

Thought Force Topic: HOSPITALITY GUIDELINES FOR ASSEMBLY

Background/Historical Info: We have traditionally hosted a Hospitality Room at AWSC, Assembly and Convention. They are three very separate events, with very different Hospitality needs. Over time they have merged into a single approach to "hospitality" which has often included incredible stresses on Districts as well as on individuals. Costs have gotten very high in the purchase of food and paper goods, and sometimes the stuff gets passed along until there are a half dozen large boxes of paper goods and even foodstuffs that get hauled around and have to be stored. There seems to be a lot of confusion about who is responsible for what and how to coordinate the process.

Financial Impact: At the last Assembly the Area made a large unbudgeted contribution to Hospitality because the two districts were concerned with the level of eating, and the demands being placed on them by the membership.

Charge: Brainstorm ideas about Hospitality and look at this historical part of our Assembly to see if we can re-envision the best way to go forward. Looking at our Legacies, using the Service Manual, and relying on your own experiences ask these 5 questions and see if we can get some new ideas flowing. What is it? Do we need it? Do we want it? What do we want? Be creative. Don't try to solve the problem or come up with specific answers. Think and discuss and try out new perspectives.

Five KBDM Questions

1. What do we know about our membership's needs, wants and preferences that is relevant to this topic?

- hungry and like to eat (6)
- helps with expenses, some groups can afford to send people (21)
- form of socializing, fellowship, place to rest and recharge, let's be accessible (31)
- we want food, Starbucks and a bigger room (9)
- opportunity for growth for GIPS and newcomers to help out (4)
- AWSC : NO / ASSEMBLY : YES (52)
- Access to water
- Expectations, special dietary needs can be difficult (32)
- Some GRs expect three full meals a day for free (11)
- Should just have snacks (18)
- Area should provide grocery list (14)
- It's a positive experience, it's convenient (3)
- Volunteer hours too long (6)
- Groups should finance cost (2)
- Some Districts bring too much (18)
- Just need light snacks, coffee and tea and water (21)
- Unrealistic expectations are now the norm (12)
- This has become a mountain of work for Districts (4)
- Want team-building, opportunity to share unstructured (4)
- Not like convention, this is an Area service (3)
- Casual visits and sharing, larks and owls (night time folks to visit)
- Food, drink, fellowship – keep it simple (18)
- Area should pick up cost (5)
- Lists of various things we should have (12)
- Shouldn't expect meals (22)
- Simple and inexpensive breakfast items (5)
- Cost should be considered (32)

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- Host districts needed to run the room (2)
- Snacks and fellowship (28)
- Some looking to supplement meals (12)
- Some want full breakfast and full lunch (11)
- Breakfast foods important (3)
- Social and spiritual needs met here
- Financial considerations important at all levels
- Location of Hospitality Room is very important (3)

2. What do we know about our resources (finances, member participation, etc) that is relevant to this topic?

- Give 2 Districts a list of snack items and a \$\$ limit (13)
- Financial restrictions of some groups (2)
- Some groups can give more (3)
- Lots of waste (7)
- Volunteers can also be a problem for Districts (3)
- Area can provide food, Districts can provide volunteers (21)
- Create Grocery lists (34)
- Eliminate competition between Districts, don't try to outdo others (18)
- Menu available so that people know what will be available (14)
- Costs to groups becoming too high, GIPs work too hard. (3)
- Big Dollar Districts/Low Dollar Districts – budget should come from Area (16)
- Standardized menu and dollar amount (22)
- Can Area provide all food and menu with Districts providing volunteers (15)
- Too much stuff, boxes, cups, coffee pots, etc (18)
- Can we bring the food into the meeting room? (3)
- Limited financing available to different districts (14)
- Consider Area involvement with Districts implementing (24)
- Each member could bring a packaged snack to add to Hospitality
- Service in Hospitality is overwhelming to most Districts (23)
- Cost has become unmanageable. Not enough staffing. People can't participate throughout the meeting (33)
- No clarity on costs. Many districts can't afford. (31)
- Where to store supplies? This is a hardship for many Districts. (17)
- Provide more guidance and more stringent rules about what and how much (20)
- Change expectations of members (5)
- Resources are becoming more and more limited. This is out of hand. (8)
- Discuss finances but leave Districts with autonomy.
- Concept 1 – the ultimate responsibility is the Group.
- No specific instructions for what is needed, this leads to bad experiences.
- Area seems healthier with funds, and should coordinate the hospitality (5)
- Budget suggestion. Assets are limited. Redefine expectations. (8)

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- End-report, evaluation, need information after Hospitality so everyone knows what is going on. (11)
- Costs have risen, keep costs down. (21)
- Be specific about what needs to be done. (34)

3. What do we know about the current realities (membership, culture, etc) and our fellowship's environment (technology, geography, demographic, etc) that is relevant to this topic?

