

Confederation of Reformed Evangelical Churches
Minutes of Church Council Triennial Meeting
October 14 – 16, Conroe, Texas

October 14, 2008

Moderator Booth called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm and asked Eric Sauder to open the meeting in prayer.

Pastor Booth called the roll. Seventeen of the eighteen delegates being present, a quorum was declared.

Consent Agenda

Moderator Booth read the items composing the Consent Agenda, Motions 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17 18 and 21 of the published Agenda. Delegate Schlect requested that Motion 15 be removed from the Consent Agenda and placed in the regular Agenda. The resultant Consent Agenda motions are as follow:

Agenda Motion 2

That the CREC Book of Procedures be amended by changing the name to: “The CREC Council Book of Procedures.”

Agenda Motion 5

The Book of Procedures maintained by each Presbytery will utilize a standardized format, based up the CREC Council Book of Procedures, with local practice set out separately by Article. The portion of the Presbytery Books of Procedure that is based upon the CREC Council Book of Procedures will be updated in conformity with the Council Book of Procedures as it is updated.

Each Presbytery Moderator will ensure that the numbering of the Book of Procedures he is responsible for maintaining is consistent with the Council Book of Procedures, which will require the renumbering of Articles which appear only on a local basis.

[An exemplar is attached to these minutes as Appendix 1]

Agenda Motion 7

That: Article IV, “Procedure for Evaluating a Candidate Ordained Outside the CREC” be removed from the CREC Council Book of Procedures and that all following Articles be appropriately renumbered.

Agenda Motion 8

That: The first two sentences of Section 2, paragraph II.A be amended to read as follows:

The Examination Committee: Upon the successful completion of the Preliminary Written Examination, the Moderator of the Presbytery will appoint an Examination Committee for the candidate. The Examination Committee will ordinarily consist of five members, with ad hoc reductions to no fewer than three members in extenuating circumstances.

Agenda Motion 9

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To be added to the CREC Council Book of Procedures under Article IX:

Existing churches that have been constituted for at least two years, have two or more local elders, and can sustain themselves financially may come under the care of a member CREC church as a “Mission Church,” and may be considered for full Member status at the next meeting of the Presbytery.

Agenda Motion 10

A new section in the CREC Council Book of Procedures titled: “A Summary of the Rules of Order for Presbytery and Council Meeting”:

Robert’s Rules of Order exists to facilitate the decision-making process at meetings. They help ensure that discussion is clear and that the rights of both the majority and the minority are protected. The Moderator before each meeting shall distribute the following summary of some of the basic rules, redacted from *Robert’s Rules*, which will familiarize all attendees with them and help our meetings run more smoothly and keep discussion on track.

[The Guide is appended to these Minutes as Appendix 2]

Agenda Motion 16

That Constitution Article II.F be amended by deleting the reference therein to Article IV.P and replacing it with a reference to Article IV.O.

Agenda Motion 17

That Constitution Article IV.O be amended by deleting the reference therein to Article IV.M and O and replacing it with a reference to Article IV.L.

Agenda Motion 18

Constitutional Amendment added to the end of IV.C.:

Elected Council delegates must also be seated as Presbytery delegates during the same year as the Council meeting.

Agenda Motion 21

That Constitution Article III.D be amended by insertion of the bolded text as shown:

Before a congregation can be accepted into CREC membership it must have its own constitution, been in existence for at least two years, have at least two elders, and have enough support from members to meet all regular expenses **necessary to sustain the life of that congregation**. Congregations seeking membership with the CREC which do not meet these criteria must come under the care of an existing CREC church and will be characterized as mission churches. Mission churches may have non-voting delegations at presbytery and council meetings. When such a mission church comes to meet the criteria for a particularized church, they may be accepted into voting membership of the CREC by a two-thirds vote of presbytery.

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Motion 08:10:14:01 Phelps/Young: to approve the Consent Agenda as set forth above

Motion (08:10:14:01) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Moderator Booth exhorted the Council to work expeditiously in working through the Agenda items.

Motion 08:10:14:02 (Agenda Motion 2) Alders/Helsel; amended Strawbridge/Vanderveen (08:10:14:03):

That the CREC Council Book of Procedures be amended by adding “Article XII – Miscellaneous Items,” with paragraph A to read as follows:

The emblem below is the only one approved for use as graphic representation of the CREC. It can be presented in varying colors, as appropriate and tasteful for its intended use. No other emblem may be used in this regard.



Main motion (08:10:14:02) carried by voice vote, no dissent.

