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The future of ASAE-GWSAE is...

The 4 boards of the groups involved in the ASAE-GWSAE proposed merger approved the plan, paving the way for the final stage, a vote by the GWSAE members.

The proposal has not changed much from the original plan to consolidate in January. The education arm and the foundation of the American Society of Assn Executives will merge with the Center for Assn Leadership. The Greater Washington Society of Assn Executives must vote to dissolve, and turn its assets over to the Center.

A communication was sent May 26 to the voting members of GWSAE, informing them of the boards' approval and that a vote to dissolve the assn will come June 30. By law, GWSAE has to give at least a 30-day notice of such a vote. The vote will take place at an in-person meeting at the Reagan Building in Washington, where GWSAE and the Center have offices. A packet of information, including absentee ballot information, will be sent out June 7. Independent firm Survey and Ballots Systems will tabulate the vote, and results will be made public at 7:30pm June 30.

To date, a minimum 165, or 10% of the 1,650 eligible voters – assn professionals – needs to cast votes, though the number of eligible voters changes daily. Two-thirds of those who voted must vote for dissolution in order for the proposal to pass. About half of GWSAE's voting members are also ASAE members. Current GWSAE members will be grandfathered into ASAE, if merger is approved.

ASAE members do not have to vote on the merger plan. However, proposed changes to the ASAE board as a result of the merger would have to be approved by ASAE members, as a change to the assn's bylaws. All members of ASAE are voting members.

\$33.1-million budget

Under the proposal, ASAE's combined budget will be \$33.1-million in FY04-05. ASAE expects that there will be 131 full-

time positions in the consolidated staff. ASAE CEO John Graham IV said there will be minimum RIF, as well as new positions. Also, the plan is to carry some duplicate products, such as the organizations' competing magazines, for at least a year. The cost to merge is projected to be about 3% of the budget, which includes introducing a new branded look within 6 months of merger.

"GWSAEnetwork" recently was announced, in which the Center will maintain the Washington assn community through networking opportunities, a directory and other services for at least 2 years following merger. All ASAE members in the Washington area are eligible for such products and events. Graham hopes GWSAEnetwork will become a model for other assn hubs in the country.