

REPORT OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE
ON RECOMMENDED AMENDMENTS TO
THE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS OF
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
October 9, 2017

The Constitution and Bylaws (“CBL”) Committee recommends the following amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Church. These recommendations are made after a period of prayerful study and extensive discussion by the 2016 and 2017 CBL Committees.

The Constitution and Bylaws Committee’s reasoning regarding these amendments is briefly summarized in a background and discussion section following each proposed amendment.

The proposed amendments are shown in full context as part of each constitutional provision or bylaw affected by the proposed amendments. To the extent possible, added text is shown in *italics* with deleted text being shown by ~~strikeouts~~. All proposed amendments are highlighted in *red italics*.

These recommendations are in numerical order of the numbered bylaw amendments proposed. References are to sections and subsections of the existing Constitution and Bylaws.

1. ***Proposed Amendment to Bylaw Section 1.02.3 “Deacon Committees” and Article Senior VII, Section 2.A. of the Church Constitution “Senior Pastor Search Committee”.***

A. ***Proposed Amendment to Bylaw Section 1.02.3 “Deacon Committees”.***

1.02.3 Deacon Committees:

The Chairman, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Parliamentarian shall appoint at least ~~five~~ *four* Deacons to each of the following sub-committees of the Deacons: Orientation and Training, Family Ministries, Communion, Baptism, Pastoral Advisory and Deacon Election Process Committees. *These committees shall meet as needed during the year and report monthly to the Committee of Deacons which report shall be reflected in the Deacon Committee minutes.* Other sub-committees of the Deacons may be appointed from time to time as authorized by the Committee of Deacons.

The Orientation and Training Committee: *This committee shall be responsible for the explanation of duties and training of incoming new deacons. They will assist the Pastor in an ordination service for new deacons prior to the upcoming new church calendar year. They will meet with all new Deacons before the end of January of a new year and as often as needed thereafter to facilitate their training. This committee will facilitate other deacon training events as needed*

The Family Ministries Committee: *This committee is responsible for assisting all Deacons in ministering to their Deacon families. Their family list shall be provided to all Deacons by the first Deacon meeting in January or before. They shall meet*

with all new incoming Deacons before the end of January to explain and assist them with this ministry.

The Baptism Committee: *This committee is responsible for assisting in baptism. They will help and direct all candidates in preparing for and being baptized as directed by the baptizing Minister.*

The Deacon Election Process Committee: *This committee will function in accordance with Bylaw 1.02.1 Election of Deacons.*

The Pastoral Advisory Committee: *The mission of the Pastoral Advisory Committee (PAC) shall be to consult with the Senior Pastor and provide feedback to the Senior Pastor regarding perspectives of the church membership on the health and direction of the church. The Senior Pastor and the PAC, working together, shall develop goals and objectives as areas of focus by the Senior Pastor in fulfillment of the Church's mission and vision statements. The Pastoral Advisory Committee and the Senior Pastor shall review and report to the Deacons progress in fulfillment of the Church's mission, goals and objectives. The PAC shall seek to be of mutual benefit to the Senior Pastor and the membership of the church consistent with the Church's mission. Another purpose of the PAC shall be to perform a written annual evaluation of the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor shall then have the opportunity to respond in writing to the Committee of Deacons.*

The PAC shall be composed the Deacon Chair, Deacon Vice-Chair, Deacon Secretary, and Deacon Parliamentarian, immediate Past Deacon Chair from the preceding year, and three at-large members selected as follows: For the first three years following call of a new Senior Pastor, up to three members of the Senior Pastor Search Committee, whose service resulted in the call of the Senior Pastor, shall serve as the at-large members of the PAC, with terms calculated as follows: One member of the Pastor Search Committee will serve a three year term; one member of the Pastor Search Committee will serve a two year term, and one member of the Pastor Search Committee will serve a one year term. The Pastor Search Committee, in selecting those of its members who will serve on the PAC, will determine which members serve which terms. As members of the Pastor Search Committee rotate off the PAC, the Deacons shall elect from the Committee of Deacons the requisite number of Deacons necessary to maintain three at-large members of the PAC. The at-large members shall be elected from those deacons not serving on the executive committee by the current Committee of Deacons at the first meeting of the Committee of Deacons in January of each year, with the highest vote-receivers for the number of requisite at-large positions on the PAC being elected. If for any reason one or more vacancies occur among the at-large Deacons serving upon the PAC during the year, the next highest vote-receiver(s) shall fill such vacancy for the remainder of the year.

At least one of the Deacons on the PAC must also be a current member of the Personnel Committee. If none of the at-large members are on the Personnel Committee, then the highest vote-receiver of the at-large members shall become a

member of the Personnel Committee, thereby adding one extra member to the Personnel Committee for that year. The Senior Pastor is ex-officio to the PAC.