Motion 08:10:14:04 (Agenda Motion 3) Alders/Franklin; amended Schlect/Young (08:10:14:05):

That the CREC Council Book of Procedures be amended by adding a Preface as follows:

The CREC Council Book of Procedures provides standard operating procedures for both the Council and the presbyteries. Each presbytery must adopt the current version of the CREC Council Book of Procedures as the foundation for its own Book of Procedures, and may add additional procedural standards to its own Book of Procedures provided the additional standards are not in conflict with the CREC Council Book of Procedures or the CREC Constitution and By-Laws. If there is good cause for not following these standard operating procedures in a given situation, the reason for the deviation must be stated in writing and approved by the relevant Broader Assembly.

Main motion (08:10:14:04) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Agenda Motion 4: Moderator Booth tabled motion for consideration in concert with Agenda Motion 30.

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Motion 08:10:14:06 (Agenda Motion 6) Anselm and Augustine Presbyteries; amended Schlect/Strawbridge (08:10:14:07); amended Schlect/Smith (08:10:14:08); amended Strawbridge/Wilson (08:10:14:09); amended Tuuri/Strawbridge (08:10:14:10):

[Moderator Booth noted that the Motion is a composition of language put forward from the two presbyteries.]

Amend the CREC Council Book of Procedures and each Presbytery Book of Procedures as follows:

Change title of Article X of the Council Book of Procedures to:

“Conducting an Election for Moderator/Moderator *Pro Tempore* of Presbytery or Council.”

Replace body of Article X with:

All nominations for the position of Moderator should be pre-posted on the agenda. Churches wishing to nominate candidates for the position of Moderator or Moderator *pro tempore* shall submit their nominations to the Moderator at least thirty days in advance of the opening of the meeting.

Following the election of Moderator, the delegates may nominate candidates for the office of Moderator *pro tempore*. The nominees need not be limited to the delegates nominated for the office of Moderator.

The Moderator and Moderator *pro tempore* shall be elected according to the procedure delineated in Article IV.F. of the CREC Constitution and By-laws.

Election of Moderator and Moderator *pro tempore*

1. If there are no nominations pre-posted on the agenda, the Moderator shall receive nominations from the floor from any delegate in order to create a roster of candidates.
2. In order for a nominee to be recognized as a candidate his nomination must be seconded on the floor and the nominee must express his consent to be a candidate. The nomination and second may not come from two delegates representing the same church.
3. In due time, the Moderator will close the nominations and identify the candidates. A motion from the floor to close nominations shall require a two-thirds vote.
4. The Moderator will invite open discussion about the candidates. Delegates may use this time to ask questions of the candidates or elicit statements from them. Delegates also may speak for or against any candidate.
5. A roll call vote will be taken unless by majority vote or at the Moderator’s discretion, a vote by ballot is requested. The candidate receiving a majority of votes will be elected Moderator. The outgoing Moderator will tally the votes and then shall declare the results of the election.
6. If there is only one candidate, he must receive at least a two-thirds majority of the assembled delegate votes to fill the position of Moderator. In elections with more than one candidate, a candidate must receive the votes of more than 50% of the delegates present and voting to become Moderator-elect. If no candidate meets this requirement, the candidate receiving the fewest votes is eliminated and another vote taken. In the event of a tie vote between two candidates, the Moderator will break the tie, if necessary, to elect a Moderator or eliminate a candidate from the ballot.

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Main motion (08:10:14:06) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Motion 08:10:14:11 Wilson/Smith: That the next moderator appoint a committee to review Article 8 of the Book of Procedures, our definition of fraternal relations, and our relationship with REC, FIRC and other Christian denominations.

Motion (08:10:14:11) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Motion 08:10:14:12 (Agenda Motion 12) Franklin/Mahaffey: That

The name of the “Confederation of Reformed Evangelical Churches” be changed to the “Communion of Reformed Evangelical Churches.”

Moderator Booth recessed the meeting for a break.

Motion 08:10:14:13 Phelps/Young Table the main motion (08:10:14:12) to a time definite of October 15, 2008, and requesting the presbyteries to consider this matter in their morning sessions.

The motion to table with definite date (08:10:14:13) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Moderator Booth noted that Agenda Motion 13 was contingent upon passage of the prior motion, and was therefore tabled to like time.

Motion 08:10:14:14 (Agenda Motion 14, substituted language) Alders/Strawbridge; amended Wilson/Vanderveen (08:10:14:15):

Change IV.F., replacing the first sentence with the following:

“Broader Assemblies will elect a moderator from their assembled delegates when that office is vacant. In the event that no more than one Council Delegate is willing or able to serve or is nominated as Council Moderator, the assembled presbytery delegates also shall be eligible for nomination as Council Moderator.”

Main motion (08:10:14:14) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Motion 08:10:14:16 Schlect/Wilson: Amend the motion to provide that this constitutional change be effective immediately after the adjournment of the 2008 meeting of Council. Adopted without objection.

Motion 08:10:14:17 (Agenda Motion 15) Anselm and Augustine Presbyteries; amended Schlect/Hatcher (08:10:14:18):

Add to Constitution V.A.

