

WSBC 2021 Business and Bylaws Motions to be discussed

A:

Change OA's definition of abstinence and recovery, which was adopted in 2019, to a statement on abstinence and recovery. The definition currently says abstinence is "the act of refraining from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors while working towards or maintaining a healthy body weight" and recovery is "Removal of the need to engage in compulsive eating behaviors." The new statement has the same statement about abstinence and removes the definition of recovery. The maker of the proposal (an intergroup) believes this will promote unity in OA.

B:

Retain the current definitions of abstinence and recovery and make it possible to change the definitions only in years ending in zero. The maker of the proposal (a different intergroup) believes this will promote stability in OA.

C:

Retain the current definition of abstinence and change the definition of recovery to: "Relief from the compulsion to engage in self-destructive food behaviors" and change the final paragraph to "Working and living the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step program lead to spiritual, emotional, and physical recovery." The maker of the proposal, a third intergroup, believes this more accurately expresses the meaning of recovery and smooths out the grammar.

D:

Change the prescribed dates for several OA events (OA Birthday, Sponsorship Day, and IDEA Day) to two-day weekends rather than single days. The makers of the proposal (cochairs of the WSBC Bylaws Committee) believe this will avoid confusion when the first day of the month is a Sunday.

E:

Change the wording of the OA Preamble so that the words “compulsive overeating” become “compulsive eating and food behaviors” and the phrase “eating compulsively” becomes “compulsive eating and other compulsive food behaviors”. The maker of the proposal (a trustee of OA) believes this will help people who do not identify with the terms “overeater” and “compulsive overeater” to see they can be part of OA.

F:

To create a Diverse Voices Policy which would encourage the WSBC Literature Committee to seek out stories and/or quotes from members of diverse populations underrepresented in OA (i.e., to reflect a variety of compulsive food behaviors, belief systems, nationalities, genders, sexual orientations, indigenous peoples, and peoples of color, etc.). The maker believes our literature needs more diverse voices that it currently lacks.

G:

To change the name of the “OA Young Persons’ Conference Committee” to “OA Young Peoples’ Conference Committee.” The maker believes the term “young persons” is outdated and may turn young people away.

H:

To change the wording of the “Unity with Diversity” Policy language in several places, including adding the sentence “Everyone with the desire to stop eating compulsively is welcome in Overeaters Anonymous.” The maker believes the changes will better express the policy’s intent and better accomplishes that intent.

I:

To redefine and explain what constitutes a hybrid meeting. The maker believes hybrid meetings will help OA reach out and carry the message and they can strengthen small meetings.

J: N/A

Has been ruled out of order by the chair as being outside the authority of the WSBC, its delegates, and/or its committees.

Summary of Proposed Bylaw Amendments for 2021 WSBC

1:

To change the WSBC voting method by stating that where a vote must be counted on the Conference floor, the board members shall vote last. The maker believes that new delegates can be unintentionally influenced by seeing the trustees' vote.

2:

Changing the trustee term of office limitation to 8 total years as a trustee. The maker believes that limiting the length of time each trustee can serve will bring new voices to the board. Currently, trustees can serve an unlimited number of terms with breaks in between.

3:

To change the qualifications for a trustee position from a physical residency requirement to a permanent residency requirement. The maker believes that those who live part-time in another area or country ("snowbirds," etc.) should be permitted to be eligible to serve.

4:

To redefine and clarify the number of regions to include one virtual region. The maker believes this will clarify that the virtual region is differentiated because it does not inhabit a geographic region.

5:

To clarify the number of WSBC delegates to which each intergroup is entitled. The maker believes this will remove the redundancy of the language.

6:

In an emergency, to enable the board to call the Conference or any part by virtual methods. The maker believes the board needs the ability to do this and is currently not authorized to do so.

7:

To allow any region with fewer than 40% representation at the previous WSBC when they are able to include 5 additional delegates from their region, they should give preference to delegates from intergroups that would otherwise not be represented. The maker believes this would help small intergroups to have a delegate when they would otherwise not be able, for example, to afford to send one.

8:

That the number of trustees be reduced incrementally from 17 trustees to 12, with 2 at a minimum coming from outside North America. This proposal from the board has been in the works for several years, with previous support from WSBC delegates and the board to increase the board's flexibility, to cut costs, and allow for more participation outside North America.

9:

To restructure trustee qualifications to reflect the changes in proposal 8. The board believes this will improve board effectiveness and reduce costs as well as region flexibility.

10:

This proposal (made by a trustee) further supports the move from 17 trustees to 12 by changing details about how trustees are nominated. Instead of having regional trustees and general trustees, as we currently do, we will move to 12 trustees, each of whom will act as liaison with a particular region. This proposal makes the changes necessary to put the nomination bylaws in alignment with that plan.

11:

This proposal (made by three trustees) redefines the service bodies of OA. There will be four types of service bodies: intergroups, national service boards, language service boards, and regions. The proposal covers all the details about how these bodies will be composed and how they will interact. There is no change to the current regions, but there are provisions clarifying how the geographic regions and the virtual region relate to the national and service boards, and covers how a virtual group can co-register with the virtual region and a language service board, for instance.

12:

This proposal (made by two trustees) defines hybrid groups/meetings that include both face-to-face and virtual attendance components.

13 and 14: These did NOT make the agenda so were not voted on

To change the wording of the 12 Steps and the 12 Traditions to “God as we understand Them,” etc. to remove the gender identity. The maker believes it will help make the OA more inclusive with no bias to gender in referring to God. Note: Similar proposals have been made in the past (for “God as we understand God,” etc.) and have been voted down by WSBC. Assuming it appears on the agenda, to implement these changes, two-thirds of the delegates must vote in favor, as well as three-fourths of all registered OA groups responding within 6 months, provided at least 55% of the registered groups have responded.

15:

To clarify the WSBC delegate qualifications of service boards so that each language service board has only one qualified delegate. The maker

believes this will prevent multiple representation from the same service bodies.

16:

To clarify the relationship of each service level to one another, how these service bodies operate, and where they are similar and where they differ. The maker believes this will remove bylaw redundancy and accomplish the intent all in one bylaw article.

17:

To allow new service bodies called special focus service boards. The maker believes it will allow for connections between special focus groups of the same type in OA.