The PAC shall meet at least monthly and more often as needed. Additional meetings of the PAC may be called by the Senior Pastor or the Deacon Chair. In the absence of a meeting for more than two consecutive months, any member of the PAC may call a meeting by giving at least ten (10) days written notice to the other members of the PAC with a copy to the Deacon Secretary for inclusion with the minutes of the Committee of Deacons.

The PAC shall keep confidential written minutes of the PAC meetings to be maintained by the Deacon Chair with copies to the Senior Pastor and Church Administrator. The Church Administrator shall maintain a permanent copy in a secure file. Upon expiration of the Deacon Chair's term of office, the Deacon Chair shall deliver the Chair's copy of the PAC minutes to the successor Deacon Chair who in turn shall maintain their confidentiality. The permanent copy of the written PAC minutes shall be accessible only to the Senior Pastor and the members of the PAC then serving or serving at the time of the meeting for which the minutes were recorded. Each person entitled to access to these minutes shall maintain their confidentiality.

The Senior Pastor's annual evaluation will be conducted by the PAC in accordance with the principles of review of church staff positions as established by the Personnel Committee. The evaluation summary, with individual comments, will be discussed by the full PAC before sharing with the Pastor. The summary evaluation information, without individual comments, will then be forwarded to the Personnel Committee.

- B. Proposed Revision to Article VII, Section 2. A. of the Church Constitution regarding Senior Pastor Search Committee providing for continued interim service as part of Pastoral Advisory Committee.**

Article VII Section 2. Special Committees

A. Senior Pastor Search Committee

The Senior Pastor Search Committee shall be elected by the church to seek out a new pastor. It shall be composed of seven members of the church with a minimum of three men and three women. No two members of the Senior Pastor Search Committee shall be members of the same immediate family, either by blood or marriage.

Within 60 days after the church has notice that a vacancy will occur in the office of Senior Pastor, the Deacons shall assess the needs of the church and the timing of electing a Senior Pastor Search Committee. At a church conference called for that purpose, the Deacons shall make a recommendation that the church elect a Senior Pastor Search Committee or that the church

undertake a time of study and evaluation before a Senior Pastor Search Committee is elected. Following any time of study and evaluation undertaken by the church, the Deacons shall bring to the church a recommendation that it elect a Senior Pastor Search Committee. A church conference shall be called for the second Sunday morning following the vote to elect a Senior Pastor Search Committee. Each church family shall be sent a letter with notification of the church business meeting and with instructions concerning the nominating procedure, as stated in Article VII, Section 2 A (1). A current list of church members shall be sent, also.

Nominations for the Senior Pastor Search Committee shall be made by the church membership by ballot and shall include three men, three women, and one of either gender. Absentee ballots shall be allowed only in accordance with Article V, Section 4 of this Constitution.

At the close of the morning service following the nominations, the ballots shall be tabulated by deacons designated for this purpose. Those nominees, who receive a majority of the votes cast and who confirm their willingness to serve, shall be declared elected as members of the Senior Pastor Search Committee. Other nominees shall be contacted in descending order by the number of nominations until a number of persons equal to three times the remaining number to be elected, with required ratio between men and women, confirm their willingness to serve. The names of these persons shall be placed on the election ballot. A sample ballot shall be placed in the bulletin one week before the election.

Notice of the church conference for the purpose of electing remaining members of the Senior Pastor Search Committee shall be given as set forth in Article V, Section 2 of this Constitution. The voting shall be by ballot, as outlined in Article V, Section 5 of this Constitution. Absentee ballots shall be allowed only in accordance with Article V, Section 4, of this Constitution. Members will be instructed as to the number of men and women for whom they are required to vote. Deacons designated for this purpose shall tabulate the ballots, following the morning service at which the election is held. Those receiving the highest number of votes, up to the number necessary to complete the Senior Pastor Search Committee and to maintain the required ratio between men and women, shall be declared elected; in the event that two or more members of the same immediate family would otherwise be elected, only the family member receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected.

In case of a tie in votes in the election of the Senior Pastor Search Committee, a ballot for a run-off election shall be presented to the church, following proper notification to the church membership and the calling of a church conference for this purpose. The ballots shall be tabulated by deacons designated for this purpose. The nominee receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected.

The Senior Pastor Search Committee shall elect a chairman and vice chairman from among its members and begin to seek out a new Senior Pastor. It shall make reports monthly to the Deacons and to the church.

The Finance Committee shall set expenditure guidelines and oversee expenditures of the Senior Pastor Search Committee. In addition, as soon as a vacancy occurs in the office of pastor, the Finance and Personnel Committees shall evaluate the current compensation package and set guidelines as a beginning point for developing a compensation package for the new Senior Pastor.

