

**American Baptist Churches of the Great Rivers Region
REGIONAL MINISTRY BOARD**

Minutes From Meeting Friday, April 27, 2007

Executive Hall, Great Rivers Region Resource Center, Springfield, Illinois
George Rosales, President
Roland Sundberg, Recorder

Present:	Francis Bartley Sharon Brown Rene' Gorbold Patricia Midkiff PJ Patterson George Rosales William Steger (21 of 28 members)	Elaine Bolen Jim Daugherty Deborah Harkness Reg Mills Gerald Phillips Mary Ellen Sharp Elmer Voudrie	Henrietta Brown Diane DeSmidt Keith Ingold Harry Parker Charles Reed Geraldine Sirls Dwight Stinnett
Guests:	Cheryl Henson	Richard Ricks	Roland Sundberg
Regrets:	Lynette Austin Mark Keyser Hari Smith	Jeffrey Hammer Helen Murrell	Courtney Jones William Schneck

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Diane DeSmidt, in the absence of President George Rosales, called the business meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and gave a devotional message from Colossians 1 about church planting, reminding us that Christ is the head of the body, the Church. She then led us in prayer. The Minutes from the February 2, 2007 meeting were reviewed without objection and will be entered into the record. The Minutes from the special meeting on March 23, 2007 were also reviewed without objection and will be entered into the record. President George Rosales arrived shortly afterwards and assumed control of the proceedings. He gave a devotional message from Isaiah 40:29-31 about having strength in the knowledge that God is in control, and led us in prayer.

Board Roles vs. Staff Roles. Dwight Stinnett gave a powerpoint presentation regarding how the roles of staff differ from the roles undertaken by the Regional Ministry Board. He summarized John Carver's writing: The premise is that the board represents

the ownership (stewardship); "Governance" empowers stewardship, and the board governs staff and ministries through policy; The board separates "ends" from "means"; "Ends" are defined through policy statements; "Means" are assigned to staff with restrictions (executive limitations). Furthermore, the board assigns resources to staff, sets boundaries and evaluates results.

DECISION ITEMS

Proposed Bylaw and Standing Rule Amendments. The Ministry of Planning and Review has reviewed the Bylaws and Standing Rules of the Region and suggests the following changes:

- Define the quorum for Board meetings.
- Add to Board responsibilities the authority to declare positions "open" (because of moving, etc.) and to fill those open slots.
- Create a first and second Vice-President of the Region. These offices progress from second, to first, to President. The Vice-President for Planning becomes an office with a three-year term, open to the possibility of re-election (like the Vice-President for Personnel and the Vice-President for Finance).
- Add a procedure for electing a President *pro tempore* in the event that none of the officers are present for a meeting.

Submitted to the Board was a document entitled Draft Revisions – 070323, which makes revisions to version 3b of the Bylaws to accommodate the above changes. The full revised version of the Bylaws, if recommended for adoption, will become Bylaws version 4. These changes would take effect for the Area meetings of 2008.

Discussion revealed that the Second Vice-President would also attend meetings of the Ministry of Financial Stewardship. The First Vice-President would also attend meetings of the Ministry of Planning and Review. This would allow the future President to gain knowledge of the workings of Board Ministries before advancing to the presidency. Motion was made and seconded to adopt the changes as Bylaws version 4 and to authorize the Executive Minister to announce the proposals in preparation for the Business Session during the Annual Meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

MONITORING ITEMS

Staff Activity. Dwight gave a written report of staff activity since the last Board meeting. All of the Area Annual Meetings were held in March. Dwight continues to meet with pastors, churches and church leaders regarding issues in our denomination. He has spent time implementing the financial "Roadmap" adopted by the Board, especially the GRReat Friends Offering, and dealing with an emerging financial crisis in the Region. He met with the General Executive Council and the General Board Executive Committee regarding covenant issues and possible reorganization strategies for ABC/USA. Written reports were also received from other Program Staff members.

