

Off-site GA Planning Team - Notes–July 5, 2011

Present: Mark Steinwenter, Linda Laskowski, Randy Becker, Lew Phinney, Don Plante, Larry Stritoff, Eva Marx

Next meeting: Noon ET, Tuesday, July 12

Fireworks from the 4th.

Opening words greeting summer by Randy

Review of outcomes listed in Linda's 7/3/11 e-mail.

Voting. 1) Voting window was open less than 10 seconds in some instances, e.g., calling the question. More people said they voted than were recorded. Was this due to problems with the system, confusion, too little time to react, or problems with the ballot itself? Or were people multitasking? 2) Substantive voting takes longer and is more significant than procedural voting. Should procedural votes not be voted offsite? 3) Offsite delegates need to use their phones and not rely solely on screen. Not only because of delay but also because some could not see ballot when more than one window was open. Suggested a chime or flashing screen to signal upcoming votes. What are the distractions? By Sunday tech deck was able to anticipate, just couldn't switch screens fast enough. In summary, revisit design of page, training, and elimination of procedural votes.

Technology/training. The number of people who perceived technology as easy was surprising. Most likely the result of training. Cannot possibly provide the same amount of support with large number of offsite delegates. Perhaps experienced participants can act as mentors.

Queuing. Offsite delegates felt discriminated against in the queues. Next year's queuing will require redesign, perhaps scan bar codes of people in line and projecting order on screen, allowing people to see where they are in sequence.

Straw votes. Had not anticipated straw vote participation in mini-assemblies. Using keypads exceeded expectations. Should we use same technology in plenary? Confusion between plenary voting and keypad voting.

First-timers. High proportion, How does this compare with onsite first-timer attendance? Will compare data.

Intercongregational participation. Perhaps provide a kit to offer guidance for working with other congregations. "Gathered Here" might promote cluster participation. Would deter multitasking. Those who were involved in chat were most engaged, not multitasking. This process has moved people toward wanting greater involvement in Association affairs.

Key Findings. Achieved our outcomes. Cost was principal reason for not attending. Cost includes time off from work for hourly workers, pet or child care, etc.

Cost of offsite. Cost to date is \$9,000, which does not include toll-free phone calls and laptop rentals. Will probably total less than \$15,000, i.e., 20% of budget. Increase in number of participants will not substantially affect cost.

Potential. Great potential for building virtual community. Delegate chat use exceeded public chat. Could extend chat to times other than plenary. Offer a virtual exhibit hall.

Could sell offsite delegate T-shirts.

Team. An amazing model of collaboration among multiple stakeholders. Project was virtual from its initiation. Linda's leading us in discussion of what works in groups laid a solid foundation. Linda would like a quote from a project team member about what it was like to work together. Larry will write something about how this was accomplished without face-to-face meetings. Mark lifted up and was affirmed in a great feeling of love for all participants. Randy observed that offsite participation can be complementary to and not disruptive of onsite meetings. Appreciation was expressed for Gini's embrace of the process and its enrichment of plenary. Perceptions of onsite delegates will be reported in onsite feedback. Don will send link to onsite GA feedback responses.

Organization for the future. Recommend Option 2. "Continue as a quasi-autonomous Project Team, with representatives from key organizations, that will continue to expand and shape the off-site experience beyond voting." Will be called "Connected Responsive Project Team (CRPT?). Linda will include the other two options in her report. Rationale for Option 2—Builds on success of Year One. Integrating new strategies too quickly can result in their fading away. Should probably ultimately be under the purview of the GAPC. Someone from the GAPC needs to be at the table. Mark and Linda will contact Walt Wieder.

Relationship with live streaming. There were more than 13,000 unique viewers of live streaming. At least two offsite congregations had more than delegates in the room. A good time for the live-streaming team and the offsite delegate team to work together more closely. Expands vision from offsite delegate to full offsite participation. Offers opportunities for cross-fertilization. Both groups owe reports to GAPC and the Board. Would simplify communications. Could include imagining what technology could do for us in Phoenix and beyond. What would offsite participation in social justice look like?

Voted to invite Margy to join the group. Don abstained because he did not know how GAPC would respond to combining budgets. Linda and Mark will have a conversation with Walt and the Board. Budgets could still be separate. Would eliminate redundancy, e.g., posting documents, combining chats. **Moved** (we never voted) to charge Linda to sound out Walt regarding willingness to combine these efforts.

Other next steps. Mark will send out survey about telephone use.

Add to issues list (from subsequent e-mail). Policy for including delegates registered for onsite participation who have last minute emergency and can't attend.

Agenda for July 12. Continue discussion of report and recommendations. .

Persony chat log.

Nothing.