The Chairman of the Deacons, the Chairman of the Personnel Committee, and the Chairman of the Finance Committee, or their designee, shall serve as consultants to the Senior Pastor Search Committee when requested by the committee. When their terms end, the successor chairmen shall serve as consultants to the Senior Pastor Search Committee.

The Senior Pastor Search Committee, after prayer, study, and deliberation, shall unanimously decide upon one person to nominate as Senior Pastor. It shall consult with the Chairman of Deacons, the Chairman of the Personnel Committee, and the Chairman of the Finance Committee to develop a compensation package. The committee shall convey to the candidate in writing the terms of the compensation package prior to bringing its nomination to the church.

Notice of a called church conference for the purpose of bringing a nomination to the church shall be given as provided in Article V, Section 2 of the Constitution. The Senior Pastor Search Committee shall mail to each church family a professional and personal profile on the candidate at least one week before the church conference. Thereafter, the procedure shall be as set forth in Article VI, Section 2 A (1) of the Constitution.

Upon acceptance of a call as Senior Pastor as provided for in Article VI, Section 2 A (1) of the Constitution, the Senior Pastor Search Committee shall elect from among their number three (3) members to serve as at large members of the Pastoral Advisory Committee for terms as set forth in Bylaw 1.02.3. The purpose of this continued service as at-large members of the Pastoral Advisory Committee is to facilitate continuity in the transition of the relationship of the Church to the Senior Pastor from that of a Pastoral Search Committee to a Pastoral Advisory Committee.

Background and Discussion.

Since this Bylaw was originally created, the number of Deacons on the Committee of Deacons has decreased due to shrinkage of the number of resident church families, which is the basis for

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calculation of the size of the Committee of Deacons. Therefore, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee recommends that the number of Deacons to be assigned to each of these Deacon Committees be dropped from five deacons to four deacons.

The existing bylaw for Deacon Committees has no “job description” as to the mission of each Committee or suggestions as to how the Committee was to perform. Currently serving Deacons on the Constitution and Bylaw Committee suggested that the bylaws give some elaboration on the mission of each of these Deacon Committees and how each committee should proceed.

The current bylaws contain no provision for any review of the Senior Pastor. Recognizing the special nature of the Pastoral Advisory Committee and its relationship to the Senior Pastor, considerable prayer and time were spent in drafting this committee bylaw in an effort to create a model bylaw for the Pastoral Advisory Committee. **The original draft of proposed revisions to the bylaws for the Deacon Committees and Personnel Committee contemplated that the Pastoral Advisory Committee would conduct an annual review of the Senior Pastor and provide a summary of that review to the Personnel Committee.** In mid-2016, the Senior Pastor and 2016 Deacon Chair met with the Constitution and Bylaws Committee to express concerns regarding review of the ministerial staff, including the Senior Pastor, by church members other than current members of the Committee of Deacons. The CBL Committee took into consideration the concerns expressed and spent several additional months further considering the proposed draft of the Pastoral Advisory Committee bylaw.

In February 2017, the CBL Committee forwarded a draft report to 2017 Deacon Chair containing the proposed revisions to Bylaw 1.02.3 “Deacon Committees” and a revised version of the proposed PAC bylaw to reflect the CBL’s consideration of concerns of the Senior Pastor and 2016 Deacon Chair. The 2017 Deacon Chair expressed reservations about (1) the manner of selection/election of members of the Pastoral Advisory Committee, (2) the CBL recommendation that confidential minutes be kept of meetings of the PAC, and (3) the PAC conducting a review of the Senior Pastor. The CBL Committee considered these reservations and continued to work on the drafting of the proposed PAC bylaw.

The CBL then decided to seek further input from the Senior Pastor regarding his recommendations as to how an annual review of the Senior Pastor should be conducted. The actual meeting with the Senior Pastor took place after his resignation and provided valuable input. This PAC bylaw, as proposed above, reflects the evolved recommendation of the CBL after lengthy study and extensive discussion by the 2015, 2016, and 2017 CBL committees, prayer for guidance, and discussions with the Senior Pastor and the 2016 and 2017 Deacon Chairs.

If the proposed PAC bylaw is approved, it requires amendment of *Article VII, Section 2. A.* of the Church Constitution to provide for the Senior Pastor Search Committee’s selection of three (3) of its members to continue to serve staggered terms of one, two and three years upon the Pastoral Advisory Committee. The proposed amendment appears as a new last paragraph of Article VII, Section 2.

Through their work in assisting the Church in the selection of a new pastor, the Pastor Search Committee and new Senior Pastor will have established a working relationship. The input of our past Senior Pastor regarding the lack, in his case, of any transition of that existing relationship from the Pastor Search Committee to the Pastoral Advisory Committee led the CBL Committee to recognize the importance of facilitating a smooth transition of the existing working relationship of the Search

Committee and Senior Pastor to the Pastoral Advisory Committee and Senior Pastor. The continued presence of some members of the Search Committee on the Pastoral Advisory Committee is intended to promote the smooth transition of that working relationship and be of mutual benefit to the new Senior Pastor and the membership of the Church consistent with the mission of the Church.

