

Below are the notes from the 2011 AAGT Annual General Meeting held on Sunday, June 5th in New York, NY.

- **Attendees**

- Alan Swartz
- Ansel Woldt
- Brad Larsen
- Bud Feder
- Burt Lazarin
- Carl Hodges
- Cathy Gray
- Charlie Bowman
- Dan Bloom
- Elinor Greenberg
- Frank Bosco
- Gail Feinstein
- Janneke van Beusekom
- Joe DePaula
- Judy Graham
- Ken Meyer
- Lee Zevy
- M'Lou Caring
- Maryanne Nichols
- Nancy Woldt
- Norman Friedman
- Patricia Tucker
- Sandra Lucas
- Susan Gregory
- Sylvia Crocker
- Zelda Friedman

- **Treasurers Report:**

- Burt provided a summary of the financial condition of AAGT. See attached report. Funds include income from membership renewal and scholarship. Costs to AAGT include fees to APA for CE credits and administrative assistant.
- Burt emphasized that Cathy and Burt established a budget flow for the conferences separate from the AAGT general budget. This was done to provide clarity and direction for planning.
- A loan has been made to the conference planning committee for advanced payments for the conference. This money will be returned to the general fund.
- Credit card fees were discussed and clarified. PayPal is AAGT's credit card service, but payments are not being made from one PayPal account to another PayPal account.
- Cathy: Thanks Burt for putting AAGT finances in order so that it is easier to track where our money is going.

- **Interest Groups** – Joe DePaula – shared proposal for new interest group. Read interest group definition from AAGT website (<http://aagt.org/main.cfm?p=about&c=interestgroups>). An interest group specific to the

upcoming conference related to cross cultural matters, including language, culture, etc. Anyone interested should look for Joe's emails. Also looking for an additional co-chair to work with Joe. Why do interest groups wane? Charlie says, IGs were most related to Richard K, Zelda and Zoe(?)...For example, the research group is an interest group. IG didn't have a rigidity, continuity, and developed because excitement would gather around something and people would get together who were interested in it and develop something. That was in the forming days of AAGT. It cannot be done top down. Interest emerges and recedes. It's natural. However, when members sign up and say they are interested – but how do they get connected? At one of the early AAGT meetings, George Brown said he wanted to have people interested in theory development meet for lunch. He said that Sylvia should chair the group and they had a many year conversation. Then the conversation transferred to email and the group became manifest on some of the listservs. That interest group has informally reformed over email and maintained itself. Is the really issue maintaining contact between conferences? How to continue the spaces between. Fill those spaces in between with communication. Internet communication still self-selects and there must be alternative ways to meet with one another. Social networking could be quite beneficial here. The idea of pre-contact of interest groups prior to conferences. The listservs work, but function only when people post to the listserv. Challenges with ciphering information from discussion on the listserv. We need to communicate. We need a venue for specific conversations about specific or discrete interests.

- **2014 Conference** selection process - a proposal
 - A proposal that is in the full proposal set below.
 - Marlene is asking to plan further in advance for the conference. At the AGM we make the determination for the next conference (2014) for the site and the conveners. They would begin working to be ready to present to Puebla conference what would happen in 2014.
 - If we accept this proposal, it is not mandated that this would not happen now (meaning a decision would be made at today's meeting), but would begin with 2013.
 - If future AGMs are or are not well attended we might need to consider other ways to include membership input for selecting sites.
 - Talking about the process, but not instituting the process this year.
 - This would be a switch from the next site emerging from the energy of the current conference. So this would be allowing a new process to emerge.
 - An email from Kerry in Australia in which he inquired about a 2014 conference in Australia. Possibly in Korea (Jungkyu Kim).
 - Proposals for conference sites need to include realistic planning, thought, proposed conveners etc.
 - Spontaneity is wonderful for conference planning, but the ground for this is not solid (Dan B). This guarantees that important conferences have solid ground.
 - There needs to be a venue for a discussion of how the next site emerges and there may be more of a need for developing GT in the US. (Charlie)
 - Please make an effort to include all members input in whatever possible way. (Maryanne)
 - If the site is selected by consensus at the conference, we run the possibility that the next conference could be in central or South America or Asia. (Ansel)
 - This is precisely the question of the future of AAGT (Carl)
 - Spontaneous emergence and ground – can we set up at the conference a space for spontaneous recommendations for where the conference could be in 4 years. At each conference a call for suggestions for future conferences to be reviewed at the next AGM – planning four years in advance. (Janneke and Dan)

