

MINUTES

COMMISSION ON HANDBOOK St. Louis Crowne Plaza Airport Hotel July 7–8, 2011

1. Call to Order/Opening Prayer

This first meeting of the newly constituted Commission on Handbook was called to order by the Secretary of the Synod, who provided an opening prayer. All members of the commission were present, as follows:

Albert Marcis (voting individual member)
Walter Rosin (voting individual member)
Marvin Temme (voting individual member)
Richard Nuffer (voting attorney member)
Gordon Tresch (voting attorney member)
Raymond Hartwig (advisory member, Secretary of the Synod)
Ronald Schultz (advisory member, Chief Administrative Officer of the Synod)
Wilbert Sohns (advisory member appointed by the Commission on Constitutional Matters)

2. Election of Officers

As a first order of business and as required by Bylaw 1.5.3.1, the commission elected its officers. The Secretary of the Synod called for nominations for the chairman position. After Gordon Tresch was nominated, a motion to close nominations was introduced and carried, and he was declared elected to serve as chairman of the Commission on Handbook. After discussion regarding the positions of vice-chairman, secretary, and secretary *pro tem* of the commission, a motion to elect Marvin Temme as vice-chairman, Raymond Hartwig as secretary, and Walter Rosin as secretary *pro tem* was introduced and carried unanimously.

A second motion was introduced to clarify the length of terms of these elections, since all voting members of the commission are serving concurrent six-year terms. The motion that the Commission on Handbook elect its leadership at its initial meeting after each convention was also carried without negative vote.

3. Meeting Agenda

Chairman Tresch led the commission in determining the agenda for this first meeting, including housekeeping matters, details regarding the functioning of the commission, specific issues that can already be addressed, and specific convention-related matters that will require more extensive attention. An agenda for the meeting emerged from these discussions.

4. Housekeeping Matters

A. Minutes: The commission discussed the Bylaw 1.5.3.5 requirement that it develop policies and procedures for making available official minutes of its meetings. After discussion of the content of the minutes to be provided, a motion was introduced and carried that the minutes of all Commission on Handbook meetings be posted in a timely fashion on the Synod's Website under the link to the Commission on Handbook.

B. Frequency of Meetings: The commission discussed the Bylaw 1.5.3 requirement that it meet at least quarterly and make its meeting plans public. After discussion of the manner in which the predecessor Commission on Structure functioned in this area, it was agreed that commission meeting dates will be posted in advance on the Synod's Website under the link to the Commission on Handbook. Discussion followed on possible dates for the commission's next quarterly meetings.

C. Initial Meeting Requirements: Chairman Tresch called attention to the Bylaw 3.2.4 (e) requirements for initial meetings of boards and commissions, noting in particular its requirement for an orientation program conducted under the direction of the President. Given the manner in which the commission is appointed, which cannot coincide with initial meetings of other boards and commissions, it was agreed that the bylaw's expectations are satisfied by the presence of the Secretary of the Synod to represent the President's interests and responsibilities.

D. Meeting Agendas: The chairman of the commission will work with the Secretary's Office to provide agendas in advance of meetings. Specific items of business will be assigned numbers for good order and easy reference. Writing and other assignments given by the chairman to members of the commission will be indicated on the agendas. Devotion responsibilities will be assigned by the chair on a rotating basis.

E. Travel Expense/Procedure/Policy: Chairman Tresch initiated a discussion of Synod policies governing the submission of travel expenses. Ron Schultz added input from the perspective of the Synod's accounting department regarding the submission of receipts, mileage information, etc. The Secretary's Office will provide updated electronic expense vouchers. He noted that his office will also be providing travel insurance enrollment information as needed and any other documents requiring commission members' signatures (conflict of interest statements, etc.).

F. Commission Role/Responsibilities: The commission reviewed its responsibilities as articulated in Bylaw 3.9.4.2, noting that it has a clearly defined role in the operations of the Synod (a) assisting convention floor committees with *Handbook* matters; (b) revising the *Handbook* after each Synod convention in consultation with the Commission on Constitutional matters; (c) maintaining a complete file of handbooks for research purposes; (d) carrying out specific assignments relating to the *Handbook* given to it by conventions; and (e) responding to requests from Synod agencies for new provisions in the *Handbook* to address issues that surface between conventions.

Discussion followed regarding document files that have recently been made available to others via flash drives provided by the Chief Administrative Officer's office. It was agreed that such flash drives should also be provided to the members of the Commission on Handbook, with updated flash drives provided on a regular basis to keep them current. The Secretary's Office will see to it that commission members receive such flash drives and will create a schedule for updating.

