




AREA 15 AD-HOC HYBRID MEETING COMMITTEE

Final Report



NOTE: Subjects in picture are not actual AA members.



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INTRODUCTION

- The Ad-hoc Hybrid Meeting Committee was approved at the January 2021 Quarterly Assembly and formed at the April 2021 Quarterly Assembly as the result of a motion “...***to review options to enable Area 15 Business Meetings, Conference Agenda Review assemblies and Area 15 Delegate and Officer election assemblies, to include a virtual conferencing technology component in conjunction with the in-person attendance.***”



INTRODUCTION

The Committee has met monthly using virtual conferencing technology to:

- Investigate how other Areas are using virtual conferencing technology for their Area Assemblies and /or Business Meetings
- Define the options for enabling virtual conferencing technology and the costs associated with each.
- Evaluate the non-tangible requirements of AA's Second and Third Legacies of Service and Unity

COMMITTEE COMPOSITION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The committee is composed of:

- Committee Chair Tom S., Chair of District 3
- Area Quarterly Coordinator Ray S.
- District Committee Member Jeannie S., District 4
- Two General Service Representatives Virginia B., District 1;
Kim C., District 9
- Ex Officio member Karen V., Area 15 Recording Secretary

OPTIONS



Option A: PURCHASE EQUIPMENT

The purchase of equipment by the Area for in-house operation of a hybrid system has the lowest start-up and recurring costs, and requires the greatest level of manpower to successfully operate.

Costs would remain lower.

There are also risks and liabilities:

- equipment would need to be stored and maintained;
- troubleshooting technical issues with equipment would be in-house.
- Volunteers could be trained to setup equipment to follow a preset map; however, knowing how to troubleshoot a bad audio cable or adjusting mic balance is more specialized knowledge that is not easily taught.



RESPONSIBILITIES

Operation of a Hybrid format will require the establishment of a sub-committee to orchestrate the service.

The suggested organization would be the formation of a sub-committee operating within the Quarterly Coordinating Committee as tech requirements would have to be negotiated and will differ from hotel to hotel.

The in-house option would require the largest number of trusted servants to facilitate operation. Responsibilities would include storage of equipment, transportation of equipment to and from assemblies, set-up and operations of equipment, troubleshooting technology, and tech operation utilizing the virtual meeting platform.



TRANSPORTATION

The in-house option would require the overseeing committee to ensure that the equipment was transported to and from assemblies in an enclosed vehicle.

The equipment should be able to be easily housed within most vans or SUVs.



STORAGE

Due to the sensitive nature of the electronics involved, storage of any equipment purchased by the Area would require a climate-controlled environment.

It is recommended that foam-lined hard-cover storage cases be utilized where possible for equipment. Such cases are an added layer of protection and would help to ensure equipment operates optimally for its maximum lifespan.



Option B: RENT HOTEL EQUIPMENT

Rental of the equipment through the host hotel is the middle option in terms of cost.

The Area would be assuming less responsibility with the elimination of in-house equipment. Additionally, hotel operators would assume responsibility for setup and troubleshooting equipment.

The Area would remain responsible for operating the virtual meeting platform.



Option C: OUTSOURCE

Outsourcing of hybrid operation with a third-party vendor is the most expensive of the three options.

Would require negotiated contracts for the best rates that will obligate the Area for a pre-set time period.

Would eliminate most liabilities in terms of equipment and manpower on the part of the Area.

SUMMARY AND COMPARISON OF OPTIONS

Option A In-house: \$13,290 initial cost. \$6,600 annually thereafter. **Lowest initial cost.** Has a recurring fee for equipment replacement. **Highest level of manpower required** for set-up, transportation, operation, and storage of equipment. Trusted servants needed to run digital meeting platform required. Area would have to negotiate (and pay) for bandwidth at each hotel. No professional troubleshooting of technology.

Option B Rental Of Equipment: \$30,000 annually. **Middle range cost.** Contracts would have to be negotiated with each host hotel for equipment and bandwidth. Eliminates Area responsibility for set-up, transportation, storage, and operation of equipment. **Trusted servants needed to run digital meeting platform still required.** Professional troubleshooting of technology provided by hotels.