- Spontaneity means we don't have to wait for the biannual timeline. AAGT feels fragmented. US AAGT areas need to be organized into some kind of regional force. We need to find some way to educate our members about the kind of unification. To do this we need a strategic plan/process (Lee Zevy)
- Four years ahead of time people would offer a meeting place and put together a full proposal in a years' time for the next AGM. (Ken)
- This is global – we are a real global organization – and it will take time for us to figure this out(Allen)
- I suggest we evaluate the proposal that Marlene has made and make adjustments and maybe by the end of the day there will be a new proposal. Then it needs to be vetted by the membership. (Nancy)
- Why the 3 years? Why not have the proposals in before the next biannual AGM where there is a huge number of people so that there is more participation in the selection process. It's not that new proposals would be selected at that point.(Maryann)
- It is very helpful for the planning committee of the next conference to be up and running prior to the beginning of the current conference.(Cathy)
- It's a planning process. Everything changes and is emerging and is a planning process. We're talking about the planning process of the next conference. Let's have a continuous planning process. Some will be more coherent and some more, but we want to be planning in some regard all year long. One more thing, we had our first 2010 planning meeting in 2008. (Burt)
- Given this proposal, we cannot pick a place for 2014 today, but this is a useful experiment for two years from now. I would say I like this but let's see how it emerges. (Bud)
- I would like this discussion to inform us in Puebla, so whoever is coming forward to ask them certain questions to know how well they've thought it out. (Gail)
- Use this meeting as an example; we would be making a decision about the next conference at a low attended meeting with mostly Americans. I don't like this. I was opposed to the name change to AAGT because of the spontaneity in Amsterdam by the few people who could make it. I would hesitate to do that again. (Charlie)
- The decision could be made at the time of the AGM but not just with the people present. As long as there is a vehicle for input from all members. The AAP identifies conference planning committee for three conferences out and then that committee does everything. (Charlie)
- We really have to be process oriented. It would be great to have several committees in place, but there is something to making a spontaneous decisions and built upon in the moment. How could we know where the best place is unless we're building on experience? It is important that people do the background work to make sure a conference is feasible. (Frank)
- Balance is an issue for AAGT to balance spontaneity with planning.(Cathy)
- The balance comes with dialogue and informing people more effective. (Frank)
- The missing piece here is a vehicle to establishing the process that is different than the conference planning committee itself. We need a group (committee) to vet the recommendations, establish communications process and looking at what is entailed in certain situations. There is nothing in this proposal that recommends what we do structurally with AAGT to make this happen. (Joe)
- Perhaps we can do is ask what the criteria are or what questions to ask – **a baseline of requirements** to people who are considering proposing. This is a support to people who are considering a proposal. (Carl)
- I like the previous groups that have run conferences tooffer their experience for the next conference.(Lee)

- We've done that in the past. If you look at the themes of the conference mimic what is happenin in the organization. The themes are very organic. (Charlie)
- I've been listening. I disagree – the theme name is created closer to the time of the conference and could continue to reflect the current state of the organization. As I read this now, I see this as being a lot less structured as I first did. This asks for multiple proposals and what these proposals should include. Then at the next conference they choose among the proposals. (Dan)
- With amendments – how many in favor of having a conference planning process that occurs three years in advance of the actual conference – that is a decision is made three years prior about the location of the next conference – with a process that include input from all the membership. No count now. (Cathy)
- I understand the need to get things going ahead of time. The only thing is I am not clear on how it is going to work. (Maryanne)
- We have some good ideas, but the beginning is tough because it is not inclusive or consensual. (Nancy)
- Two issues – realistic planning time. Being able to – getting well prepared proposals. And riding on the high of the conferences. So I am agreeing that if we do this this way – what is missing is the mechanism. (Ken)
- Il think a lot of the things we're talking about is laying ground for looking at the other things on the agenda. (Susan)
- There was just a feeling, something doesn't feel right. Putting some kind of structure on it. What could I, if proposing, could I commit to three years in the future. This feels like putting a box on the organic process. (Judy)
- If we could plan two ahead this time – then we could be on track – and it does not seem like a huge problem to me. (Patricia)
- Bringing this discussion to a close – and this can be – for those particularly energized can continue in a small group later. (Cathy)
- **2012 Conference** – update
 - See conference website (<http://www.aagt2012.g-gej.org/>)
 - Conference proposals are being accepted
 - AAGT Membership Registration opens 6/15/2011
 - Fly into Mexico City, take scheduled bus to Puebla - cheaper
 - **The PUBLICITY COMMITTEE Needs to address safety**
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- **AAGT structure discussion** - leading toward a proposed bylaw change
 - Ansel noting that we have designated information or structure within the bylaws, but not for the structure of the org itself.
 - Conflating two different agenda items 1. Rodney's request for a strategic plan, long range plan with 2. This proposal to look at the structure of the organization. Clarify for ourselves what we do want to be doing in the future. Ansel put together questions that go with each of the items.
 - Pg. 6 – international or multinational structure, language issues, customs
 - Regional structures
 - Interest group structures
 - Communication
 - Other

