Conference Participant Web Meeting
March 18 2017
Small Group Notes

The small group discussions were focused on one topic from the February 2017 Future of the WSC report.

OBJECTIVE 4 — Future of the WSC: Continue work to make the WSC a more effective resource to help achieve the Vision for NA Service

A. *Improve the effectiveness of the time between meetings by working on processes to forward issues and have discussions on ideas between WSC meetings.*

The report suggested the following strategies to help achieve Objective 4a:

- Formalize a method for Conference participants to give input to the NAWS Strategic Plan.
- Encourage participants to forward ideas for posting on the FTP site throughout the cycle.
- Continue to use a *CAR* survey for ideas for recovery lit, service tools, and IDTs.
- Engage with Conference participants to determine which ideas they wish to discuss further at the WSC and/or by webinar.

Small groups Discussion Questions:

1. *a. What do you like about the approach? b. What don't you like?*

2. *How can we build on these ideas?*

3. *What other ideas could we consider?*

The following small group notes are as captured

Small Group Discussion Group # 1

- Like that we are actually discussing this and there are really good ideas on the table, e.g. ABCD put something forward which is trying to take shape as a motion and good.

- Don't like the idea of using FTP site as a primary vehicle since it doesn't allow discussion. Would be okay with posting to FTP; reference on the board as the primary vehicle of discussion.

  When WB control what is posted creates a perception that not every voice is heard. There's a perception that the WB is trying to control the process. There is a lot on FB about the WB controlling the flow of stuff. Believe what is being proposed will help must make sure that the 'perception' issue framed.

- There are other collaborative tools for online work that can be used that allows collaboration in real-time. Other tools better suited that allows for group collaboration.

- As long as this is a method is about collecting ideas without controlling the direction of the idea - great. A more transparent way of collection, collating, sorting.

- Don't have any specifics to share, but agree with Brian. Understand not wanting to use the FTP site because seems 'distilled' and from NAWS.

- Want all the information but at the same time overwhelming.

- FTP is viable source.

- Think that we need better collaborating technology tools. There will always be a separation between generation and of those that use technology and not. Some of the older generation will have a harder time with technology.

- Better planning and sharing of ideas with happen with technology.

- Acknowledge and like the effort to get us all together despite time zones issue.

- Believe a way to improve is to allow us to group according to our areas of expertise and experience.

- As well as heterogeneously group new and experienced RD's - support mentorship between more experienced participants and less experienced while selecting members of small groups

- I also believe that a small group could get together and research or prepare an issue/topic to present in the larger webinar or to other small groups.

- Like the central store of information on the FTP with a central point of authority. People make mistakes and the fact that everyone has ability to modify or delete a document (accidently) on FTP site is dangerous.

- Need technology since it helps to improve our communication that will then help with planning. Lack of communication slows down the wheels of Narcotics Anonymous.

- More action just planning

- Don't like terms like participating/nonparticipating regions

- I love the direction we are going in! Exciting what we are doing, that we have awareness and taking steps to get it.

- Love the fact that we are starting an approach and good we are doing. Our region doesn't want to spend hours on discussions like environmental scanning. But like Billy said if people participant they participate…If we participate it helps us more than when we don't.

- I like the FTP and like the collaborate approach and as a central dumping site. Think that if we start using too much technology we will use people.

- Don't like *us vs them* mentality. See it on the conference participant bulletin board, on personal fb site.

- Zoom is working pretty good, and a very big first step, so webinars like this one a good start. Think this focus is a great start.

- We can use zoom to train ADs and look for new leaders

- Echo's thoughts regarding FTP site not allowing for discussion

- Do think there a NAWS "control perception" and any way we can get away from this would be good.

- Don't use conference participant board, posts sporadically.

- Love this zoom format and how we are coming together between conferences and continuing collaborative efforts.

- I like zoom, it's not that difficult and having these webinars start in a great direction.