Option C Outsourcing: \$42,000 annually. **Highest financial cost** to Area. Would eliminate most all responsibilities for the Area. **Trusted servants needed to run digital meeting platform still required.**

PROPOSED BUDGET

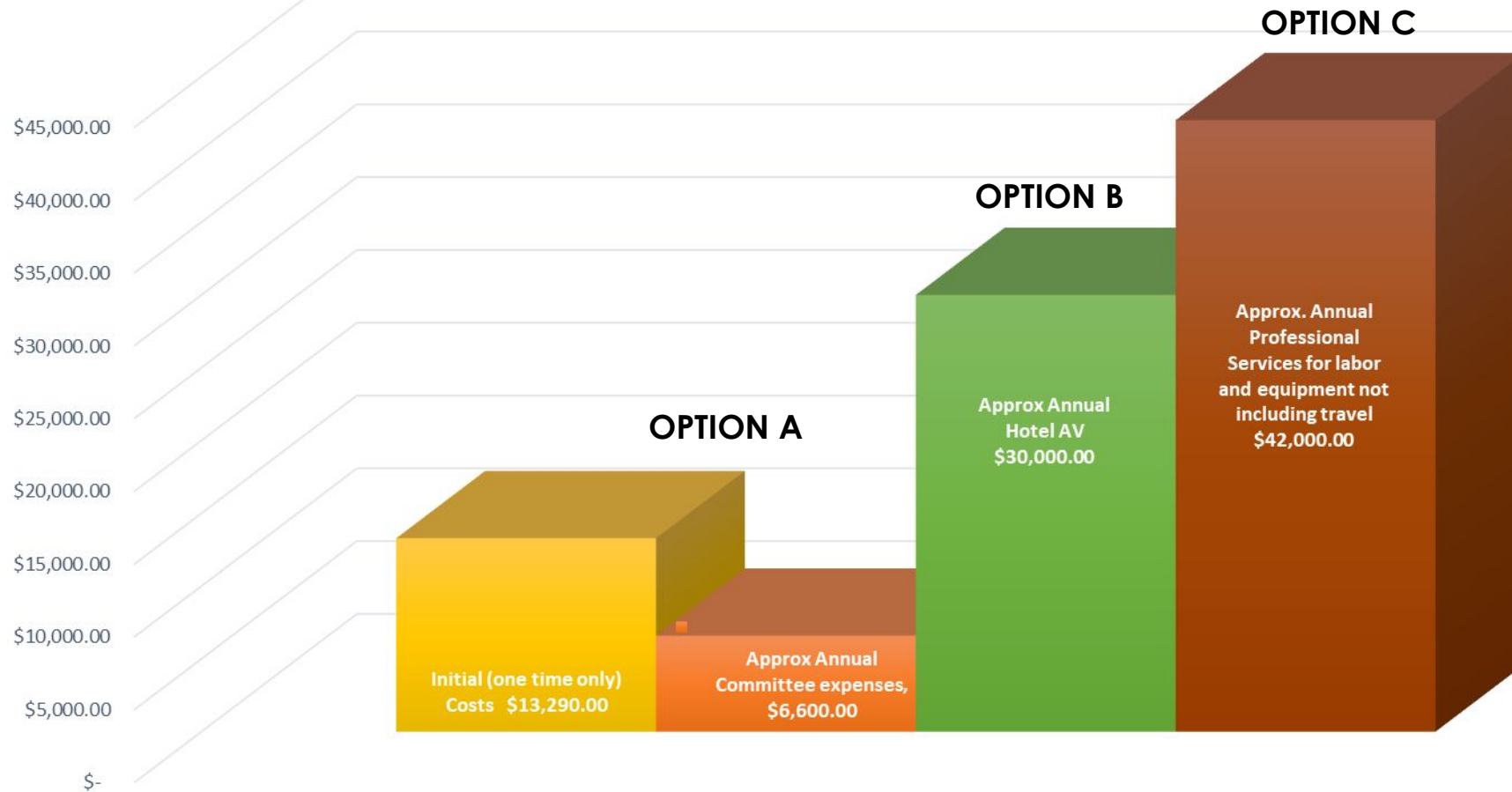
Option A In-house: **\$13,290** initial cost
\$6,600 annually thereafter
*Storage and travel expenses for trusted servants who
set up and break down will add to these estimates*

Option B Rental Of Equipment: **\$30,000** annually.