- So first, can we have consensus around beginning a long range planning, strategic planning or futuring, thinking beyond today about how we move forward.
- Susan – I am experiencing that we are.
- Lee – we have questions we can't possibly answer today. We need a weekend or more time every couple of years to do a strategic plan
- Cathy – I think we need to have structures or processes in place to enable us to speak in depth at out these questions. There are so many things to be addressed, everything gets done at the top surface without much depth.
- Joe – Looking at us, as this international community that we have so named ourselves, that we are dedicated to bottom up and involvement of regions of various sections of the world and so on, we can't possibly do it from this level without the active involvement with the regions. We need a structure for participatory planning that fits our situations to incorporate ALL the regions. We've not scratched the surface. This will help us move beyond New York and English speaking.
- Cathy- or not – we don't know where this will take us, but you're speaking in favor of a process
- Sylvia – I had originally embraced the idea of being international, and I don't reject it now, but I do think what Charlie was saying, we don't have an American organization to advance gestalt therapy. I imagine our American membership will die away. I am speaking in terms of a strategic plan – I think we need to discuss more the international aspect. I don't think the Russians and Koreans and Americans should – I am worried about American membership.
- Dan – I agree to a planning process.
- Cathy – at some point we'll break into small groups and identify the questions to be asked among us to just begin to identify the questions we want to have addressed at some point in the near future. We'll then report back to the whole.
- Ansel – this has to be a long term process.
- Charlie – I don't think we need to do that here – it seems like that would be an excellent thing to do at the community meeting at the conference – unless there is some prep work we can do now.
- Lee – we've been together for 20 years – the starting question is the vision of the org – does the vision still support our needs given who we are and where we need to go?
- Joe – is there a vision statement?
- All – yes – in constitution.
- Nancy – Sometimes the words and language scares people a little bit. The word framework is coming back to me – when you build a framework you can add and subtract and modify. Let's not forget that this is a volunteer organization.
- Bud – I'm very grateful to Ansel for doing this work. I don't see a face value in dividing into groups and talking about these questions. I see a lot more value in developing a structure for our strategic planning rather than nibbling at these things today. I am in favor of strategic planning.
- Anyone against future planning?
- Charlie – a process we had in place previously – was the philosophy and purpose interest groups –
- Cathy – do we try to develop that structure now or do we break into small groups now to id questions?
- Ansel – we'll get more done in small groups.
- Bud – one of the small groups be on structure.
- Burt – please give us a time limit.
- Allen – can we float between groups?

- Group options – Vision, Structure, International or multinational, Regional Structure, Interest Group Structure, Biennial Conferences, Communications Structure, Other Structures.
- Vision – supporting the associates, one where the structure emerges and is not imposed and does this statement of purpose still apply? We ID'd things we wanted to add or specify. Educational function, teaching function, archival/library, AAGT as a hub/networking function, bring in people from other places, other ideas, research. AAGT has become an *organization* and the vision statement does not reflect this. That we provide a forum is what the vision statement says right now, but are we more than just putting on a conference every two years? And we had an idea of expansion and two ways to achieve this – at the conference and in the newsletter to get ideas of what people need. AAGT doing more of this linking. Not everyone in the group was in favor of this expansion. A group member liked the vision statement as it is, the flow and the invitation to improvise. The visioning process. Spirals and spirals of people involved in the process of envisioning AAGT. Thomas Jefferson said, “every 20 years, rethink the vision.” The world changes, it's a new generation. There is a lot of energy for rethinking a lot of these things. Be permanent revolutionaries.
- Structure for planning process: President's task force on future planning – chair – president – board members, rcg's, interested members. Immediate goal : prepare membership inclusion experiment at Puebla community meeting (with geographic diversity). This is just the most immediate function. Other functions include talking about how the conference will be prepared etc. Start now – a year of work. Take a look at our planning process and come up with a way to involve membership at the community meeting. Use the results of the experiment to feedback to the organization info about what we can do change the structure of our planning process. Feedback loop about the structure of our planning. Reviewing bylaws, constitution, process now as a starting point for the creation of an experiment. The taskforce would be inclusive of the vision as it is and then the change would be imminent. Is it appropriate anymore, how can it be changed, how does it need to be change? Give everyone a chance to really look at what has been presented. Let's acknowledge that the structure has been and is and has emerged for 20 years. “Task force for...” vs “President's Task for....” Pros and cons for both. This can be a support for the president – supporting Cathy.
- International – the initial part was centered on our groups concerns about the US gestalt therapy community and keeping that strong and feeling there was strength outside. If we just went with the flow, we might find more conferences outside the us and more action outside. The concern about the delusion of gestalt therapy in non-recognizable forms. Do we and can we agree on a current definition of what is essential to gestalt therapy? What is Gestalt therapy and how can we tell? Should there be some stipulated number of conferences that have to be English speaking and in North America. Identified a fear that we're losing gestalt therapy here in the US. Regarding the definition of gestalt therapy, why do we have to explore it now? We are of a size where there are many things we know about each other's philosophy and practice that does not necessarily have to be defined. When an org grows to a certain things that have to be defined. We are size that give or take we all understand what is gestalt therapy. What is one interest is what AAGT does in terms of organizationally how do we apply/live our principles organizationally? Concern exists about the demographics of the membership. We really brainstormed – anything that is said here is brainstorming. Is there a danger in holding on to things because they work? How can we grow with whatever is happening. Clinical programs in the US do not emphasize gestalt therapy.
- Bi-annual conference – questions that came up – is the 2 year prep time realistic – yes we agree it is. How do we utilize the spontaneity from the meetings? How to be inclusive so that members of our community can participate in decision making. The required ground that is required in order to