Miscellaneous

- Find better ways to use many of our experience members during the conference. help create leaders

- Likes the idea of mixing the Delegates and Alternates instead of separating the two groups

Small Group Discussion Group # 2

1.   a. What do you like about the approach?

- Highly effective, we are exploring new ways and ideas, exciting and goes along with better way to serve the fellowship

- It's an exciting possibility, like the idea we are doing it.

- Don't ask us what we like or don't like. Just try new methods to communicate and we'll see what we like and don't like.

- We are communicating before WSC, its creating transparency and discussion and how we will conduct business at the WSC.

- Love meeting in between conferences, it helps when you are new, to catch up, good to have face to face time with people which in turn helps communication. Approach working.

- Using this system can see the future without having to send a team to CA (WSC), region can better carry a conscience anonymously and RD carries conscience to the floor and save funds. Can participate in a way we have the ability to gather conscience more effectively

- Change is hard, anything different is a real good idea, we should try it and we will not use what doesn't work

b. What don't you like?

- The graphic is hard to understand but excited as to where we are going (said 2x)

- Technology is a little difficult

- Forward information ahead of time and

- Provide a brief summary of what we are going to discuss prior to breaking up into small groups.

2. **How can we build on these ideas?**

- I like the idea of moving forward in our planning we have to change, this the best way we have to move forward, we are moving in the direction of zonal representation, only way to gather conscience of worldwide fellowship, it seems its evolving in that direction.

- Continuing with these check-ins will help, getting everyone to speed

- Trying to see how process evolves, hard to add to something we are just starting

- We need to take first step. Activity in WSC 2008, participants wrote a letter to what participants would find in the future, and here we are 10 years later and WSC has not changed much, never a comprehensive semi haul of the WSC.

- The FTP site is better as of late, however hard to navigate and concerned with how to have a discussion on the FTP site.

- Create a piece of literature to help address fear, to make sure the conscience is going to be heard. Assure everyone's voice will be heard, especially if we are moving towards zonal representation. I'm from a small region we fear we might not be heard- find a way to help reduce the fear of the groups in the area and region structure.

3. **What other ideas could we consider?**

- We are faced with a monumental task, I feel we are guided by a loving HP, and we will come to a solution, believe these discussions will develop that.

- Like concepts that we put forward by the ABCD region at the last conference, like the idea of no new business, that decisions are made at the beginning of the conference and spend the rest of the time in what we are going to put in the CAR, not figuring out what we are putting in the CAR. Less business more discussion.

- More time for people to understand and read CAR, move to 3 year cycle, CAR released in September, more time to read and translate

- Think there is something we can do to help people understand the CAR and it's to move to a 3 year cycle, this will allow for more time to digest material and translation.

- Like environmental scan and surveys, good way to prioritize

- Like what I read in the report, moving in the right direction, simpler the CAR the more participation, the more participation the less fear there will be. Would like to ask a question in CAR asking how people feel about an idea that the board will like to develop…. (RD's connection got cut off).

Small Group Discussion Group # 3

- Question 1a
- Like direction, CPs participating in the planning
- CPs continue to communicate throughout cycle and have webinars to ask and learn and collaborate before WSC so we know what's going on and get down to meat of business
- Info overload following WSZF—much to learn and understand
- Need info and processes for info to make its way from WS to groups. We as participants need to make sure RCM's pass down information.
- Like the web meeting option because we can participate no matter where we are.
- Getting regions through conference participants involved in the planning process via the RDs
- Webinars, surveys, etc.…keeping everyone involved. Even though it can be overwhelming, good to be involved
- Brings world view to our regions throughout cycle instead of just every two years when CAR comes out.
- Webinars help us see how big NA is and a picture of what WS is.
- Technology and service Issue Discussion Topic key right now
- Gives a face to the World Board.
- Continuity in delegate positions important
- Need to move forward involving everyone to better use the two years
- Region thrilled with environmental scan—RD carries this region's conscience—so we were able to workshop this in March, but would like longer cycle to participate in the scan. Time frame needs to be longer.
- FTP site: good way to disseminate info; how to communicate if info is uploaded by regions
- Survey great

- Web meetings allow CPs to participate. Lots of interest in using these kind format for communication. Wants training.
- Region using Zoom two years—great device
- Need more time for input to survey's because a lot of people are responding and we need time to translate.
- Good to have a place and way to share ideas during the cycle

Question 1b What don't you like?