Actions of the Council Moderator on behalf of Council reported all to and approved by two-thirds of the presbyteries shall be deemed as approved by the CREC Council.

Main Motion (08:10:14:17) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Motion 08:10:14:19 (Agenda Motion 19) Wilson/Mahaffey: That:

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Constitution Article VI, "Missions" be amended by appending the following paragraph B:

Unless commissioned by, sent by, or ministering under the authority of a Member Church, individuals or ministries shall not be considered foreign missionaries or missions of the CREC.

Motion (08:10:14:19) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Agenda Motion 20: Wilson – withdrawn

Agenda Motion 22: Moderator Booth re-assigned this motion to the October 15th session.

Moderator Booth invited Pastor Ralph Smith to assume the podium to manage the presentation of the motions by the Ecclesial Committee.

Motion 08:10:14:20 Ecclesial Committee:

Replace the phrase in the present Article IV section I: "This should in no way be interpreted as a judicial or prelatical authority," with the following:

"Moderators are to act according to the authority conferred to them by virtue of their office and all their actions are to be confined and limited to the authority specified by the constitution of the CREC."

Motion (08:10:14:20) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Motion 08:10:14:21 (Agenda Motion 24) Ecclesial Committee:

That the title "Moderator" be changed to either "Steward" or "Minister"

Motion 08:10:14:22 Wilson/Strawbridge: Amend the motion as follows:

That the Council deliberate and decide between "Moderator", "Minister" and "Steward".

The motion (08:10:14:22) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Moderator Booth called for a vote between the three titles:

Moderator: 5

Steward: 4

Minister: 9

Then having eliminated the title "Steward:

Moderator: 5

Minister: 13

Henceforth the title will be "Minister".

Committee recommends that action on this motion be deferred until consideration of Agenda Motion 34.

Motion 08:10:14:23 (Agenda Motion 26) Ecclesial Committee; amended Tuuri/Mahaffey (08:10:14:24): Add to Constitution IV. I.

That Ministers have the discretion and authority to appoint assistants, clerks, or, when the Minister *Pro Tempore* is not available, chairmen of assemblies, on a case by case basis.

The main motion (08:10:14:23) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

The meeting recessed for the day with prayer by Garry Vanderveen.

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The meeting resumed at 8:30 am on October 15th.

Minister Booth invited Jeff Niell to open the day's meeting with prayer.

Chris Schlect distributed a copy of the latest installment of the CREC history project and discussed the state of the project.

Motion 08:10:15:01 (Agenda Motion 12; previously 08:10:14:12) Franklin/Mahaffey: That

The name of the "Confederation of Reformed Evangelical Churches" be changed to the "Communion of Reformed Evangelical Churches."

Motion 08:10:15:02 Alders/Mahaffey: Move that the motion (08:10:15:01) be referred to a committee of the Council consisting of Tuuri, Booth, Wilson, Strawbridge, Wilkins; said committee to report back to presbyteries at their meetings in 2009. If two-thirds of the presbyteries approve the committee's recommendation, it will be constituted an act of Council.

Motion to refer (08:10:15:02) carried by voice vote with two dissenting votes.

As a result of this action, the Ecclesial Committee withdrew Agenda Motion 13.

Motion 08:10:15:03 (Substitute Agenda Motion 20, resubmitted) Wilson/Helsel: That

Council authorize an ad hoc committee charged with organizing a missions conference to occur immediately following the 2011 meeting of Council and further charged with formulating constitutional language for organizing our international relations.

Members:

Bogumil Jarmulak
Ralph Smith
Blake Purcell

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Sebastian Smolarz
Oleg Volkov
Todd Davis
Garry Vanderveen
John Stoos
Doug Jones

Motion (08:10:15:03) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Motion 08:10:15:04 (Agenda Motion 27) Ecclesial Committee: That

we reorganize Articles IV and V of our Constitution. Combine into one article, “IV. Broader Assemblies,” and subdivide into five sections: General Provisions, Representation, Work and Authority of Moderators, Referrals, Appeals and Actions, and Meeting Protocols.

Motion (08:10:15:04) carried by voice vote without dissent.