G. COH Website Content

The commission reviewed and discussed a draft provided by the secretary of suggested content for the commission's link on the Synod's Website. After discussion and editing, a motion was introduced and carried to accept the edited draft of the Website content [*Exhibit A* of these minutes] and to direct the secretary to see to its implementation.

5. Handbook Revisions (01.07.11[1])

The Secretary of the Synod called the commission's attention to a number of inaccuracies and/or omissions in the published version of the 2010 *Handbook*. The commission noted its responsibility "in

consultation with the Commission on Constitutional Matters...to revise the *Handbook* of the Synod immediately after each convention to bring it into harmony with the resolutions and changes adopted by the convention” (Bylaw 3.9.4.2 [b]). Since the following are not substantial changes but only bring the pertinent bylaws into harmony with 2010 convention actions, the following resolution was introduced and adopted:

Resolved, That the 2010 *Handbook* of the Synod be revised to incorporate the following changes after consultation with the Commission on Constitutional Matters:

- In Bylaw 2.12.1.4, correct the reference in line 4 to the “Office of National Mission” to read instead “Office of International Mission”
- In Bylaw 3.4.3.2, insert in line 1 after “Chief Mission Officer” the words adopted by amendment by the convention: “shall be a minister of religion—ordained and”
- In Bylaw 4.5.1 (c), correct the reference in line 3 to “Bylaws 3.3.5ff” to read instead “Bylaws 3.3.4ff”

These changes, after consultation with the Commission on Constitutional Matters and taking into consideration any input received, will be reflected in electronic versions of the *Handbook* on the Synod’s Website.

6. 2010 Resolutions 8-30B (02.07.11.[1]) and 8-32B (03.07.11[1])

The commission briefly noted the content of 2010 Resolutions 8-30B “To Study Article VI of Synod’s Constitution” and 8-32B “To Study Article VII of Synod’s Constitution” and its responsibility in both cases, “That following the study, the Commission on Handbook, in consultation and concurrences with the synod President, the Commission on Constitutional Matters, and the Council of Presidents, submit a proposal to clarify and affirm or amend” the articles in question to the next convention of the Synod. The secretary was asked to provide copies of both resolutions to the members of the commission.

Noting that its responsibilities await earlier synodwide studies of the subject matters, and given the passage of time with the 2013 convention now two years hence, the commission agreed that its chairman, in consultation with the secretary, write a letter to the President of the Synod expressing its willingness to assist however possible in meeting the expectations of the convention resolutions.

7. 2010 Omnibus Resolution re Overture 8-80 (04.07.11[1])

The commission reviewed 2010 Ov. 8-80 “To Amend Bylaws 7.1.1 and 7.1.2 re Amendments to Bylaws” submitted to the convention by the former Commission on Structure. It was agreed that reference should be made to the role of the Commission on Handbook in paragraph (c) of Bylaw 7.1.1, mirroring existing language already in Bylaw 3.9.4.2 (a). A draft of a proposed amendment to Bylaw 7.1.1 (c) will be prepared by a member of the commission for consideration at the next meeting.

8. 2010 Resolution 8-05B (05.07.11[1])

The commission reviewed 2010 Res. 8-05B “To Elect Delegates to the Synod Convention,” noting that this resolution was specifically referred to the Commission on Handbook by the convention and will require a response. After discussion, the secretary was asked to provide copies of the content pertaining to this issue from the Final Report of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance. Research material considered by the task force will also be provided by a member of the commission who served on the task force, with updates provided as possible.

9. Other Matters

During the course of the meeting, a number of other possible bylaw issues were surfaced and discussed:

- Issues regarding terminology used in the *Handbook* continue to surface and beg attention, e.g., the use of the words “agency” and “synodwide.” The secretary will correspond with the Commission on Constitutional Matters requesting a memo on how “agency” has been historically defined by the Synod.
- Issues may exist as a result of a convention action (Res. 8-02A “To Restore Circuits to Their Primary Purpose”) which removed visitation circuit numerical requirements for numbers of congregations and communicant members, the convention, however, not removing such numerical requirements for electoral circuits.
- Additional bylaw content will likely be required to address details associated with the new process for electing the President of the Synod.
- The index to the *Handbook*, prepared by Concordia Publishing House as a final step in its production, could be more user-friendly.

The commission also discussed overall plans for distribution and storing of materials associated with its work. Consideration will be given to an Internet share site. It was agreed that time will be provided at the next meeting for inservice training for use of flash drives and share sites.

10. Adjournment

With all business to come before the commission having been addressed, the meeting was closed with words of benediction.

Raymond L. Hartwig, *Secretary*