- FTP site: rename the different levels

Question 2 How can we build on these ideas?

- WSZF—helpful to have NAWS participate at ZF meeting to allow for dialogue, questions, etc. Is it still possible for NAWS to participate in those ways?
- Better ways to make FTP site more useful?
- Difficult to get to the FTP site, but helps to have others share info/experience
- Okay getting into FTP, but difficult to figure out what file is needed. Could be more user-friendly.

Question 3 What other ideas could we consider?

- Is an FTP site the right medium for us to do what we want to do…maybe Google groups/docs, etc. would be more useful than an FTP tree (Mark clarifies that this idea is also for regions to post to the FTP site; know it's not a great tool for conversation)
- More descriptive on FTP site
- Last WSC proposed idea about way to better communicate
- How many think they would forward ideas for discussion during the conference cycle? 4
    - Web meetings with small groups like this allow us to talk about ideas that have been forwarded.
    - Good to have info/develop opinions before WSC
    - If we have more time before WSC to discuss and work together on motions
    - Want to be better informed on subjects before WSC so can get region's opinion on things and not spend so much time discussing
    - Would like to use delegate sharing Session to discuss new motions and ideas
    - Don't think region would bring forward ideas, but think discussion board was a good place to hear ideas, get more info, hear sides, etc., to better present ideas to region; better than just motion/proposal with rationale and WB recommendation
- Would like dynamic platform to get and give insights to exchange ideas and opinions despite differences in time zones.

- The sooner we get info, the better we can discuss it and the more informed we're going to be before the WSC. The timeframe between CAR and CAT distribution and WSC so short

- CAR in English distributed 150 days before conference in English; would be great to have cycle-long discussion of ideas

- If we do more effective job of being in communication, then CAR won't be the first time we are seeing/engaging with ideas.

- Good idea to invite WS into local events via Zoom meetings

Small Group Discussion Group # 4

- Don't like the processes so far. Not trusting—feeling like being led towards a predetermined result. Will take trust and goodwill on both parts. Would like to engage the fellowship as well as the delegates. Get international fellowship/Spanish speaking delegates involved with English speaking delegates? How can we get input from international fellowship?

- Also need to think about the other languages that are not represented like China and Japan.

- Like the spiral diagram…well thought out. Don't like that there is no reference to timeline, need to show relationship to each other. Maybe sequence diagram (wave with a timeline). Success criteria—how do we evaluate what is effective (benchmarking, what are the variables being benchmarked). A strategic cycle is 5 years; the WB meeting frequency is not enough for this time frame. Should use a 10 year strategic plan.

- Didn't know about the ability to participate in Strategic Planning…very excited. Likes timeframes. Likes what she is seeing in the plan. Wants to look at inclusions of foreign language involvement.

- Felt we were being led in breakout sessions, and interrupted too often during WSC--Neutral facilitation. We try to do too much during cycle. Take so long to get rolling after the conference.

- Like using zoom for these discussions. We need to hear the diversity of our fellowship. Spiral diagram…no need for timelines as the fluidity would be effected. If we feel we are being led we certainly have a voice. May be a short amount of time for the work we are doing for the conference cycle. Have hope we can do great things. Strategic plan cycle might be little short. Encourage the World Board to lead (leadership/facilitate) the WSC break out rooms, but not lead (unduly influence) the WSC break out rooms

- Like approach…good start. Solidify business process of WSC so that the rotation of AD to RD is more effective. We can train people on what to expect. Appreciate the technology

and getting people involved. Important to get info back to fellowship and then receive input—may be too much for the timeline we have. Neutral facilitation is the key. Straw poll question in themselves are leading---more open questions.