Motion 08:10:15:05 (Agenda Motion 28) Ecclesial Committee: As marked

[old IV A] There are two broader assemblies in the CREC: the Presbytery and the Church Council. A minimum of two local churches is necessary to establish a presbytery (another term in common use is *classis*). Geographical boundaries of presbyteries may overlap, but in considering this presbyteries are urged to remember the law of Christ (Matt. 7:12; 3 John 9). ~~A minimum of two presbyteries are necessary to form the council (Acts 16:4).~~

Motion (08:10:15:05) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Motion 08:10:15:06 (Agenda motion 29) Ecclesial Committee; amended Schlect/Young (08:10:15:07): Bold language inserted in the Council Book of Procedures at a place to be determined by the Minister of Council:

New presbyteries may form only with the approval of council. **Newly-formed presbyteries will be named on the model of Anselm and Augustine—after figures from Church history.**

Main motion (08:10:15:06) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Motion 08:10:15:08 (Agenda Motion 30) Ecclesial Committee; amended Schlect/Strawbridge (08:10:15:09): New provision:

The authority of the broader assemblies of the CREC is set forth in various parts of this Constitution. The assemblies shall only deal with ecclesiastical matters in an ecclesiastical manner and hence their authority includes the following powers: (a) to hold regular and ad hoc meetings; (b) to amend their standards following due process; (c) to designate ad hoc committees; (d) to address matters referred to them by the session of a member church or by another CREC broader assembly; (e) to formulate plans of action concerning matters common to the churches; (f) to admit new churches into membership; (g) to evaluate men for ordination and recommend or not recommend candidates to the local churches; (h) to inquire into the spiritual health of member

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churches and to confer with other assemblies to this end; (i) to offer a timely pastoral voice to public issues of common concern; (j) to mediate in situations wherein a local church's session is at an impasse and when a local church's session is a party in a dispute either with one of its own members, with the session of another CREC church, with a CREC broader assembly, or with a non-CREC church; (k) to require mediation and non-binding arbitration, when appropriate, in order to reconcile brothers; (l) to protect its own purity and peace through judicial action following due process; (m) to censure or expel a member church following due process;

Main motion (08:10:15:08) carried by voice vote without dissent.

Motion 08:10:15:10 (Agenda Motion 30) Ecclesial Committee offered the following substitute motion:

(n) by two-thirds majority vote and pending judicial process, censure a member church or a CREC officer. A censure under this provision does not affect a member church's voting rights or appeal rights in the broader assemblies.

Motion (08:10:15:10) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Motion 08:01:15:11 (Agenda Motion 30) Ecclesial Committee: strike and replace as marked:

[old IV S] The broader assemblies shall keep a Book of Procedures that details particular methods for carrying out the various constitutionally-sanctioned tasks of an assembly. The broader assemblies are informed by the Book of Procedures, but not bound to it. Should an assembly act in exception to the Book of Procedures, the exception must be acknowledged and explained in the minutes. The Book of Procedures may be altered or amended at any time by a simple majority of an assembly. The various presbyteries may modify their respective Books of Procedures between meetings of council. Each meeting of council will review these various modifications and ~~determine one uniform Book of Procedures for use by all the presbyteries~~ **harmonize the various Books of Procedures, in accordance with the provisions of the CREC Council Book of Procedures.** Presbyteries may then approve further modifications for their own use, to be followed in turn by conciliar review. Maintenance and publication of a current Book of Procedures is the responsibility of the moderator.

Main motion (08:10:15:11) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Motion 08:10:15:12 (Agenda Motion 4, prior Motion 08:10:14:06) Alders/Smith: New Section added to the CREC Council Book of Procedures:

Harmony of Books of Procedures:

Presbytery Moderators shall submit to the Council Moderator, at least six months prior to the next regular Council meeting, a list of any changes to their Presbytery Book of Procedures to be presented for adoption and harmonization with the CREC Council Book of Procedures. These should include items that the presbyteries wish to see standardized for all presbyteries. Items peculiar to a particular presbytery do not need to be presented but may be maintained by that presbytery in their Book of Procedures, provided that such procedures are not in conflict with the

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Council Book of Procedures or the CREC Constitution and By-laws. Once approved by the Council Moderator, the proposed changes shall be presented in the form of motions for adoption at the next regular meeting of the Council. If a motion does not pass, it may be presented again to the delegates of Council for approval to be retained in that presbytery's Book of Procedures.

Motion (08:10:15:12) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Motion 08:10:15:13 (Agenda Motion 31) Ecclesial Committee substitute motion: New text (bold) proposed:

[old IV B] Each congregation in a presbytery will send up to two elders as voting representatives to each meeting of presbytery—ordinarily, one of whom is serving in the capacity of pastor if such exists in the local church. A voting representative of a congregation must be a member of that congregation, unless an exception is granted by presbytery.

Main motion (08:10:15:13) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Motion 08:10:15:14 (Agenda Motion 32) Ecclesial committee; amended Phelps/Strawbridge (08:10:15:15): New text (bold):

[old IV C] The various presbyteries will each send an equal number of delegates to council, not including the moderator of council among the number sent from his presbytery. Each council shall determine the number of delegates that will represent the presbyteries to the subsequent council; the number will be so determined as to create a council of between ten and eighteen delegates in all, not including the moderator of council. If there are more than nine presbyteries, each presbytery will be represented at council with two delegates. Delegates to Council are to be elected at the first meeting of Presbytery following a regular meeting of Council, and their service continues through the next regular meeting of Council. Thus they represent their Presbytery at one regular meeting of Council plus any ad hoc meetings of Council that are convened in the interim.

