

1996 Chapter Relations Meeting Synopsis of Recommendations

MGCSA's voting delegate Jim Nicol, CGCS, was present at this meeting and responds to the issues.

The fourth annual Chapter Relations Meeting was held September 7-8, 1996 in Lawrence, Kansas. Representatives from 88 chapters came together to discuss pertinent issues and provide direction for the future of GCSAA.

Paul McGinnis, CGCS, GCSAA Vice President and chairman of the Chapter Relations Committee, asked the chapter delegates to share their concerns and ideas on issues ranging from finances and technology to membership and election activities. With that in mind, the chapter delegates participated in open discussion on a variety of topics and issues. The major points and recommendations on each issue are outlined below.

Issue

Is a dues increase needed in order to generate revenue for the association, to sustain program activity for the next three years and to have a moderate bottom line of revenues over expenses? A scenario of a 20% dues increase was discussed.

Straw Poll

Approximately 25 delegates preferred to vote on a possible increase in membership dues at the 1998 annual meeting in Anaheim, while approximately 66 delegates preferred to vote on a dues increase at the 1997 annual meeting in Las Vegas. It was unanimous that a dues increase is merited at some point.

• *Jim Nicol supported voting at the 1997 annual meeting.*

Recommendation

The issue will be referred to the board of directors for possible placement as a ballot issue at the 1997 annual meeting in Las Vegas.

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Issue

Beginning July 1, 1997, individuals

who join a local chapter must also join GCSAA to fulfill the dual membership requirement. A verification process must be created in order to ensure that members who join a local chapter also join GCSAA and vice versa.

Recommendations

GCSAA will work with each chapter as needed to ensure a smooth process in handling the paperwork after the dual membership requirement takes effect, but would like to develop a standardized plan in handling membership applications and payments.

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Issue

GCSAA chapters have raised concerns during the reaffiliation process. Chapter delegates received a survey prior to the meeting, asking them to rank six affiliation issues in order of importance. The six items were: the time, efforts and resources needed to complete the tax-exempt and incorporation requirements; the dual membership requirement and its effect on superintendents from small budget or nine-hole courses and whether it will limit chapter growth; problems acquiring insurance; how the directors and officers composition requirements may limit chapter growth; bylaws conformity, and financial burdens for smaller chapters.

Survey results indicated that the dual membership requirement was of the greatest concern to chapters, followed by the directors and officers composition requirements, bylaws conformity requirements, financial burdens on smaller chapters, tax-exempt and incorporation, and problems with insurance, respectively.

Recommendations

GCSAA's chapter relations department staff will work with chapters to

resolve any affiliation issues that arise at any time and will keep chapters updated on affiliation progress.

Chapters who have not submitted affiliation materials to GCSAA by October 1 will receive a phone call from one of the Chapter Relations Committee members, encouraging them to submit affiliation materials before the December 31 deadline.

The chapters will also be notified of their affiliation status through mailings to the chapter leadership on October 1, November 1 and December 1 this year.

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Issue

GCSAA is seeking a better way to use its logo to increase exposure on "Par for the Course" and the Web site, and is seeking a method to harmonize GCSAA's logo.

Potential Solution

Reach a possible consensus on GCSAA and its affiliated chapters having a common logo.

Straw Poll

About 50% of the delegates like the idea of using one unified logo, while the other 50% preferred not having a unified logo.

Which is more important — the ownership of the chapter logo or the aesthetics? About 30-40% of the delegates felt that the ownership of the logo was important while about 20% felt that the aesthetics (graphic look) were more important. The additional 40-50% of the delegates didn't have a strong feeling about either, but are pleased with their current chapter logo.

• *Jim Nicol supported the use of the MGCSA logo*

Recommendation

None was made at this time. GCSAA and the chapters will con

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tinue to explore options and identify opportunities to increase logo exposure for both GCSAA and the chapters.

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Issue

At the 1996 annual meeting in Orlando, an amendment was passed to lower the dues for class C members from \$210 to \$105. In addition, class C members lost the right to vote. Should class C members regain some of the privileges they lost, such as voting rights?

In addition, should there be a split in classification for class C members between career assistant superintendents and those who intend to become superintendents (entry-level assistants)?

Straw Poll

Approximately 70% of the delegates said they would like to vote on the split in the classification for assistant superintendents at the 1997 annual meeting in Las Vegas, while approximately 30% of the delegates preferred to table the discussion until next year and consider voting on the issue at the 1998 annual meeting in Anaheim.

• *Jim Nicol supported voting on the split classification in Las Vegas.*

Recommendation

Send to the Standards/Bylaws Committee a recommendation to create a proposed bylaws amendment that would be voted on by the membership at the 1997 annual meeting in Las Vegas. This amendment would add an additional classification for career assistants in the class C category.

Any member who volunteers to be classified as a career assistant would be required to have at least three years of experience as an assistant superintendent, would pay annual dues of \$210, would have voting privileges, would carry a gold card, and would be required to comply with the dual membership requirement.

Any member who is classified as an entry-level and assistant would have less than three years of experience as an assistant superintendent, would pay annual dues of \$105, would not have voting privileges, would carry a green card and could not be required to comply with the dual membership requirement.