- Old business—seems like we could limit discussion or even vote before we get there (using technology more).

- Something to help new CPs especially non-English speakers…acronyms, WSC 101--training, mentoring

- Preconference webinar which was supposed to help new CPs but it was just a rereading of the CAR.

Small Group Discussion Group # 5

- Collaboration
- Regular webinars on topics best thing. WSZF also helpful.
- Improve file tree on FTP site. Imagery unfamiliar. Handout/FAQ would be helpful.
- Why not use the bulletin board more? Email notification easier.
- Suggest that everyone use the bulletin board to encourage and be positive about using the bulletin board. And to share our best practices.
- Surveys and webinars useful.
- Workshops in webinar format
- Prioritizing before WSC to minimize 12 hour days
- Continuity and consistency in communication is good, however that happens (i.e. Webinars, bulletin boards, surveys, etc.)
- Environmental scan questions for groups. Groups don't generally have the information to answer those questions. Difficult for RDs to answer for the groups. Bulletin board could be a better resource for these kinds of questions, seeking other RD experiences.
- Face to face discussions whenever possible throughout service bodies. Creates better context. Technology has limitations.

Small Group Discussion Group # 6

- Positive—helps us do more between WSCs. Webinars and posting ideas on the FTP site should help us do more.
- This should help us do more before the WSC and so streamline the Conference itself.
- Spreading out work should help more.
- More interaction between WSCs is a good start.

- **Deadlines would help. This could be a way to refine these approaches. For instance, a given topic could be discussed from Jan-March, and then another from March to May…etc.
- I like the milestones as goals in the cyclone to me plan for discussions in my region
- Maybe zones could be used more for discussions. More productive/easier than discussing among all CPs. Perhaps we could schedule zonal webinars for discussions. Zones could prioritize the topics that were most important to them.
- The WB members who are assigned to each region within a zone could participate in the zonal web meetings.
- Maybe CP webinars could be quarterly, not monthly. (So that they could coordinate with zonal web meetings.)
- Challenges: coordinating among time zones
- Challenge: time consuming.
- Is there a method to collect input from members? Not just delegates or regions? For instance, with the environmental scan some regions collected a lot of member input.
- Maybe there could be a page or some sort of online survey for members to submit ideas that CPs could see in addition to their own ideas that are submitted on the FTP site. (would want members to identify regions so that the idea could be forwarded to the RD/AD)
- That would help members feel more involved and included. But it's tough to meet deadlines and communicate through the "layers"—region-area-group-member.
- Is there a way to make the environmental scan input more member-based? Some sort of e-form where the results go to the delegate team for each region.
- Positive. General direction is positive. The webinars this cycle are helping connect CPs better than last cycle's web meeting.
- These strategies are building on the improvements we've already made to communicate and connect.
- Forwarding ideas through the cycle is a really good improvement. The EDM, for instance, has ideas that they are developing that they would love to distribute and get conversations going about.
- NEZF—like the EDM meets twice annually. This is a great opportunity for the members of the zone to connect with the WB. The zonal forum agenda is developed by the hosting region and it can be challenging to give over large parts of the time to the WB. Web meetings seem like a really good opportunity that wouldn't take as much time from the f-2-f meeting.
- Harder to give input as a newer CP because there's not as much experience to compare with, having not yet been through a Conference cycle.
- Western states zone is now adding days to it include FD to the local hosting fellowship and we want more connectivity throughout.

- WSZF is heading toward more participation from non-delegates and we have workgroups for electronic communication and setting up an admin by 2019
- RMZF is using VSEE to connect electronically.
- Being able to see each other from around the world is really inspiring. It reminds us all that we are a global fellowship.
- The new technology is connecting us more and helping us be more effective and communicate better. When we keep communicating through the cycle, we don't need to "reset" at every WSC. We keep up and are better prepared for the WSC.