

# **BIDDING FOR THE CONFERENCE**

As we noted in our Overview of the Conference, GCYPAA is held in a different city or area each year. At the Conference, one or more Bid Committees propose to host the Conference the following year. The Advisory Council selects one of these Bid Committees to host the next Conference.

In this Section, we share our experience, strength and hope about bidding to host the Conference and the “Bidding Requirements.”

## **Purpose of Bidding**

The purpose of bidding is to prepare a group to host the Conference. Many of us began our GCYPAA service with little practical experience working with others or following spiritual principles and bidding for the Conference provided us an opportunity to gain that experience.

A Bid Committee can prepare to host GCYPAA by outreaching the Conference in their area, attending the Conference and GCYPAA events, helping the Host Committee and addressing the GCYPAA Bidding Requirements.

## **How to Bid**

A GCYPAA Bid Committee is a service committee of recovering alcoholics that represent a particular area or city.

A Bid Committee may be internally organized to assist its task. Bid Committee positions may include Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. If a Bid Committee has many members, additional service positions can be added – the portions of the Host Committee Section of this Guidebook about service positions and getting people involved might be useful for Bid Committees.

It’s a good idea for a Bid Committee to have business meetings before bidding at the Conference. Some tips on running effective business meetings are contained in the Section of this Guidebook devoted to Hosting the Conference.

## **About the Bid Requirements**

The Bidding Requirements should not be viewed like a daunting scavenger hunt list, but rather as some organizational ideas that are meant to help Committees effectively carry out the primary purpose of the Conference.

Although the Bidding Requirements may seem intimidating and confusing at first, those who have bid to host GCYPAA are generally happy to share their experience, strength, and hope with you throughout the bidding process. They can help answer questions you have and provide your Committee some guidance.

In this Section, we’ll discuss all the Bidding Requirements (though not completely in order they are written). The full text of the GCYPAA Bid Requirements is contained in the Appendix to this Guidebook.

## **Token Bid VS. Full Bid**

These terms may be used to describe different types of bids. A “token bid” is a loosely organized group that wishes to express its interest in hosting the Conference. A “full bid” is one that has attempted to address all the GCYPAA Bid Requirements.

Both token and full bids play a vital role in GCYPAA. On several instances, the Advisory Council has selected token bids to host GCYPAA.

## **Who Makes up a Bid Committee?**

**Bid Requirement #1** answers this question: “Three AA members under 40 years of age with a minimum of one year of sobriety must represent the bidding city. Support by AA members of all ages is strongly encouraged.”

When we bid to host the Conference in Atlanta, we submitted a roster of Bid Committee members that listed ages and sobriety dates. Many of our Bid Committee members were also present at the Conference Bid Session.

## **Propose a Site to Host the Conference**

A Bid Committee should propose a specific place in their area where the Conference could take place. This is a practical necessity for carrying the message.

**Bid Requirement #2** states: “Bidders must have commitments from at least two appropriate facilities (hotels, universities, convention centers, gymnasiums, etc.) so sized as to be able accommodate the entire conference. Please include the proposed dates and diagrams of the available meeting space. All costs, both to the committee and to the attendee, must be outlined.”

In our experience, the main criteria for potential facilities are size and cost.

A good approach to obtaining appropriate site proposals is to begin with a list of prospective sites in your area, then determine which have suitable conference rooms and are reasonably priced. The archives section of the GCYPAA web site lists where past Conferences have been held.

For example, when we bid to host the Conference in Atlanta, we limited our search to hotels within the I-285 perimeter, narrowed our search to hotels with conference rooms that could seat between 200 - 500 people theater style, then further narrowed our search to hotels that could offer overnight room rates under \$100. Although there are many hotels in Atlanta, we quickly narrowed our search to a manageable list of facilities and used the internet and phone calls to hotel sales departments to find out more about them and to set up in-person meetings to tour the facilities. We had three hotels prepare proposals for our chosen weekend and included these proposals in our bid packet. If your area has only one appropriate facility for the Conference, that’s fine, the Bid Requirements are guides to help you prepare to host the Conference.