Main motion (08:10:15:14) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Motion 08:10:15:16 (Agenda Motion 33) Ecclesial Committee:

1. The Ministers of Presbytery and Council serve three-year terms. They assume authority and responsibilities following adjournment of the assembly meeting at which they are elected, which concludes the term of their predecessors.

All nominations for the position of Minister should be pre-posted on the agenda. If no nominations are received prior to the posting of the agenda, nominations may be made from the floor of the assembly. Upon the establishment of a new presbytery, the Council shall assign a year to begin the three-year rotation for the election of the Minister of that presbytery. The presbytery shall have the discretion to have its first moderator serve one or two additional years in order to meet this rotation requirement.

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No Minister may serve two consecutive terms as moderator unless no qualified candidate is willing to serve (1 Peter 5:1-4). In such cases a two-thirds vote can extend the term of the current minister.

Motion (08:10:15:16) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Motion 08:10:15:17 (Agenda Motion 33) Ecclesial Committee:

2. Assemblies shall also elect a Minister *pro tempore*, to serve in cases of the Minister's absence, or to fill out the term of the Minister if the office of the Minister becomes vacant.

Motion (09:10:15:17) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Motion 08:10:15:18 (Agenda Motion 33) Ecclesial Committee; amended Schlect/Liechty (08:10:15:19); amendment (08:10:15:19) withdrawn; amended Phelps/Smith (08:10:15:20):

3. Ministers properly act on behalf of the broader assemblies when actions have been declared in writing by the Minister and then included in the Minister's written report to the next duly constituted meeting of the broader assembly. At the meeting, the Minister's report must be received and acted upon by the broader assembly in accordance with the procedure described in the Meeting Protocols.

Main motion (08:10:15:18) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Motion 08:10:15:21 (Agenda Motion 33) Ecclesial Committee:

4. With regard to meetings, the moderators of presbytery and council have the following authority and responsibilities: to prepare agendas, chair the meetings, submit reports of their work, call ad hoc meetings when necessary, and prepare minutes of the meetings to be posted in public. In addition, the moderator of church council shall bear the responsibility for maintaining a true and accurate copy of the CREC's constitution, reflecting all amendments and additions thereto, and for making the constitution available by means of electronic publishing.

Main motion (08:10:15:21) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Motion 08:10:15:22 (Agenda Motion 33) Ecclesial Committee; amended Tuuri/Young (08:10:15:23); amended Tuuri/? (08:10:15:24): Add the following new language:

5. The Moderator of Presbytery or Council is also a spokesman and representative, whose authority and responsibilities in that capacity are as follows:

First, between meetings of the broader assembly, the moderator represents the broader assembly by initiating and taking prudent steps in furtherance of an action, which he must report to the broader assembly for ratification. In this way, the moderator represents the broader assembly for any action empowered to that assembly by this constitution, except for the following: admitting members; amending confessional or governmental standards; making formal recommendations regarding ministerial candidates for ordination; removing a member church; requiring arbitration; and adjudicating a trial.

Second, as representative of presbytery or council, the moderator has the authority to encourage

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and spiritually strengthen the sessions of elders within his broader assembly, meet with the moderators of other broader assemblies, both within and without the CREC, to encourage them or to be encouraged, and to inquire about the spiritual and doctrinal health of other broader assemblies as well as the churches within his own assembly.

Third, moderators are to act according to the authority conferred to them by virtue of their office, and all their actions are to be confined and limited to the authority specified by the Constitution of the CREC, and they shall report to presbytery or council on their work as spokesman and representative. Additionally, prior to a Minister censuring a CREC church or officer he must receive approval from two other Ministers.

The main motion (08:10:15:22) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Council Minister Booth re-assumed the Chair.

Motion 08:10:15:25 Anselm Presbytery: Amend the Council Book of Procedures by including the following definitions at a location to be determined by the new Council Minister:

PRESENT

An item (e.g., committee report, correspondence, etc) is “presented” to the assembly when a delegate reads or, as appropriate, summarizes or describes the item to the assembly and hands it to the presiding officer or secretary. (Based on Robert’s Rules ¶53.)

RECEIVE

A report or other item is “received” by the assembly when it is presented it to the assembly as specified in these definitions. (Based on Robert’s Rules ¶¶ 53-54). It is not necessary to move to “receive” a presented item, for it has already been “received.” (*Ibid.*) “Receiving” an item does not indicate approval, endorsement, or adoption by the assembly.