have a conference in their area. Keeping us members interested. Other question about 2014 – how are we going to plan the process of identifying sites? What are we going to do about 2014? What we came up with as a possible suggestion is that it would be okay to have 2 years if the ground work were already done. The concern is the ground work is done and people can start right away. Can proposals be vetted before the conference? What came to the big meeting are proposals that are already vetted and approved by a particular committee. A committee of people involved in conferences beforehand to serve as mentors and advisors to the next committee for the conference.

- Regional structure group – most of our questions were addressed by the regional development fund group. The regions are emerging structures of AAGT, we see the regions are where the members live and breathe all the time. The regions exists already and emergent as the needs of our members come and go. We already have an RCP reporting to the board and taking the board conversations back to the board. And the RCP meet regularly and communicate over GoogleGroups. The RCPs have their own identity. Our activities know about their region and other regions. So all of the questions being asked of the organization at the mega level are already functioning on the ground level – emerging. Regions have their own identities. The regions in the US are the oldest, part of the support for the gestalt therapy and the principles are being maintained by the regions.
- **Membership Notification** proposal – remove the requirement to snail mail members. APPROVED
- **Membership Report** – New brochure has been created and is available via PDF on the AAGT website. Looks wonderful. Next piece, where do the new members fit in? Proposing the brochure is translated for the conference. Maryanne and Nancy will be working on welcoming new members to the conference and the organization. We'll need volunteers. Proposal for “ambassadors” within the attendees to support new people. Considering the possibility of this given the expected numbers – take back to the CPC. A Call between conveners and members before Sundays CPC call. Thank you for the wonderful brochure.
- **Election** of Organizational Members' Representative – Marlene Moss Blumenthal, Anna Bacik
- **Selection** of Regional Contact Person Representative – This was done previous to AGM.
- **Appointment** of a Communications Officer – Brian Mistler as Chief, Charlie Bowman as Assistant.
- **Regional Development Fund** – ratification –
 - Model of how to approach a proposal.
 - Next step is to assign a chair and a committee
 - APPROVED
 - Group Hug
- **Research Task Force Fund** - review of proposal and action –
 - Question and concern about the members ability to specify where their contributions go. Would this leave us strapped for operating capital if people could specify their funds. It would function like the scholarship fund, etc. That is how this is imagined, but not clear. Contributions from membership, additional to membership fee, dedicated fund. Restricted funds might need a separate bank account. Extra language to clarify this is needed. This proposal is almost to create a separate entity with its own conference and own research process – do we have the money for that? The proposal is micro managing what the task force does and should the AGM be asked to decide this? It's a long commitment to approve the research task force and the gestalt international study center. What affiliation do they actually have with AAGT? I would prefer their research conference be folded into regular AAGT conference. These are things the members already agreed to. We could not go forward with the 3rd proposal. Those proposing it could come up with a different proposal. It looks like part of the design of the task force is to be able to accept grant money for research – there are some concerns about this because whoever is accepting those funds is beholden to the funders.