In furtherance of that goal, the CBL recommends that three members of the Senior Pastor Search Committee, whose service resulted in the call of the new Senior Pastor, be the initial at-large members of the initial Pastor Advisory Committee for the new Senior Pastor. These three members would serve staggered terms of one-year, two-years, and three-years, respectively, with one member rotating off the PAC each year, being replaced by an at-large member chosen from the Deacons in accordance with the PAC bylaw. The Senior Pastor Search Committee would select which of their members would serve as the three at-large members of the PAC as well as determine the length of the terms on the PAC by each at-large member.

Upon presentation of the foregoing recommendations to the full Committee of Deacons in April 2018, it was suggested that the Immediate Past Chairman of the Committee of Deacons for the preceding year be added to the Pastoral Advisory Committee in furtherance of continuity of communication between the successive committees.¹ The 2017 Constitution and Bylaws Committee submitting these recommendations concurred in this addition.²

3. *Proposed Amendment to General Policies Bylaw Sections 11.02 and 11.04*

11.02 Unless otherwise provided by the Constitution and these Bylaws, all councils and committees shall elect a ~~chairman~~, vice-chairman and recording secretary from their members. The vice-chairman shall serve as chairman in the absence of the chairman, and as recording secretary in the absence of the secretary. *The committee officer presiding at each meeting should present an agenda of matters to be considered at that meeting. The recording secretary shall record the minutes of each council or committee meeting, maintains a committee attendance roster, and provides copies of the minutes and attendance roster to the church office. The recording secretary shall prepare minutes of each committee or council meeting to include an attendance roster of those committee members present and absent, others in attendance, a record of the matters discussed, and a record of actions taken by the committee. The recording secretary shall provide copies of the committee minutes to the church Administrator, who shall maintain a permanent record thereof with the records of the Church. Minutes of the Pastoral Advisory Committee, and Personnel Committee minutes that have been designated by the Personnel Committee as being confidential, and minutes of committees in executive session shall be separately maintained by Church Administrator in a confidential file. Except for minutes of a committee or council in executive session, minutes of the Pastoral Advisory Committee, and minutes of the Personnel Committee regarding personnel of the church that have been designated by the Personnel Committee as confidential, minutes of all committees and councils shall be available to any church member upon request.*

¹ Added at suggestion from Committee of Deacons in April 2018.

² 2017 Committee concurred through polling of the 2017 Committee.

Background and Discussion.

~~The CBL Committee added chairman to the list of committee officers who should be elected by the committee. Existing bylaw 11.02 only addressed the committee electing a vice chairman and recording secretary. Apparently, former practices were for the Nominating Committee to select the chairmen of each committee. However, since the Nominating Committee no longer selects the chairmen of each committee, the Committee felt that chairman should be added to the list of officers to be elected annually by each committee.~~

The CBL Committee ~~also~~ felt that keeping of an attendance roster of committee members in attendance would not only promote better attendance record of committee member participation, but that such a roster of attendance would be helpful to the Nominating Committee for future consideration of possible nominees for service upon church committees or in other roles for the church. The committee also felt that preparation of an agenda for each committee meeting would facilitate committee meetings proceeding in an organized fashion, and assist the recording secretary in preparation of committee minutes by use of a checklist of matters discussed at a given meeting.

The CBL Committee also felt that the special nature of the roles of the Pastoral Advisory Committee and Personnel Committees in conducting personnel reviews, which should be confidentially maintained, and minutes of all committees in executive or closed session which also should be confidentially maintained, mandated some revision of this bylaw to so provide a method and manner of maintaining confidentiality of personnel records and actions except as on a “need to know” basis. Nevertheless, except for minutes of the Pastoral Advisory Committee, and Personnel Committee minutes that have been designated by the Personnel Committee as confidential, and minutes of other committees meeting in executive session, minutes of all other committees or councils, would be available to any church member upon request.

- 11.04** All committee and council meetings, **except Personnel and Pastoral Advisory Committees**, shall be open to **Bible Study** or all church members. Upon the request of any voting committee member, the committee shall enter into executive session and shall request all non-voting committee members to excuse themselves from the meeting. By vote of a majority of the voting committee members present, any person, including ex officio members, may be permitted to attend all or any part of the executive session.

Background and Discussion

See discussion comments to Bylaw 11.02 above.

Respectfully Submitted,

2017 Constitution and Bylaws Committee

Mike Watson, Chair

Al Jean Bogle

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Susan Haire

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