

NDBC Bylaws Review 2019-2020
Proposed Substantive Change Summary
3/10/20

Review Committee:

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Note: Editorial changes/corrections which do NOT affect function, operation or responsibility are not outlined herein.

1) Frequency of Bylaws review: Article I, Section B, Paragraph 4

Currently: The Bylaws currently require the Moderator to appoint an ad hoc committee to re-examine the Bylaws, beginning in 2015, and every 5 years thereafter, for any necessary changes or updates. This review is very time-consuming, even if no changes are required, which is common.

Proposed: The proposed language would change review timing to “from time to time,” at the discretion of the Moderator, based on input from the Church Council and membership. Creation of an ad hoc Review committee when needed, and the review and approval processes for any proposed changes by the Church-in-Conference continue unchanged.

2) Permitted Participation of Associate church members on Ministry Teams and Committees: Article II, Section C, Paragraph 4

Currently: Associate members may not serve on Ministry Teams or church committees, vote on congregational matters, or serve as a church officer (Moderator, Treasurer, Trustee, or Church Clerk). We have had several scenarios where Associate members are a valuable contributor to a committee and work of the church, and are not officially acknowledged for this, or formally allowed to hold positions of leadership.

Proposed: Associate members would be allowed to serve on Ministry Teams and/or church committees, including as Chair or Co-Chair, and may vote as representatives of such in Church Council decision-making. Associate members may not serve as a church officer (Moderator, Treasurer, Trustee, or Church Clerk) as at present.

3) Term of Office for Church Officers: Article III, Section B, Paragraph 1

Currently: Term of office for church officers is 1 year except for the Moderator, who serves a 2-year term. Church officers other than the Moderator may serve successive terms.

Proposed: Added language to specify length of term for a Trustee, which is 6 years.

4) Composition of the Nominating Committee: Article IV, Section B, Paragraph 5(e)

Currently: Nominating Committee composition for Children & Youth Ministry Team(s) is only one (1) member on the Nominating Committee. There is no consideration for separate multiple representation if/when the Children & Youth Ministry Team becomes two (2) teams again.

Proposed: Language is added to specify additional representation (1 representative for each) and equal voting rights on the Nominating Committee for both Children & Youth Ministry Teams should they become separate Ministry Teams again.

5) Term Limits for Nominating Committee members: Article IV, Section B, Paragraph 5(g)

Currently: The term limit for Nominating Committee members is currently 1 year for a member; except for the Vice-Chair, who may serve a 2nd year as Chair (resulting in a 2-year total max on Nominating Committee). Positions on this committee become harder each year to fill due to fewer members willing to serve.

Proposed: Members may serve on the Nominating Committee for up to 3 successive 1-year terms. The Chair is still limited to a 1-year term as Chair but may serve up to 3 years total (2 years as a non-Chair). The intent is to preserve the experience and insight of the Chair and other members of the committee.

6) Identification of Ministry Teams, Church Council representation of the Children & Youth Team(s) if/when separated & designation of sub-groups of Ministry Teams: Article IV, Section C, Paragraphs 1, 2 & 3

Currently: The current provisions of Paragraph 1 are not adequate for the following reasons:

(a) Listing of current approved Ministry Teams is not up-to-date.

(b) There is no language to address representation and decision-making changes necessary should the currently consolidated Children & Youth Ministry Team be separated when these 2 groups are again large enough to require separate planning, budget needs and decision-making representation.

(c) Identification of sub-groups serving Ministry Teams is not complete.

Proposed: The proposed revisions accomplish the following:

(a) Revised Paragraph 1 provides an updated list of currently approved Ministry Teams (Children & Youth Ministry Team consolidated).

(b) New Paragraph 2 adds language to specify representation and voting rights for Church Council of both Children and Youth Ministry teams should they become separate Ministry Teams again.

(c) New Paragraph 3 identifies sub-groups associated with the Worship & Music Ministry Team (Audio, Flowers, Handbell Choir, Paraments, Sanctuary Choir, Ushers, & Wedding) and the Hospitality Ministry Team (Care Ministry)

7) Guidelines for Conducting Church Business via Electronic Communication & Voting:
Article IV, Section E (New)

Currently: Bylaws have no guideline for either process, or recording of electronic “discussion” or voting within Ministry teams, or of the Church Council.

Proposed: Church Council, church committees, and Ministry Teams are permitted to conduct communication and voting, in accordance with all other provisions of the Bylaws. The results of all such activity must be reviewed, and included in the next Church Council meeting, by either the Moderator (for Church Council activity), or the Chair/Vice-Chair of a committee or team using electronic discussion and voting.

The existing requirement for all Church-in-Conference voting activity continues to be “conducted in-person, on church premises”, without change.

8) Senior Pastor Search Committee Creation: Article V, Section B, Paragraphs 3, 4 & 5

Currently: Creation of the Senior Pastor Search Committee leans heavily on full participation by all current Ministry Teams and church committees to create and propose an initial Search Committee ballot with three (3) candidates for each Ministry Team or committee. This process is viewed as increasingly difficult to achieve (more and more difficult to find 3 candidates for each Ministry Team or committee to serve on the Search Committee), drawn out (time wise), and does not allow for direct membership nomination (or “from the floor”) of Search Committee candidates.

Proposed: The proposed process would utilize the Moderator, Chair of the Diaconate, Chair of Finance, and Chair of Personnel to create a proposed Search Committee ballot, with one (1) representative candidate proposed on the ballot for each existing Ministry Team and committee (8 total). A called Church-in-Conference (CIC) would then be scheduled 30 days out, and the proposed ballot distributed to members. At the called CIC, nominations from the floor are permitted for any of the 8 Search Committee positions. If there are no nominations from the floor, the ballot is voted up/down in total. If there are nominations from the floor for any of the 8 positions on the ballot, a secret ballot would be held at that time for each contested position.

As is currently the case, only active church members present at the CIC are eligible to vote.