ADOPT

When the assembly wishes to approve and endorse assembly minutes or the factual findings or opinions of a committee as set forth in a report, or when the assembly wishes to implement the recommendations or resolutions of a committee as set forth in a report, the proper motion is to “adopt” the minutes or specified portion(s) of the report. If a committee report contains statements of fact or opinion which are only for the assembly’s information, the assembly may simply “receive” the report, unless the assembly wishes to endorse and assume responsibility for the statements, in which case the assembly should “adopt” them. (Based on Robert’s Rules ¶¶ 33, 54.)

RATIFY

When the assembly wishes to confirm the action(s) of a moderator under paragraph IV. J., or to make valid a past action by an officer, committee, or delegate which requires prior approval of the assembly, the proper motion is to “ratify” the action. By definition, the assembly may ratify only such actions of its moderators, officers, committees, or delegates as it had the right to authorize in advance. (Based on Robert’s Rules ¶ 39.)

MEDIATION

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The attempt to settle a dispute through the active participation of a third party (the “mediator”) who works with disputing parties to clear up misunderstandings, heal offenses, find points of agreement, and persuade them to agree on a fair and just resolution. The role of mediator may be performed by an individual or a committee.

NON-BINDING ARBITRATION

An informal mini-trial conducted by a third party or panel in an attempt to assist disputing parties to more objectively assess the respective merit of their positions and the likely outcome of a formal trial. The outcome of non-binding arbitration is advisory only.

The motion (08:10:15:25) passed by voice vote with no dissent.

Pastor Booth exhorted the assembled to ensure that all presbytery delegates be in attendance in time for the new presbytery meetings in the morning.

The delegates were addressed by Pastor Alexander Orlov-Koschavka (San Sanych) of the Bible Church of Rovno, Ukraine.

Ministers Strawbridge, Booth and Wilson prayed over Pastor Orlov-Koschavka and anointed him with oil in accordance with James 5:14-15.

The meeting was recessed with the singing of the *Doxology* by the assembly.

Thursday, October 16, 2008

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 am by Minister Booth, with the singing of “O Love, How Deep, How Broad, How High” and a prayer of invocation by Gene Helsel.

Pastor Booth requested and received unanimous consent to add a motion regarding the CREC sponsoring men as military chaplains.

Motion 08:10:16:01 (Agenda Motion 34) Ecclesial Committee: Insert the bold language into the Constitution, as follows:

1. [old IV M] Issues relating to the local congregation which may lawfully be brought before the broader assemblies are specified in this section. All matters not itemized here must be adjudicated and resolved at the level of the local church. Before any appeal is made, a matter must be first addressed at the local church level. Appeal may be made (1) when the session of elders is accused by two or more of the church members of participating in or tolerating grievous dishonesty in subscription to the doctrinal or constitutional standards of the local church; or, (2) when the session of elders is accused by two or more of the church members of gross misbehavior. In any case where at least two witnesses are from the same household, three witnesses are required to hear the case. When such accusations of grievous dishonesty or gross misbehavior on the part of the session of a local church are made to elders or pastors from other local churches or to the moderator of presbytery or council, the session under accusation must be promptly informed. However, pastors and elders must reject irresponsible accusations and direct the member making the complaint to his own session. The broader assemblies must refuse to hear frivolous or unconstitutional appeals. Appeals to council do not necessarily have to

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first be heard by presbytery. However, council may choose to remand the case to presbytery.

The motion (08:10:16:01) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Motion 08:10:16:02 (Agenda Motion 34) Ecclesial Committee: Strike and insert language as marked

[old IV O] The decisions of the assemblies with regard to the local congregation are spiritually authoritative, but practically advisory. If the elders of a particular congregation choose to refuse the instruction of the broader church, they may do so without deprivation of property. However, if their disregard of godly counsel is particularly egregious, they may be removed from membership in the CREC, **in accordance with Section M and O constitutional procedure.**

The motion (08:10:16:02) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Minister Booth struck Agenda Motion 35 as redundant

Motion 08:10:16:03 (Agenda Motion 36) Ecclesial Committee: New text (bold) proposed by Ecclesial Committee.

1. [old IV D] The presbytery will have a stated annual meeting. If **two-thirds** of the churches submit a written request to the moderator, an *ad hoc* presbytery meeting will be called. The decision to call for an *ad hoc* meeting of the presbytery cannot be made at presbytery.

[old IV E] The council will have a stated meeting every three years. In the year that the council meets, presbyteries must have their annual meeting at the same place and time. If **two-thirds** of the presbyteries submit a written request to the moderator of the council, an *ad hoc* council meeting can be called. The decision to call for an *ad hoc* meeting of the council cannot be made at council. The requirement that presbyteries convene at the same place and time as council does not apply to *ad hoc* meetings of council.

The main motion (08:10:16:03) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Motion 08:10:16:04 (Agenda Motion 37) Ecclesial Committee: New text (bold) proposed by Ecclesial Committee.