This is a great liability for AAGT. Cathy suggests that we say to the committee that we would like to follow the same process that the RDF followed. This goes out to the full membership. And then alter the proposal about. Advocacy for the people who promoted this proposal and have done a lot of research and made tremendous efforts to prepare this proposal. This means committing to grants and research funds etc. There is a culture with many gestalt therapists to avoid research. We must pursue research in order to remain relevant. What's the structure of chair/co-chairpersonship? It would need to be in the bylaws. The scholarship chairpersonship has to be a board person, so we are proposing the research fund is chaired by a board member. Need greater clarification of the structure of the committee and its accountability to the board and the organization, distinct from Phil's current role and participation. Lots of support. Grant money can be substantial, with lots of ties to how it is used. Treasurer would be put in a role of tremendous responsibility and funds could not be co-mingled. Any money would need to have a clear structured for monitoring and maintaining all money. For this reason the chair should be on the board. There is a lot of research already going on with a large group of people associated with AAGT. Proposal – Gifts above donations would be above membership dues and dedicated to the fund and the grant monies would have to be in separate fund, not administered by treasurer. chair sit on the board, 3 year term. Research funds not be handled by AAGT treasurer. A system of accountability, including reporting. The board would appoint the chair of the committee. Some discussion about how grant money, politics and concerns about where money comes from. Some concerns about bias, how to manage bias and developing a system to address where grant money might come from and what political position or otherwise it might be tied to. This brings us to ethics and ethics of the research, ethics statement that we could connect with as an organization. Ask the committee to address this matter. Need to be clear about reporting to the board in terms of what *has* been done versus what is being *proposed* to be done. The criteria that there is a board representative are considered to be of primary importance. The questions and concerns will go to the committee to be addressed and brought back to the board. Approved with modifications and request for further modifications from this committee. A line for making contributions to the research task force has been added to the membership form and the conference registration form.

- **Attending to the Community Process** – discussions
 - Nomination process – currently at biannual conference. We have in the bylaws where the vp is responsible to develop a nominating committee. They may approach people or put out a call. It can be a lengthy process. We need to ask if we want to do it differently. For Gail, it was the process of being at the conference that allowed her to feel supported in stepping forward when nominated. So there is something of value of the spontaneity of the conference. But in addition to have questions in place for a ground of support. Gail shared her experience and awareness of vulnerability about how she experienced her nomination and the public conflict on the listserv with Dan. Recommended that we rely more on a nominating committee prior to the conference, not denying people to come forward from the floor, but more ground work in advance of the conference. Recommended a small committee to deal with how the election process unfolds. Judy will chair this committee! What are we asking Judy to chair? We were in a democratic situation. We struggle to stay with consensus to conclusion and we end up calling a vote. How do we get the information out to the members about who is being nominated – and their qualifications?
 - General discussion about being hurt within, by the organization or members of.
- **Involvement** of Membership in Board Discussion and Decisions
- **Lists** - member list, listserv, distribution

- **AAGT Board Google Group**
- **AAGT RCP Google Group**
- **AAGT Icors Membership Discussion List (Opt In Only)**
- **MailChimp AAGT Members Announce Only List (Opt Out Only)**
- **MailChimp AAGT General Mailing List Announce Only (Opt In Only)**
- **MailChimp 2010 Conference Attendees Announce Only**
- **MailChimp 2012 Conference Attendess Announce Only (all registrants automatically added)**
- **Welcoming** Gail Feinstein as vice president
- **Saying thank you** to Dan Bloom, who leaves the board, but not AAGT!

Regional Development Fund Task Force

The Regional Development Fund Task Force received a mandate from the second AAGT Community Meeting of the June 2010 biennial conference to make recommendations to the board for implementation of the **AAGT Regional Development Fund (RDF)**. The board and task force would present a proposal for consideration at the Annual General Membership Meeting.

The Task Force is chaired by Dan Bloom, vice president, and Gail Feinstein, president-elect. Members are Brad Larsen, Nancy Woldt, Deirdre Winter, Kerry Shipman, Anne Leibig, and Maryanne Nicholls. Cathy Gray, president, is ex officio.

Members communicated on a Google group and Google docs.

A call for membership of the Task Force was placed in the AAGT Newsletter and on the Members List.

Notice of the details of the RDF, and subsequently, of the questions being considered by the Task Force were also published in the newsletter and on the list. The RCPs discussed the RDF and were also given a survey for the members in their region. The survey solicits opinions about the RDF and the needs of the members for such a fund. We are still collecting surveys

Accordingly, the Task Force believes the membership has had sufficient notice of the RDF and an opportunity to discuss it.

This is our proposal and the concerns that each aspect of the proposal addresses. The proposal includes items that are open for recommendation by the board, the task force - and, of course, ultimately, the membership.

The AAGT Regional Development Fund

Purpose of the **Regional Development Fund (RDF)**:

- The existing regions of AAGT have become increasingly vital to the functioning of AAGT. Regional activities are increasing. From time to time, Regional Contact Persons asked the board for loans as "seed money" to support their own regional conferences. These requests were granted, but the board has been concerned that a precedent not be established.
- AAGT recognizes a need to concretely support these regions in their activities. Such recognition would be a visible gesture of the membership of how the organization is involved in developing gestalt therapy among its membership everywhere on an ongoing basis.
- To this end, it is proposed that:

