number of persons attending the banquet or brunch. It's important to balance low attendance, unexpected additional meal costs along with other related expenses.

Selecting a Hotel site

Following the election of the Executive Committee members and Subcommittee chairs the first order of business should be proposals for a hotel site. A discussion concerning the suitability of each hotel prior to selection has proven to be very helpful in the past and is highly encouraged. Consideration of hotels can begin with nominations from the floor. It is also strongly suggested that all concerned members of the Convention Committee tour and inspect each hotel prior to final selection. Individuals who nominate hotels are responsible for submitting written bids from the hotel they are proposing. No hotel may be voted on or selected without a written proposal. Once selected, the host hotel is usually the site of future Convention Committee meetings.

Responsible Management of Funds

“NA funds are to be used to further our primary purpose and must be managed responsibly.” Our 11th Concept points out how very important NA funds are. In keeping with the spiritual principles of this concept, guidelines regarding the handling of funds should be developed and adhered to. The guidelines should include both recognized accounting practices and procedures that ensure the accountability of our trusted servants. Theft can be avoided by consistently and diligently following responsible financial principles and practices. The pain and conflict caused when one of our members steals from us, as well as the loss of funds that could have gone to help the still suffering addict, points to our responsibility to prevent theft from happening in the first place. Most theft of fellowship funds occurs when precautionary measures are not in place, or are in place but are not used. Some of us have hesitated to either institute or use these measures because it makes us uncomfortable. That is to say we believe that they are insulting to the people we ask to serve or they seem too troublesome to follow. However, the very best safeguard against theft is to remove the opportunity to steal. It is far more uncomfortable and troublesome to deal with theft after it has taken place than to take measures to prevent it in the first place. The Treasurer’s Handbook is an excellent resource for groups and committees to use in instituting accounting procedures. All guidelines should include such safeguards as monthly reporting, regular audits, two-signature checking accounts, and monthly reconciliation of original bank statements. It is critically important that all processes be monitored by another person. Financial records should be readily available to other trusted servants. It is also important to note that other assets, such as convention merchandise, literature, and equipment, should always be treated as carefully as money.

Handling the Media

It's a good idea to have a press packet available at the registration table in case the media does show up. All Convention Committee members should be advised that if a reporter approaches them, they should direct the reporter to the registration area. A well informed and knowledgeable Convention Committee member should be readily available to accommodate the reporter's needs or questions. A Convention is not an appropriate setting for a community presentation. Neither is it beneficial time or place to encourage media participation.

OCNA 28 Convention Committee

Guidelines approved 5-09