Consultation with Search Committees. Cheryl Henson and Richard Ricks reported on how the Region works with local church search committees. The Region's most important task is to insure that churches have competent, qualified ministerial leadership. One of Cheryl's responsibilities is to serve as Ministerial Leadership Coordinator. Cheryl acknowledged programs that are in place to help search committees, such as MOL (Ministry Opportunities Listing) and Face To Face events. It is necessary that Church profiles and PCL profiles are updated on an ongoing basis, since these profiles provide the best information in search processes. Richard is developing the online pastoral search option that the region is offering this year. He described the COL, or Churches Online Listing, which provides the online search capability.

State of the Region. Dwight gave a report based on 2006 financial realities, and the prospects for 2007 and beyond. United Mission was down \$269,430 in 2006. The region had a deficit of \$85,064 (it would have been considerably more if we had not made quick reductions in the budget and if we had not received over \$130,000 in gifts designated for the region). In addition, the camping program ended the year with another \$60,000 deficit, despite region assistance of over \$30,000 to the camps. At the same time, the region has continued and expanded programs to assist congregations. Natural Church Development took off as a major church renewal effort in the region. Consecration Sunday continues to be a popular event for churches. In addition to the increases in financial resources for mission and ministry, we have seen spiritual renewal, recaptured vision, and leadership emergence in about 40 churches. Our covenantal relationship with Costa Rica continues to grow, and our electronic and multimedia communications were expanded. And we welcomed two new mission churches in 2006.

Update on Lake Benton Property. We are currently awaiting the completion of a Survey and an Appraisal of the Lake Benton property. Dwight has communicated with attorney Fred Moore to obtain a legal review of the restrictions placed on the camp property. Mark McCall has been our onsite security guard at the camp, in return for housing at the manager's residence. Maintenance of the property continues, and mowing and groundskeeping duties have been contracted out.

Denominational Issues. The General Executive Council, in the process of preparing a reorganization proposal for ABC/USA, agreed on eight criteria that would guide any reorganization proposal and presented those criteria to the General Board in November, 2006. Those criteria were listed for the board members. In an April, 2007 meeting, the GEC agreed to the general form of a reorganization proposal, and also agreed to a proposal specifically intended to address Criterion 6: Resolve the division over homosexuality or at least move the denomination forward on the issue. GEC members covenanted to give due consideration to all ABC Policy Statements and Resolutions in recommending persons to serve at denominational levels.

Ministry of Staff Relations. Reg Mills submitted a written report to the board. The Ministry of Staff Relations reviewed sabbatical guidelines for GRR staff. Dwight Stinnett

is the next staff member due for a sabbatical, sometime after January, 2008. Randy McNeely gave the Ministry a report on his sabbatical from fall of 2006, when he attended the Natural Church Development training in Chicago and spent time in Costa Rica learning Spanish and deepening his relationship with Costa Rican Baptist leaders. Also reviewed were position descriptions, compensation and terms, and covenant agreements for a new manager at Lake Springfield Camp and a resident security guard at Lake Benton Camp.

Ministry of Financial Stewardship. In PJ's absence, Rene' Gorbald gave a summary of actions at this morning's Ministry of Financial Stewardship meeting. The preliminary draft of the 2006 audit was reviewed and a couple changes were recommended. The Ministry approved the construction phase of the storage shed at Blackhawk Camp, and also authorized distribution of funds from the sale of the Blackberry Creek church property in Aurora.

INCIDENTAL ITEMS

Plans for 2007 Annual Meeting in Decatur. The theme of this year's Annual Meeting will be "Sharing God's Treasure." We will meet at the Decatur Convention Center and Hotel October 5-7. The Pastor's Conference will be held at the First Baptist Church of Decatur on Friday, October 5. Also being held at the church will be the ABWM and ABM Breakfasts on Sunday morning, and the Worship Session of the convention on Sunday. All other functions will be held at the hotel. Appearing at the convention will be The Four Sopranos, and Dr. Reid Trulson, Executive Director of the Board of International Ministries, will be the keynote speaker. Four different evangelism workshops will take place on Saturday.

The board adjourned with prayer at 4:00 p.m., agreeing to hold its next regular meeting on Friday, October 5, 2007, at 4:30 p.m. at the Decatur Conference Center and Hotel in Decatur, Illinois, which is where we will be holding this year's Annual Meeting.