1. The Regional Development Fund (RDF) be established to offer financial assistance to existing regions as defined by the Constitution and By-laws.
2. The RDF may be funded from:
 - a. Donations from regional activities;
 - b. Donations from the membership of AAGT;
 - c. As a voluntary addition contribution at conference registration;
 - d. Donors-at-large;
 - e. And in any and all other ways as the organization deems appropriate.
3. The funds collected by the Regional Development Fund shall be maintained by the treasurer of AAGT;
4. A Regional Development Fund committee will be established to consider applications from the regions for grants or loans from this fund specifically ear-marked for regional development. (see "Responsibilities and Activities of RDF Committee", below.)
5. This committee is to be representative of the organization. It shall include an Organizational Member Representative, Regional Contact Person, the Treasurer, a member of AAGT, and the Regional Contact Representative to the Board. Two additional members may be included should they volunteer.
6. Responsibilities and Activities of the Committee:
 - a. The committee shall prepare a RDF proposal application form.
 - i. The form will assist the applicant region in describing the purpose for which the requested funds will be used.
 - ii. The form shall specify the relevance of the grant or loan's use in the applicant region. Such funds may be used for regional conferences, regional fund raising activities and publicity, regional meeting expenses, invited speakers, translations of gestalt therapy literature, and other such purposes.
 - b. Funds are not for the use of individual members, but for local, regional, AAGT activities pursuant to the mission of AAGT as stated in the Constitution and By-laws, namely to further the advancement of gestalt therapy and the association of the membership of AAGT.
 - c. The committee must be assured of sufficient accountability for the funds disbursed.
 - d. The committee shall determine the amount of each disbursement.
 - e. The transactions will be in US Dollars. The good of the fund shall be considered in making all grants or loans.
 - f. The committee shall send complete documentation of the application process to the treasurer, who will disperse the funds to the applicant region
7. The treasurer shall review the activities of the fund and make regular reports to the board.
8. All activities of the fund shall be transparent to the membership and appear in the Newsletter and on the Members List.

Conference Selection Process - a proposal

- Proposals for future biennial conferences could be entertained as early as the AGM preceding each biennial conference (that would be this June).
- Proposals should include the naming of the Conveners, the city in which the conference is to be held, site options in that city, date options, and other basic details to possibly be considered so that members get a feel for what is possible.
- The city, conveners and date should be set prior to the upcoming biennial conference (in this case, Puebla), with 'Save the Date' postcards printed (as was done for the Manchester conference, and distributed at the Vancouver conference).
- A meeting should be scheduled at the Puebla conference between the conveners of the Puebla conference and the conveners of the 2014 conference.

Appointment of Communications Officer(s): 3 year term; Originally Appointed in 1993 [Next appointments are due in 2011, 2014, etc.]

Election of OM (Organizational Members') Representative(s): 1 year term; Originally Elected in 2004 [Next election is due annually: 2011, 2012, etc.]

Selection of RCP (Regional Contact Persons') Representative(s): 1 year term; Selected annually by and from amongst fellow RCPs. [Next selection is due annually: 2011, 2012, etc.]

AAGT Structure Discussion

While **Article V** is designated, "**Organizational Structure and Governance**," this Section only defines the organizational structure for governance of AAGT, **not the organizational structure of AAGT in general.**

The figure of interest that emerges from this, is that we need to create a new **Section I of Article V** on the **Overall Structure of AAGT** that includes, minimally, the role, function, purpose and definition of the various structures that are AAGT, such as,

- What does it mean that we are an International Community when the "guts" of our organization is based in the USA and that all business is conducted in the English language?
- What is an AAGT Region and how do they fit into our organizational structure, including governance, responsibilities, financial relationships, liabilities, etc.
- What are AAGT's Interest Groups and how do they fit into our organizational structure?
- What are AAGT's Biennial Conferences and how do they fit, financially, and, etc.?

Research Fund: A Proposal from the Research Task Force for the 2011 AGM

History of this proposal:

First Proposal (going into the Madrid AGM):

That the AAGT-AIC form a task force to explore the issues and implications inherent in actively promoting research focused on gestalt therapy, including the application of gestalt therapy principles in organizational development, coaching, and training practices. Proposed that Phil Brownell and a suitable co-chair lead this task force. This task force would make report to the board so that discussion could be conducted at the AGM in Madrid; it would produce a formal proposal for discussion in Madrid with a view to decision making at the Philadelphia 2010 conference. Possible co-chairs might likely come from the INGIG special interest group, but not be limited to them; there are quite a number of people expressing active interest in research, and they can be seen at the social networking site for gestalt research (www.gestaltresearch.ning.com). All this would be a logical extension of the interest displayed in research at the Manchester conference, and it would be a natural follow up to

that interest. In addition, the idea of promoting research, and encouraging and offering reasonable support for people interested in research, fits with our mission, because these people advance gestalt therapy through their associating and collaborating, to say nothing of the very practical advantages to any actual research that is produced.

We did this and the AGM in Madrid authorized us to present a proposal for the 2010 AGM, so that there could be a vote on these initiatives.