Generally, hotels will be happy to work with Bid Committees to offer a proposal or “hotel package” to attract the Conference because hotels want to sell their services. If the Bid Committee is selected to host the Conference, the Conference will accept, perhaps with some fine tuning, one of the site offers obtained by the Bid Committee.



Most facilities will charge for use of their meeting rooms during the Conference, along with charges for any audio-visual support and coffee service they provide. As a general rule of thumb, the total cost of the facility should be no more than the total amount a Conference could expect to receive from attendee registrations.

A friend of Young People's Conferences has prepared a detailed memo on hotel contract negotiations for ICYPAA that provides many useful and relevant suggestions and is included in the Appendix to this Guidebook.

If you are having trouble with this requirement, please contact Advisory Council members who may have experience, strength and hope to share with you about working with hotels.

## **Make Temporary Pre-Registration Flyers**

**Bid Requirement #3 states: "Bidders must have available a temporary preregistration flyer with a mailing address."**

You could model your temporary pre-registration flyer on a registration flyer for the Conference. The temporary pre-registration flyer can indicate that Conference details are "to be announced" so long as there is some contact information provided for those interested in the Conference to follow-up for more information. The mailing address should be a stable mailing address where AA related mail can be conveniently retrieved by the Committee.

Having a temporary pre-registration flyer at the Conference where you bid is a terrific way for a new Host Committee to outreach its Conference to the core audience of GCYPAA.

## **Propose Conference Dates**

**Bid Requirement #4 provides this guidance: "Whenever possible, provide that no large scale AA activity will be held in their city within a 30 day period before and a 30 day period after the conference date."**

Experience has shown that the months of June, July and August are good months to host a Young People's Conference. The long holiday weekends have allowed extra time for the Conference.

There are a number of A.A. event calendars, such as those maintained by GSSA/Area 16, Atlanta Central Office and the AA Grapevine. Remember, this Bid Requirement is focused on your area, not AA generally, and its purpose is to avoid unnecessary conflicts with other AA events to maintain AA unity and help Conference attendance. As a practical matter, it is suggested that GCYPAA not be planned to conflict with ICYPAA, though ICYPAA dates may not be certain at the time a Bid Committee proposes its dates for GCYPAA.

## **Support from AA Service Structure**

The AA service structure can provide valuable assistance to the Conference because it disseminates AA information to groups in your area and may provide a resource on AA Traditions. It is also hoped that GCYPAA stay united with the AA Service Structure.

**In this spirit, Bid Requirement #5 provides: "Statements of support from the DCM or intergroup secretary or regional counterpart must be brought to the bidding conference."**

Your DCM, or District Committee Member, is the elected chairperson of your local District of General Service Representatives (GSRs). Some metropolitan areas in Georgia have Intergroup Committees. A brief letter "To Whom It May Concern" from the appropriate person will suffice. The purpose of this Requirement is to make sure Bid Committees are in contact with the A.A. service structure.

## **Ability to Raise Funds**

Because a Host Committee can be expected to raise funds to cover some Conference expenses, like the cost of having a speaker attend the Conference, it is suggested that Bid Committees have some experience raising funds in a responsible manner.

**For this reason, Bid Requirement #6 states: "Prospective bidders will be required to demonstrate financial autonomy and responsibility within the traditions of AA as a whole, being directly involved in any activity from which funds are appreciated."**

A Bid Committee's financial autonomy and responsibility may be demonstrated by hosting an event in which funds are raised responsibly and consistent with AA Traditions.

We can offer a few suggestions for Bid Committees that would like to get involved with the Conference and gain some experience working together as a Bid Committee. Our first suggestion would be to contact the current Host Committee and see what you can do to help them raise funds and outreach their Conference in your area. You could invite the Host Committee to a local AA event and help them meet young people in your area who might be interested in attending the Conference. You could also consider organizing a road trip for your Committee to attend Host Committee events together. That's a great way to build unity and support for the Conference. If you do this, consider including some AA newcomers so you can help them have some fun in recovery.

