

SoCal CoDA Ad Hoc Committee to Explore Alternative Conference Formats
Christine's Summary Notes* (*not meeting minutes; not official or approved by the committee)

First meeting: 8/21/2017 8pm (conference call); # of attendees: 7

Concerns

1. Cost of hotel to attendees & lack of inclusive feeling for those who opt out of staying on-site
2. Cost of food options to attendees & lack of inclusive feeling for those who opt out of conference meals
 - a. Note: some hotels have asked non-meal-purchasing people to sit to the side and/or don't allow outside food be brought in)
 - b. Note: some hotel locations haven't had nearby alternatives for food purchases
3. Complexity of and risk of 'penalty' costs associated with hotel contracts (eg # of sleeping rooms or food/beverage purchase minimums)
 - a. Note: the cost of conference facilities is waived if a minimum # of sleeping rooms and food/beverage purchases are met; if minimums aren't met, then SoCal is 'on the hook' to pay fees as agreed on in the negotiated contract
 - b. Note: conference planning volunteers may not be experienced in negotiating hotel contracts

Other concerns – not specific to format

1. Accessibility of conference (eg public transit option?)
2. Openness of planning committee meetings to the general fellowship
3. More Spanish language offerings (eg translator for business meeting, both English and Spanish speakers as well as workshops)
4. Timely notification to community regarding conference offerings/plans

Alternatives

1. Start conference planning at least 2 years out to allow for planning committee to secure a hotel at a low rate for attendees and that offers low-risk contract terms
2. 2 or 3 day conference at church or community center, adjacent to affordable accommodations
3. 2 or 3 day conference at church or community center, with nearby affordable accommodations available; attendees make own accommodation arrangement SP
4. 1 day conference at church or community center SD LA
 - a. Note: NorCal currently holds 4 one-day conferences each year, each in different community
5. Committee self-caters meals SD SP LA
 - a. Pre-made items (eg lasagna, sandwiches) SD LA
 - b. Organize pot-luck/volunteer provided meals
6. Hold conference at retreat center or camp (ie with cabins and food service) LA

Other suggestions – not specific to format

1. Live streaming for those who can't attend in person
 - a. Note: all speakers and workshops are recorded and can be purchased; perhaps could emphasize that more in conf info

Other Questions (either out of time to answer or will need to look into)

1. Prior conference finance info?
 - a. What was the final accounting (expenses/income) of prior conferences? Can we get copies of prior year's final conference financial statements?
 - b. What factors contribute recent high hotel costs?
 - c. How much were room rates in prior years? (Christine to provide list of recent room rates)

Action Items

1. One page summary sheet of different formats, pros, cons, costs, etc; distribute to committee members prior to next meeting:
 - a. retreat model (Lesley)
 - b. multi-day church conference (Rosa)
 - c. traditional 3 day hotel model (Darlene & Bryna)
 - d. 1 day conference, 4x/year (Christine)

Next Meeting: 8pm Monday, Sept 25, 2017

Call dial-in number: (563) 999-1002; then enter access code: 439830 followed by #