Second Proposal (going into the Philadelphia AGM):

Proposal to the Association for the Advancement of Gestalt Therapy (AAGT) From the AAGT Research Task Force

Background to proposal:

At the 2009 annual meeting of the AAGT, Christine Stevens and Philip Brownell became co-chairs of the Research Task Force for the AAGT and began consulting with established researchers. In May of 2009 the research task force identified five possible ways for the AAGT to support research involving gestalt therapy:

- Start a collaborative research project.
- Create a team of research-oriented trainers to help existing training institutes augment their programs with regard to research.
- Collaborate with existing research projects at university laboratories.
- Create a research resource "barrel" where gestalt researchers might use tests, scales, designs, and tools for data assessment.
- Hold periodic conferences focused on research. In March 2010 the Research Task Force considered the first tangible step in actualizing support for research and produced the following proposal for vote at the 2010 AGM of the AAGT.

Formal Proposal Presented to the AAGT in Philadelphia: That the AAGT actively support the generation of research focused on gestalt therapy so as to contribute to the research evidence for the practice of gestalt therapy. In order to accomplish that general purpose, we propose

- A. that the AAGT establish a Research Support Fund, to which members might contribute, but also into which grant money might be deposited, and which would be administered by the Co-chairs of the Research Task Force in consultation with both the Research Task Force and the Board of the AAGT. In addition, we propose
- B. to create an international conference on research to be held at a suitable venue in 2012 or 2013. Also, in order to get actual research going, we propose
- C. that the AAGT Task Force be empowered to initiate specific research with short and long-term projects as follows and to see to their publication in reviewed journals:
 - a. A series of studies utilizing the single-case research design that is accepted by Division 12 (The Society for Clinical Psychology) of the American Psychological Association as being a "logical equivalent" to random, controlled treatments (Chambless and Holon, 1998). These kinds of studies also qualify as practice-based evidence and allow individual gestalt therapists to generate data in keeping with the way gestalt therapy is actually practiced. Three clusters of 3 or 4 therapists each are envisioned in this design, with each cluster operating independently of the others while still centrally coordinated. There may be more clusters to join the effort after we get going, but this would be a minimum. In this each therapist would contribute 3 or 4 single-case studies. This would yield between 27 and 36 single-case studies (at least), and the data would then be analyzed and written up. This number is considered significant by any standard of experimental psychology. Thus, a cluster of therapists would be working in the UK, another in the

USA, and another through interested colleagues in Russia (and there may be another forming in France). Publication would be targeted at APA journals.

- b. A series of studies utilizing qualitative designs similar to those described in-depth in a recent book by Linda Finlay and Ken Evans (*Relational-centered Research for Psychotherapists*, 2009, Wiley-Blackwell); it is a "relational centered" approach to qualitative research that might be particularly attractive to gestalt therapists.
- c. A series of studies utilizing quantitative designs, which would likely require the development of partnerships between clinics and universities.
- d. A series of mixed methods research studies to include "case studies" that blend features from both 1 and 2 above and other mixed-methods models that utilize both qualitative and quantitative approaches.

Addendum to the original proposal:

The AAGT Research Task Force, in consultation with the Gestalt International Study Center, recommends that we accept the offer of GISC to host the Research Conference at GISC at a suitable time in 2013. Therefore, the original proposal should be amended to reflect this detail. Submitted for consideration by Phil on behalf of Christine and the rest of the AAGT's Research Task Force.

Current Proposal:

Third Proposal, Going into the 2011 AGM to be held in New York, June, 2011.

The AAGT ratified all points in the proposal presented in 2010 except the creation of the research fund. There was not enough time to attend to that. Therefore, we propose the following:

- A. that the AAGT establish a Research Support Fund, to which members might contribute, but also into which grant money might be deposited, and which would be administered by the Co-chairs of the Research Task Force in consultation with both the Research Task Force and the Board of the AAGT. In addition, we propose
- B. that all previous points continue to be supported (creation of research and creation of research conference), and that
- C. Philip Brownell and an appropriate co-chair continue in leadership of the Research Task Force

Changes to Bylaws Article V to have ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE addressed separately from GOVERNANCE

The Bylaws currently read:

ARTICLE V: Organizational Structure and Governance

Section 1. Board of Directors . . .

- A. Composition of the Board of Directors
 1. The Executive Council (Association Officers)
 2. Additional Members of the Board of Directors
- B. Election Procedures
- C. Terms of Office
 1. Executive Council : . . .President . . .Vice President/Past-President . . . Vice President/President-Elect . . . Secretary . . . Treasurer . . . Continuing Education Officer . . .