• *Jim Nicol would like to hear from our class C members on this issue.*

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Issue

The Membership Committee has proposed that class AA members pay no membership dues, which would result in a reduction in membership dues revenue. Currently, class AA members pay \$16 annually. Class AA members must have served as a golf course superintendent for a minimum of 25 years, be retired as a golf course superintendent, and be at least 55 years old.

Straw Poll

Approximately 85% of delegates were in favor of waiving the dues for class AA members, while 15% were in favor of requiring class AA members to continue paying \$16 annually.

• *Jim Nicol supported waiving the dues for AA members.*

Recommendation

Send the proposal to waive the dues for class AA members to the Standards/Bylaws Committee to create an amendment that would be voted on at the 1997 annual meeting in Las Vegas.

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Issue

In order to become a class A or B member of GCSAA, the individual must be a golf course superintendent and must pay \$210 dues annually. There are no minimum requirements or continuing education standards for membership, certification is a voluntary standard, and there is no room for professional growth in the GCSAA classification system for members to take on other leadership roles in the

industry. In addition, GCSAA is not currently able to identify a minimum skill level of its members.

Straw Poll

A majority of the delegates wanted to proceed with the creation of entry-level membership standards and approximately 60% said they would like the process to move more rapidly than the seven years originally suggested.

• *Jim Nicol supported both ideas.*

Recommendations

The Board will proceed with appointing a resource group to begin developing standards. The timeline may be accelerated, depending on how the program develops.

The progress on creation of standards will be brought back yearly to the delegates meeting for review and input.

The membership standards would be implemented for class A, B and C members, but careful consideration should be given to establishing entry-level maintenance standards for career assistants.

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Issue

If a member or a nonmember of GCSAA feels that a violation in the code of ethics has occurred, there are certain steps that should be taken to address the alleged violation.

Recommendations

Consider adopting an entry-level standard that requires members of GCSAA to follow the code of ethics. Use GCSAA's code of ethics as a resource when determining if a violation has occurred.

Chapters need to be aware when there is a false claim of membership or when an individual claims to be a certified golf course superintendent in order to respond to the individual.

When a club advertises for an open position, GCSAA should inform the club that it should contact GCSAA and verify that its finalists for the position are indeed members of GCSAA

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and/or certified before making a job offer to an individual.

Newsline and other communication vehicles should be utilized to inform members about good ethical behavior

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Issue

GCSAA is seeking ways to better serve its chapters through the chapter seminar program.

Straw Poll

A majority of the delegates said that if the regional seminar cost was decreased, attendance would not increase proportionately, but if the cost of attending regional seminars doubled, attendance would decrease.

- *Jim Nicol was in the majority on this issue.*

(Some) Most of the chapter delegates wanted the current rebate program for GCSAA regional seminars to continue, while about 15% of the delegates wanted the chapters to put forth some effort to get the rebate.

- *Jim Nicol was part of the 15%.*

About 50 of the delegates were in favor of the (chapter rebate) education program breaking even (expenses equal revenue) and about 36 of the delegates were in favor of letting the (rebate) education program be deficit funded at a reasonable level.

- *Jim Nicol was part of the 36.*

There was agreement that the goal is to educate the membership and a profit or loss is not crucial; therefore, making a profit on the regional seminar program and using those funds for future programs is not a priority at this time.

Recommendation

Continue the chapter rebate program, and ask the Education Committee to explore options regarding the education budget.

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Issue

The Chapter Cooperative Research Program assists affiliated chapters in funding research of local interest. Currently, funding is greater than the chapter support of the Golden and Platinum Tee Clubs. Chapter support is needed in these clubs in order for the GCSAA Foundation to be able to provide matching funds for research projects.

Recommendation

Require the chapters who are seeking funding for a research project to join either the Golden or Platinum Tee Club, but GCSAA should continue to fund national projects that are good ideas.

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Issue

At a recent meeting, the Career Development Committee discussed employment issues such as wrongful termination, ethics, educating employers about the economic consequences of hiring a less experienced superintendent over an experienced superintendent, the effect aging has on salary, employability and opportunity, the general manager structure, and establishing student GCSAA chapters.

Recommendation

GCSAA needs to provide communication tools to bridge the gap between the employer and the golf course superintendent. Overall, GCSAA should provide more concerted efforts in implementing standards that lead to respect and professionalism, and educate the media and employers about GCSAA.

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Issue

Provide quicker voting delegate accountability for the voting process and look at ways to accelerate the voting process.

Straw Poll

A majority of the delegates want the votes to be cast privately by the voting delegate, individual voter, or proxy.

- *Jim Nicol was in favor of this.*

A majority of the delegates also favor a system that would offer public accountability of the voting results by posting them before the conference and show ends.

- *Jim Nicol was not in favor of this.*

Recommendation

The Election Committee will examine several options to have a private casting of the votes at the annual meeting and to implement a voting system that allows accountability of the individual casting the vote(s).



RON BLOOM, Fairways Inc., attempts a birdie putt on the 15th hole at Fox Hollow Golf Club.