2. [old V A] Broader assemblies act properly when either (a) in a duly constituted meeting, the measure is moved, seconded, carried by the appropriate number of votes, entered in the minutes, and approved in the minutes; or (b) the act is declared in writing by the moderator and then included in the moderator's written report to the next duly constituted meeting of the broader assembly. At the meeting, the moderator's report must be received by the broader assembly, **and his actions reviewed and voted upon, and either ratified or not ratified, with the results recorded as such in the approved minutes.**

The motion (08:10:16:04) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Delegate Schlect indicated and the Council consented that the language regarding approval by two-thirds of the presbyteries constituting approval by Council would be inserted in paragraph 2, above. Noted by the Moderator (see Motion 08:10:16:06).

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Motion 08:10:16:05 (Agenda Motion 37) Ecclesial Committee:

3. [old IV G] At votes of the broader assemblies, each delegate has one vote. The Minister may not vote, and so in those cases when a church has only one vote because one of their delegates has been elected Minister, the church may put forth a new delegate to take the place of the Minister. If the church cannot put forth a replacement, the remaining delegate has two votes.

4. [reworded from old V B and IV I] Amending the agenda in stated meetings requires a two-thirds majority vote. The agenda for ad hoc meetings may include only those issues related to the stated reasons for calling the meeting.

The agenda of any stated Presbytery or Council meeting must be posted on the public electronic page maintained by that assembly's Minister no less than thirty days and no more than sixty days prior to the meeting.

The motion (08:10:16:05) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Motion 08:10:16:06 Wilson/Vanderveen: That the following be inserted in the Constitution with language of 08:10:16:04, as noted above:

When two-thirds of the Presbyteries ratify an action or adopt a report, it will be considered an act of Council. When such would result in a constitutional amendment, three-quarters of the presbyteries must ratify. The Confessional Standards cannot be altered or modified by this means.

The motion (08:10:16:06) passed by voice vote without dissent.

Motion 08:10:16:07 (Agenda Motion 38) Ecclesial Committee: combine old V C and old V D into one section, as presented here:

5. [old V C] Full minutes of all the assembly proceedings will be kept. The public minutes and records of the assembly will be published on a public electronic page maintained by the church of the Minister, with the Minister responsible for its contents. **The Ministers shall ensure that approved minutes and current versions of the Books of Procedures for all Presbyteries and Council and of the CREC Constitution shall be available on the CREC web page. When revised, these documents shall be posted on or linked to the CREC web page within thirty days of their revision. Whenever new presbyteries are formed, the responsibility for the archives of the predecessor presbyteries remains with the new presbyteries having the same name.** Minutes of confidential proceedings will be distributed in hard copy to all the member churches in the presbytery. The costs associated with this process will be borne by the church of the Minister. Minutes must be posted within two weeks of their approval.

The motion (08:10:16:07) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Motion 08:10:16:08 (Agenda Motion 38) Ecclesial Committee: Strike language as below:

6. [part of old V E] The quorum for the broader assemblies will be two thirds of the voting delegates. ~~[Motions to amend the agenda at the meeting require a unanimous vote.]~~

Motion (08:10:16:08) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

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Motion 08:10:16:09: Strawbridge/Wilson: Quorum rules with regard to Broader Assemblies to be changed to:

The quorum for the Church Council will be two thirds of the voting delegates. The quorum for a Presbytery will be representation by two thirds of the Member Churches in the Presbytery.

Motion (08:10:16:09) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Motion 08:10:16:10: Phelps/Wilson: Amend Constitution by replacing paragraph 7 of reconstitution of old V.C and V.D with the following:

Setting time limits for floor debate or moving the previous question requires a two-thirds vote.

Motion (08:10:16:10) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Minister Booth expressed the appreciation of Council to Ralph Smith and the Ecclesial Committee and dismissed same.

Minister Booth called for a five minute break.

Upon resuming the meeting Minister Booth made reference to a motion regarding the CREC acting as a sponsoring agency for military chaplains and invited a motion to form a committee at discretion of the Council Minister:

Motion 08:10:16:11 Franklin/Smith: Refer the issue of military chaplaincy to a committee to be appointed by the Minister of Council, such committee to report to the presbyteries.

Motion (08:10:16:11) carried by voice vote without dissent.

Minister Booth invited Dr. Roy Atwood of new Saint Andrews College to address the assembled delegates.

Minister Booth invited Gene Liechty to offer prayer on behalf of the assembly for New Saint Andrews College.

Moderator Booth invited Jack Phelps, Chair of the Division of Presbyteries Committee, to manage the presentation of motions on behalf of the Committee.