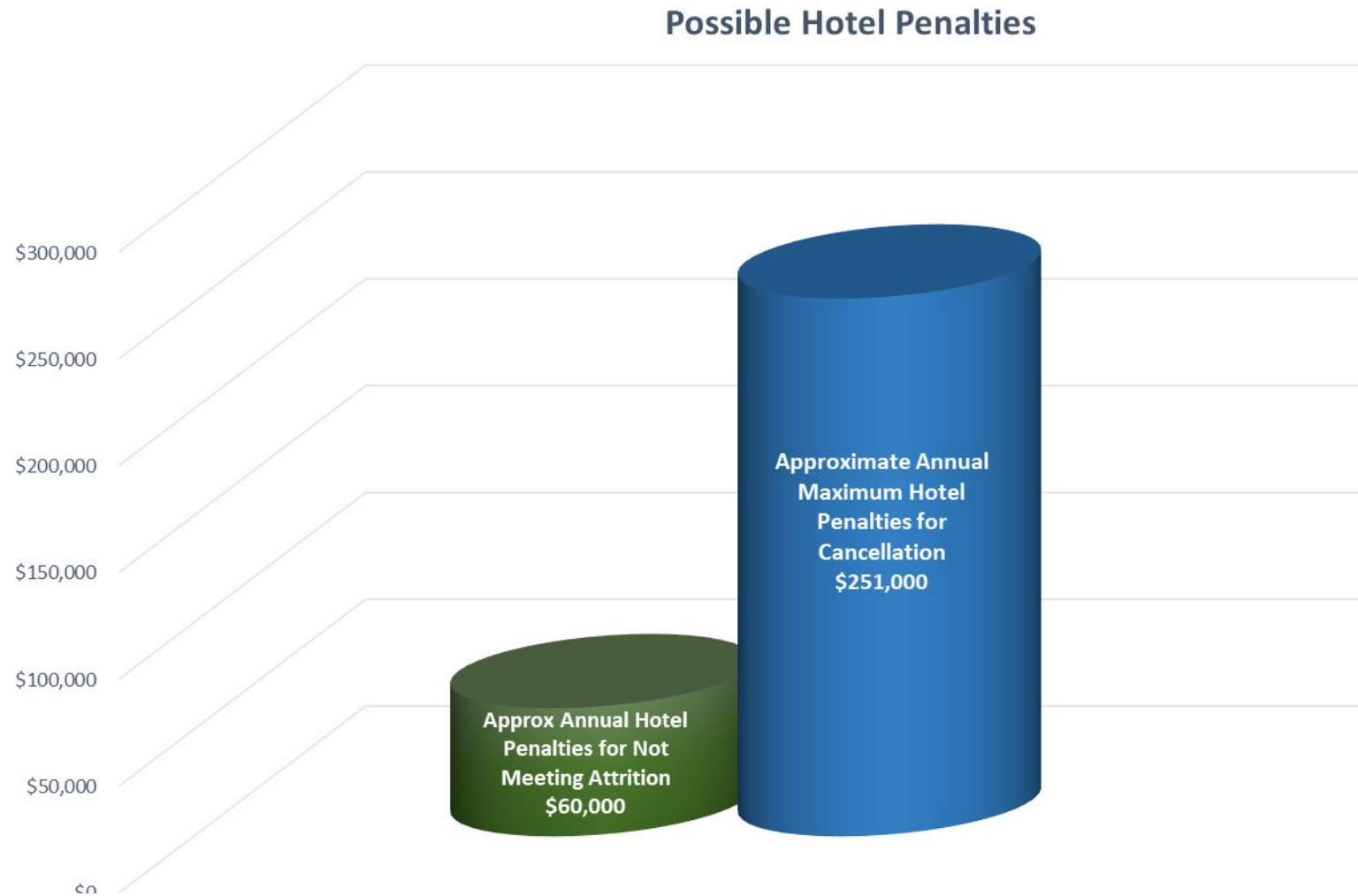
Option C Outsourcing: **\$42,000** annually
Vendor travel expenses will add to these estimates

FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS

Initial & Annual Expenses



FINANCIAL RISKS



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OPTION	PROS	CONS
Option A -In House	Least recurring cost	Requires multiple trusted servants. Travel and lodging of sub-committee members. Professional technical troubleshooting not guaranteed.
Option B - Rental of Equipment	Limited Area responsibility once hotel contract is signed	Not included in current contracts. Dependent upon Hotel staff to meet contractual agreement for set up, service levels, and troubleshooting. High cost.
Option C - Outsourcing	No Area responsibility once vendor contract is signed.	Dependent upon vendors to meet contractual agreement for set up, service levels, and troubleshooting. Hidden costs for travel and lodging. Highest overall cost.



EXPERIENCE OF OTHER AREAS

The committee contacted Areas within the United States that have implemented hybrid assemblies over the last two years. The following AA Areas are the areas that responded: California - Area 6 (Northern Coastal), Colorado - Area 39, Missouri - Area 40, Montana, Albany, New York - Area 48.

On two separate occasions, a member from Missouri and a member from New York joined our committee meetings and answered any questions from members and guests who attended.



EXPERIENCE OF OTHER AREAS

Each Area had conducted extensive research and was open about what worked and what could be improved. It was difficult to find an Area with as many in-person attendees as Area 15. The General Service Office informed us that Area 6 had the most Districts within its Area, which is more in line with our Area.

The costs varied and the number of attendees, both in-person and virtual, varied. The complexities of each report differ as well. One common thread throughout is that prior to 2020, AA had no template/reference for navigating the times that we have all experienced in the last two years.



RECOMMENDATIONS

It is the committee's recommendation that if Area 15 decides to move forward with implementing a hybrid format for business meetings that the options presented be considered.

Three possible options for implementation have been researched and are included in this report for the body's consideration.



APPENDIX

BREAKDOWN OF EQUIPMENT COSTS

Microphones/mixer			
Equipment	Description	Wireless	Wired
Mixer	Connect all microphones to speaker (\$300)	\$300	\$300
SM58-LC (wired mic)	Shure wired microphone (\$120)		\$360
SLXD2/SM58 trans	Shure wireless mic (\$300)	\$900	
SLXD4 reveicer	Shure SLXD4 receiver (\$500)	\$1,500	
mic battery	Shure SB903 (\$50)	\$250	
battery charger	Shure SBC203 battery charger (\$150)	\$300	
Mic stands	two floor one desk	\$150	\$150
XLR cables	cables to connect devices	\$100	\$500
cable ramp	Yelack 2 channel (\$10/ft)		\$600
Equipment cases	Hard case	\$500	\$200
		\$4,000	\$2,110

BREAKDOWN OF EQUIPMENT COSTS

Webcam			
Equipment	Description	Advanced	Basic
Webcam	Logitech Mevo Start (\$400)	\$1,200	
Webcam	Logitech C922x (\$100)		\$300
ethernet adapter	Mevo ethernet adapter (\$200)	\$600	
stands	Mevo stands (\$100)	\$300	
stands	basic webcam stands		\$200
network switch	power for cameras (PoE)	\$100	
cables	Cat6	\$200	\$200
Laptop	HP Laptop	\$700	\$700
vMix	software video - angles, edits, text	yes	
Headset	noise cancelling	\$200	\$200
		\$3,300	\$1,600

BREAKDOWN OF EQUIPMENT COSTS

Projectors		
Equipment	Description	Cost
Projector	InFocus IN2134 DLP XGA 4500 Lumens, 1.3X Zoom, 3X HDMI, VGA, 3D and Wi-Fi Ready TechStation (\$800)	\$1,600
projector stand	two stands	\$200
projector screen	Lopcast 100" with stand (\$100)	\$200
cables	power, video, multi display adapter	\$300
cable ramp	Yelack 2 channel (\$10/ft)	\$300
		\$2,600

BREAKDOWN OF EQUIPMENT COSTS

Speakers		
Equipment	Description	Cost
speakers	ZLX-12BT (1000W) (\$550)	\$1,100
speaker stands	two stands	\$200
cables	XLR / power cables	\$300
cable ramp	Yelack 2 channel (\$10/ft)	\$600
		\$2,200

Total of all equipment: **\$13,290**