2. Additional Board Members . . . Associate Continuing Education Officer . . . Interest Groups' Coordinator . . . Membership Chairperson . . . Communications Officers . Association Archivist . . .OM Representative. . RCP Representative . . . ExOfficio Board Members

- D. Board Quorum
- E. Manner of Acting as a Board and AAGT Decision-Making Process
- F. Official Board Minutes
- G. Board Vacancies

Section 2. Executive Council

- A. President
- B. Vice President Elect and Vice/Past President
- C. Secretary
- D. Treasurer
- E. Continuing Education Officer

Section 3. Additional Members of the Board of Directors and their Duties

- A. Communications Officer(s)
- B. Membership Chairperson(s)
- C. Association Archivist
- D. Organization Members' (OM) Representative(s)
- E. Regional Contact Persons' (RCP) Representative(s)
- F. Interest Groups' Coordinator(s)
- G. Scholarship Officer(s)

It is hereby moved that Article V be re-written in the following order so that the ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE is addressed separately from GOVERNANCE. As such, the outline might appear as follows, thus necessitating input and discussion of these various items and writing the proposed By-Laws' changes for approval at AAGT's 2012 annual general meeting:

ARTICLE V: Organizational Structure and Governance

Section 1. Organizational Structure

A. AAGT's International or Multi-National Structure

What does it mean that we are an International Community? Considering that the "guts" of our organization is based in the USA and that all business is conducted in the English language, what does this mean? While this has been discussed at length in various settings, a clear definition appears to be in order here.

B. AAGT's Regional Structure

What is an AAGT Region? What are the geographical limits or size of a region or how is that determined? To what extent does geography determine a region? How does a region come into existence? How and when is a region recognized as part and parcel of AAGT? How do regions fit into AAGT's overall organizational structure? What expectations does AAGT have with regard to regional relationships with AAGT central? What are AAGT's expectations or mandates regarding regional governance? What are AAGT regions' financial relationships with AAGT central? When a regional program or event is advertised or marketed under the auspices of being an AAGT event for any reason (e.g. continuing education credit, our approach to governance, decision making by consensus), who is liable or responsible for our reputation? Who responds to complaints or accepts responsibility? For what might AAGT Central be responsible?

C. AAGT's Interest Group Structure

What is the history of interest groups in the formation of AAGT and how have they functioned in the past? What is the meaning of "interest" and "group" in AAGT's concept of Interest Groups? How do they function in relation to AAGT's governance, decision making and creation of conferences and programs? Would it be wise to have our interest groups be time-limited or evidence-based in order to continue their existence? Would Interest Groups be more viable if each group's leader was a Board Member or seen as a more active contributor to the organization? When AAGT was founded, the chair of each I.G. was included on the Board to represent that particular interest.

D. AAGT's Biennial Conferences

What is an AAGT Biennial Conference? How do our large conferences fit with the overall organization in terms of governance, leadership, financial responsibilities, etc.?

E. AAGT's Communications' Structures

In what ways is AAGT structured to communicate with members? In what ways are we structured to communicate with the larger gestalt community? How does our communications' system fit with our other internal structures, i.e., regions, interest groups, etc. If we continue to claim to be an international or multi-national community, what responsibilities do we take for communicating in languages other than English?

F. Other AAGT Structures

What, if any, other association structures should be defined or explained?

Section 2. Governance

A. Board of Directors

1. Composition of the Board of Directors
 - a. The Executive Council (Association Officers)
 - b. Additional Members of the Board of Directors
2. Election Procedures
3. Terms of Office
 - a. Executive Council
 - i. President
 - ii. Vice President/Past-President
 - iii. Vice President /President-Elect
 - iv. Secretary
 - v. Treasurer

- vi. Continuing Education Officer
- b. Additional Board Members
 - i. Associate Officers, if any, e.g. C.E. Officer, Treasurer, etc.
 - ii. Interest Groups' Coordinator
 - iii. Membership Chairperson(s)
 - iv. Communications Officers
 - v. Association Archivist
 - vi. OM Representative(s)
 - vii. RCP Representative(s)
 - viii. Ex-Officio Board Members
- 4. Board Quorum
- 5. Manner of Acting as a Board and AAGT's Decision-Making Process
- 6. Official Board Minutes
- 7. Board Vacancies

Section 3. Executive Council

- A. President
- B. Vice President Elect and Vice/Past President
- C. Secretary
- D. Treasurer
- E. Continuing Education Officer

Section 4. Additional Members of the Board of Directors and their Duties

- A. Communications Officer(s)
- B. Membership Chairperson(s)
- C. Association Archivist
- D. Organization Members' (OM) Representative(s)
- E. Regional Contact Persons' (RCP) Representative(s)
- F. Interest Groups' Coordinator(s)
- G. Scholarship Officer(s)

Membership Notification

The membership acknowledges that previous notices of Annual General Membership meeting agendas may have been sent to the membership without technical compliance with the by-laws, although the notices were always received by the membership with proper adequate prior notice, as required. The membership agrees that decisions made the Annual General Membership meetings were proper and valid.