Motion 08:10:16:12 (Agenda Motion 40) Division of Presbyteries Committee: That

The existing Augustine and Anselm Presbyteries shall be divided into seven (7) presbyteries as set forth in the attached spreadsheet, and shall be named as indicated in said spreadsheet.

[Said spreadsheet is attached as Appendix 3 to these minutes]

Motion 08:10:16:13 Queener/Hurt: To amend the spreadsheet by transferring Covenant Reformed Presbyterian Church from Athanasius Presbytery to Augustine Presbytery.

Motion (08:10:16:13) to amend spreadsheet carried by voice vote with no dissent.

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Main motion (Motion 08:10:16:12) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Motion 08:10:16:14 (Agenda Motion 41) Division of Presbyteries Committee:

That Council adopt the proposed Guidelines and incorporate them into the CREC Book of Procedures. Future proposals to form new presbyteries in the CREC shall, to the greatest extent feasible, conform to these Guidelines:

2. Guidelines for Formation of New Presbyteries

- The optimum size of a presbytery in the CREC shall be ten churches;
- When a presbytery exceeds a membership of twenty churches, it shall begin taking steps to propose to Council the formation of a new presbytery, *except as*, after giving due consideration to the existing condition and strength of its constituent churches, the presbytery deems it unwise to propose division at that time. In this case, presbytery shall report said decision to Council;
- The factors to be considered in forming new presbyteries shall include the following:
 - to the extent feasible, each new presbytery should contain at least ten churches;
 - each new presbytery should include members that have long ministerial experience (graybeards);
 - each new presbytery should contain members that have a good working acquaintance with CREC culture;
 - each new presbytery should contain some churches of significant size (not all small churches);
 - the churches of each new presbytery should share geographic proximity, and have historic connections to one another;
 - the preference of international churches (and domestic churches if circumstances warrant), should be given significant weight when assigning them to a particular presbytery.

The motion (08:10:16:14) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Motion 08:10:16:15 (Agenda Motion 42) Division of Presbyteries Committee:

That Council incorporate into the CREC Book of Procedures the following language: “Each new presbytery shall, within one year of its formation, publish on its web page, a brief biography of the saint for which it is named.”

Motion (08:10:16:15) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Pastor Booth gave instructions to the new presbyteries regarding the afternoon meetings.

Motion 08:10:16:16 Schlect/Niell: that the Minister of Council appoint a committee tasked to harmonize our governing documents’ use of the terms “session,” “congregation,” “church,” and related terms, privileging the term “church,” and to report to the Presbyteries in 2009.

Motion (08:10:16:16) carried by voice vote without dissent.

Motion 08:10:16:17 Niell/Wilson: that Council recognize and commend the faithful labors of Pastor

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Randy Booth as Moderator of the CREC, for performing his labors in love for Jesus and His Bride, and for doing so with diligence, compassion, and sterling Christian character, citing 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13, *And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, 13 and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves.*

Chris Schlect, Minister *Pro Tem* assumed the Chair.

The motion (08:10:16:17) carried unanimously.

Jeff Niell offered prayer on behalf of the assembly, giving thanks for God's guidance in our meetings and giving special thanks for the labors of Pastor Booth.

Minister Booth assumed the Chair and delivered a final Minister's exhortation to the assembly and offered a prayer of thanksgiving and supplication on behalf of the assembly.

Motion 08:10:16:18 Schlect/Phelps: That Pastor Booth's exhortation be included in the minutes.

Motion (08:10:16:18) carried by voice vote without dissent.

Delegate Wilson asked that the Agenda be amended to allow a motion from Anselm. Unanimous consent was given by the Council.

Motion 08:10:16:19 Wilson/Helsel: That CREC churches in non-English speaking countries, since English is the official language of the CREC, be allowed to use dynamic equivalence in their pastoral translations of our documents, materials and names.

Motion (08:10:16:19) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Motion 08:10:16:20 (Agenda Motion 43) Tuuri/Strawbridge: Nomination of Jack Phelps to serve as Minister of Council through Council meeting 2011.

Motion (08:10:16:20) carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Incoming Minister Phelps expressed his appreciation for the confidence of the assembly and asked for their prayers.

Motion 08:10:16:21 Sauder/Tuuri David Queener nominated as Minister *Pro Tem*. Motion 08:10:16:21 carried by voice vote with no dissent.

Minister Booth offered the reading of the Thirty-Nine Articles and the Second Helvetic Confession in English (1566), by consent of the Council referring to electronic copies with links thereto to be provided to Council.

Blake Purcell requested to be recognized and asked for prayer for Ministers Wilson and Strawbridge. Minister Booth asked for them to be honored for their labors.

Minister Booth thanked David Alders for his support in the workings of Council.

Minister Booth adjourned the meeting in prayer on behalf of the assembly, giving thanks for God's provision and asking for His continued guidance, wisdom and grace.