

Topic: World Service Business Conference (WSBC) 2023
Submitted by: Diane Adams, Region 5 Delegate

To say that the Conference was exhilarating and exhausting, intense and informative, stressful and satisfying all at once, along with fun and fellowship doesn't seem to cover it all! Yet, that is exactly how I would describe the privilege of having done service for Region 5 at this year's World Service Business Conference.

Though having attended 2 other Conferences, one in the mid 90's in Los Angeles and one in 2000 in Albuquerque, I do not recall the level of participation in the process that I had the opportunity of doing this year. We were sent to Conference well prepared by the World Service Office with a download of materials (400+ pages) to review of agendas, proposals, reports, glossary of parliamentary procedure of terms, workshops and OA meetings to attend throughout the week of Conference. Upon arrival we received a binder of all of those materials to assist us through the week of meetings. The entire week was well organized and there were so many Delegates, Trustees, Chairpersons and volunteers to assist answering any questions that we had.

Each Delegate participated on a committee and I had requested to be on the Bylaws Committee. The committee was then divided into subcommittees. Though I have very little knowledge of technology, I felt comfortable working with those who do have the expertise and I could assist by being the secretary of the group. This subcommittee will be working throughout the next year on ways to improve accessibility to the World Service, Inc Bylaws and Policies by way of developing an index of terms and links to quickly find information in the Bylaws and Policies, rather than, as it is now, viewing a pdf and scrolling through pages and pages to find pertinent information. The first step is for the subcommittee's chairperson to contact the WSO Webmaster to determine feasibility. Our first subcommittee meeting will be on June 3, 2023.

Additionally, I was asked to serve on the Reference Subcommittee of the Bylaws Committee. This subcommittee provides a forum of discussion of New Business motions and Bylaws amendments. Its primary purpose is to provide problem-solving opportunities before the item is brought to, or returned to the Conference floor. (excerpt from "Reference Subcommittee Guidelines"). We met from early morning, through lunch time, dinner time and into the late evening hours between Business Sessions. After listening to makers of the original motions, and those members submitting amendments to those motions during or before Conference, questions are asked of those members proposing amendments by members of the Reference subcommittee, as well as non-reference subcommittee members for a period of time. Once all have been heard, the Reference subcommittee then begins a caucus of discussion to establish a consensus with all parties who have proposed an amendment/motion, to help with proper wording and eliminate duplication where similar motions are presented. I really enjoyed the work of this process, as it was more than just "word-smithing". It embodied principles over personalities for the greater good of OA as a whole. Members from all Regions around the world were on this subcommittee to offer their input and perspective as it relates to global and diverse issues affecting everyone's recovery. No final decision is made by this subcommittee; rather, that final outcome depends on the votes of Delegates when it returns to the Conference floor.

The two and a half days of Business Sessions were a true study in Principles over Personalities. Not all of the Proposals that were intended to be on the Conference floor for a vote made it there. Consideration for which ones, due to time constraints, needing to be heard were given priority. For me, the most impressive decision of all made by the entire body took place on the last day at the very end of the Conference. Two Bylaws proposals affecting Countries outside of the United States and Canadian Regions, involving National Service Boards, Intergroups and their geographic and Virtual Regions was on the floor to be voted. A motion was made to extend the closing of the Conference by 30 minutes so that more time could be given to hear Pros and Cons and to ask more questions about these concerns.

Members wanted more information to understand the issues in order to make an informed vote on behalf of those Countries on the other side of the planet! To me, that is Program in action, to extend the Hand and Heart of OA - for this I am responsible.

Yours gratefully in service,

Diane Adams