- Our District stockpiles stuff. (3)
- Current Guidelines are not being followed. (8)
- Members feel entitled to free food. (12)
- Expectations too high, and people feel like they should take care of others. (23)
- Some districts can't afford the overwhelming burden (11)
- Area should fund it, Districts could shop in Orlando (3)
- Open only on Saturday (5)
- Convenience is important (3)
- Members don't realize that Area is not supposed to provide full meals (6)
- Technology can be used for communication (3)
- Space for fellowship is more important than food (23)
- I don't like passing along coffee pots and microwave etc (14)
- Small v. large Districts
- Too much equipment to transfer from one event to the other (12)
- People like coffee, tea and water. We need to provide this. (31)
- Complaints about financial impact. (30)
- Lunch for small groups is good. (7)
- Meals should not be provided by Area (21)
- We love to eat and enjoy fellowship. (22)
- Storage is a problem. (22)
- Stockpiling is a problem for most Districts. (13)
- Guidelines need to be updated. (13)
- Members seem entitled to more than is necessary. (18)
- Coordination of supplies is too complex. We need to focus on business. (3)
- Expectations of meals is more than is reasonable. (22)
- Storage of coffee pots, microwave and boxes of stuff is too much of a problem. (11)
- Some always want their way. Not abiding by Traditions.
- Hospitality is a central meeting area, we can be of service to those who need. (3)
- Cliques are present, people don't really mix in Hospitality. (2)
- Current system overburdens volunteers.(6)

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- Make a list, keep it done by Area, make sure everyone knows meals will not be provided.(3)
- Coordinating logistics too complicated. (16)
- Expectations are all over the place. (22)
- Increased participation at elections makes the costs increase. (6)
- Need more Districts at Elections Assembly. (6)

4. What are the ethical implications of our choices – what are the pros and cons? Will our decision be consistent with our spiritual principles?

- Use honesty in dealing with hotels, don't bring outside food into meeting room. (8)
- Is outside food in the Hospitality room okay? (8)
- Are we enabling people? (22)
- Groups should be self-supporting, right? Tradition 7 (31)
- Members can bring brown bag (their own food) from home. (32)
- Groups who cannot afford it may not come. (7)
- We don't want to exclude, we want to be fair. (12)
- Why not get a storage unit in Orlando for the stuff rather than carry it around? (13)
- Area should suggest a menu and provide the funds. (12)
- Pro – help others Con – we can't please everyone
- Enabling, not allowing growth, personal responsibilities, people-pleasing (38)
- We should move away from entitled mentality and enabling (15)
- Encourage people to bring their own food, with a place to eat (3)
- There are too many interpretations of the word "hospitality" make it a Fellowship Room and just provide snacks.
- Have more Districts involved. Standardized hours.
- No Hospitality at AWSC. Yes at Assembly. Set the schedule and menu. (12)
- If Area creates a menu and a budget, then we can act together for the common good.
- Anyone with special needs should provide for themselves, not expect special treatment that someone else should provide. (14)
- Don't forget accessibility for those who may be mobility impaired.
- Everyone has a choice.
- We need a room to congregate. Call it a gathering room. Everyone provides their own food and drink. (3)
- We give in order to receive.
- Define Hospitality as a snack area not a restaurant. (16)
- Too much caretaking going on. (4)
- Do the Guidelines conflict with Concept 3?
- Are we obligated to provide food for those who "can't afford it"? (14)

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5. What do we wish we knew, but don't? (Use the back if necessary)

- What monies have been spent on Events for hospitality?
- What does the hotel charge for coffee and snacks?
- What about hotel's policy on bringing in outside food?
- Has Area ever had a line item in the budget for Hospitality?
- Can we have Hospitality in the hallway outside the meeting room?
- What do members expect and/or need from Hospitality?
- Can we have a menu? Can we have a list of supplies?
- We wish we knew about how the members feel about Hospitality?
- What about a poll of members?
- Tradition 1 – common welfare for the greatest number.
- Is there a health code issue?
- Can we get a Storage unit?
- What is the cost of hotel provisions of Hospitality room? Food? Coffee?
- Wish I knew what past Hospitality Rooms worked and what didn't work.
- How about District provide some of the food, maybe a schedule of contributions like Convention?
- How about just fellowship? Keep it simple.
- How much storage space is needed? How much does it cost? Does the hotel have storage?
- What about every District providing \$25 toward Hospitality?
- Can we rename Hospitality to Fellowship?
- How much is needed? How much is left over? How much time is spent on this?
- I wish we knew estimated head counts. How many? How much? How to communicate to Hospitality to host Districts?
- We should lower expectations.
- Can we limit to non-cooked snacks? Or no food?
- It would be great to have an evaluation of the Hospitality experience.
- What about eliminating food? Just have coffee and water?
- What are the specific complaints in the past?
- How do groups understand and interpret Tradition 7?
- Create a spreadsheet to keep track of Hospitality information.
- Can we increase Assembly Registration?

(1) It is unanimous that we want Hospitality at Assembly.

(2) It is nearly unanimous that there are problems with how it is currently run

(3) Chairperson will create a Task Force to create Temporary Guidelines to work with two Districts for May 2015 Assembly.

(4) Evaluation after May 2015 Assembly between Districts and Task Force.

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(5) Task Force will report/make recommendations at AWSC in August 2015.

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