

Vice Chair Report for July 2024 EASC

Late last year, an addict from EASC approached me with a concern regarding the raffling of a TV at GNA NYE. As detailed below, there is specific NAWS guidance discussing why this is not appropriate for an NA event. After speaking with several others and in the spirit of unity, I decided not to bring the issue up at that time since planning for the event was in full swing – flyers made, TV purchased, etc. My intent was to bring this up with the EASC body after we received a full report of the event and could focus on planning for next year. After getting the full report from the 2023 event, several additional concerns became apparent. I again hesitated to bring the issue forward since we did not have an Activities Chair. We now have a chair (Shawn) and I have started to discuss these concerns with him, but in looking back, I cannot help but wonder if they should have been submitted sooner. Regardless, here it is:

First, I want to be clear that I have no reason to believe that any trusted servant of EASC was intentionally doing something 'wrong'. It is my understanding that everyone has just worked best with the knowledge they had. **Also**, I do not claim to be the expert on NA events. I can only say that I have served on many committees and have learned many lessons.

Little history - For those who do not know, up until about 3 years ago, the GNA NYE event was put on by a group of addicts (several NA groups in Tulsa). I was not previously involved with the event, so I cannot speak to how it was managed. With being involved with the EASC area (2010-18), I do not recall hearing of any issues. About 3 years ago, EASC was asked to take on the event. I was not involved with that transition, but conversations with others report that it was mainly driven by a lack of addict support in putting on the event. I have been told that a sum of money was donated to serve as seed money for the annual event. It is very difficult to know what 'officially' happened during this time because we do not have EASC minutes for July 2020 thru June 2022. According to July 2020 EASC minutes, GNA NYE was not part of EASC. According to the next available minutes (July 2022) it was. No changes have been made to the EASC policy to reflect adding the event.

Concerns with GYA NYE event:

Overall concern, it appears that GNA NYE event has continued to be managed like a 'group event' rather than a subcommittee event accountable to the Area (accountable to all EASC groups). Perhaps we should take some time to ensure that EASC understands and approves of how the event is currently being managed.

Lack of specific EASC Activities Guidelines

EASC Bylaws do not include specific 'Activities Guidelines'. Guidelines for issues including handling of NA funds, expectations for communication with the EASC body, expectations for reporting financial details of the event (to provide learnings for future events) and handling of event merchandise and other supplies once the event is complete. This gap in our bylaws may be due to EASC historically not conducting large events. EASC Bylaws do have some general requirements of subcommittees found in the EASC Bylaws XV. Standing Sub-Committees / B. Purpose and Responsibilities

OK Region has much experience with large events (conduct 3 each year) and has an [Activity Subcommittee handbook](#) which can provide guidance. This is not meant to suggest that EASC needs to adopt the entire OK Region Handbook (our event is smaller), but more give an example of how the activities expectations can be documented.

Large Budget (\$2500) Distributed to Activities Chair

In 2023, the budget for the event was distributed to the Activities Chair as a lump sum. This is a very risky practice. If we look to larger events, they either have a specific Treasurer position, or utilize the service body Treasurer to distribute funds directly to vendors. For EASC, our Area Treasurer is the

position we focus our money handling. It can take more planning, but it should be reasonable that checks could be written for larger costs directly from the EASC Treasurer and the committee operates with a smaller 'petty cash' fund.

Budget for Event Exceeded

The 2023 event spending exceeded the \$2500 budget by over \$1600. EASC Bylaws specifically require that - "Any funds to be spent by the standing sub-committee in excess of what is approved for that sub- committee shall be approved by the EASC." (XV.C.2.Financial)

Raffle of Television

A concern has been raised as to whether we should be raffling a television. Raffling of large non recovery-oriented items is not something that typically occurs at NA events. This is due in part to some learnings shared by NA World Services in a NAWS Bulletin they produced. NA Bulletins are not considered hard rules, but as a resource to NA members, groups and service committees as they approach their service efforts.

[Bulletin 21 - the generation of funds \(fundraising\) and the seventh tradition in narcotics anonymous](#)

The focus of this bulletin is on how we raise funds in Narcotics Anonymous. One of the points to consider specifically touches on raffles:

"All aspects of the fundraising event should be consistent with our goal of encouraging recovery from addiction. We should avoid hosting events that might encourage gambling, appear to offer "something for nothing," or award prizes that are either not recovery-oriented or that otherwise may be seen as inappropriate. For example, a raffle prize such as a car or a television might make someone's living circumstances more comfortable, but at the same time may not be directly related to his or her recovery, whereas a prize of NA literature or tickets to an NA workshop or convention would be recovery-oriented. It should also be noted that, in many USA states and in some other countries, raffles are illegal. It may also be helpful to consider whether raffles—and especially cash raffles or lotteries—appeal more to the spirit of self-interest than the spirit of voluntary support implicit in our Seventh Tradition."

Merchandise

EASC does not typically manage merchandise. EASC bylaws have no reference to merchandise. How should this merchandise be managed? How is the leftover merchandise managed?

Is registration price sized properly for event?

Overall, the 2023 event saw a net loss of about \$250. Registration cost has remained fairly constant while 'cost of living' expenses has increased. Are we using 'fund raising' raffles, auctions, etc. to offset that cost? Do we need to look at lowering expenses and/or increasing registration?

Summary - If I could fire up my ToeKnee K time machine (TKTM), I would go back to the time when EASC agreed to take on the GNA NYE event and suggest that EASC sit down and have a deeper discussion on how the event becomes an EASC activities event. I would definitely recommend that guidelines be created.

Going forward – I have discussed my concerns with our current Activities Chair, Shawn. I believe that we agree the single biggest lesson going forward is for the Activities Committee to communicate their NYE plans with EASC each month so our groups can have the ability to give input.

ToeKnee K.

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