If you are interested in hosting your own event, consider a pot luck "eating meeting" with a popular speaker; it's a fun event and fairly simple to organize. For additional suggestions on event planning, see the advice on hosting events in the Host Committee section of this Guidebook.

When we were bidding to host the Conference in Atlanta, we had a great time a bonfire event, a Superbowl party, a weekend get-together where we made "fuzzies" for the Macon Host Committee and a special banquet eating meeting for which we sold tickets to AA members and contributed proceeds to the Macon Host Committee.

A Committee should be cautious about soliciting funds from outside sources as AA is self-supporting and declines outside contributions. The purpose of this Bid Requirement is not to create a fundraising competition but rather to encourage Committees to gain some experience working together.

A Bid Committee is not required to have its own bank account, but it may wish to do so.

## **What Happens to the Money?**

**Bid Requirement #7 states: "The new host city must agree that all proceeds after expenses are to be turned over to the Advisory Council for their disposition."**

This Requirement calls for a Bid Committee to prospectively agree to turn over the net proceeds of the Conference it would host to the Advisory Council should the Bid Committee be selected to Host the

Conference. The Advisory Council manages a modest reserve to carry out Conference activities during the year.

The funds raised by a Bid Committee while bidding may be carried over to the Host Committee that forms if the Bid Committee is select to host the Conference, carried over to a new Bid Committee or donated to AA if the Bid Committee is not selected to host the Conference. In no case should any individual member take money raised for A.A. service for personal gain.

## **Bid Session at the Conference**

The Conference bid session is the forum where each city interested in hosting the Conference has the opportunity to present their case and illustrate their ability to meet the bidding requirements. The Advisory Council, comprised of past host city committee members, decides the location of the next yearly conference. All interested persons are welcome to attend the bidding session, which offers a significant insight into the scope of the alcoholic problem and the efforts put forth by other cities to spread the message of recovery from alcoholism in Alcoholics Anonymous.

**Bid Requirement #8 provides: "There will be a maximum limit of 30 minutes for the presentation by each bidding city."**

Typically, Bid Committee presentations include skits, verbal statements and, despite the seeming formality, are a lot of fun.

Some Bid Committees have prepared "bid packets" to distribute to individual GCYPAA Advisory Council members during the Bid Session of the Conference. Typically, bid packets are organized with reference to the numbered Bid Requirements. When we bid to host the Conference in Atlanta, we bought about a dozen inexpensive three-ring binders and numbered divider tabs. We organized our responses to each of the Bid Requirements in the binders with tabs and presented them to the Advisory Council during our Bid Presentation to help them consider what we'd done and what we hoped to do.

## **How Will You Service Alcoholics in Need?**

Ultimately, GCYPAA endeavors to carry the message of recovery to those in need. Accordingly, prospective hosts should consider how they will serve GCYPAA's primary purpose.

**Bid Requirement #9 states: "Bidders must concisely state how hosting the Conference in their area will serve to carry the message of recovery to alcoholics in need, especially the young person in Georgia."**

It is hoped that this Bid Requirement will help those who would host the Conference consider how they can serve to carry the message to those in need which is the primary purpose of the Conference. A Bid Committee may consider where it can identify need in its area and how it has served, or will serve, to carry the message of recovery to those in need.

## **Propose a Conference Theme**

**Bid Requirement #10 provides this instruction: "Conference theme must be taken from a direct quote from the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous and the Peach trademark should be incorporated into all conference paraphernalia."**

You may wish to review the archives section of the GCYPAA web site for past Conference theme examples.

### **What If Our Bid Isn't Selected?**

We hope that your interest in AA Service does not wane if your bid to host, but are not awarded the Conference. Hopefully, the experience of bidding was itself rewarding and encourages you to bid again and support whoever hosts the Conference. GCYPAA greatly benefits from active, statewide participation.