

**United Church of God, *an International Association***  
**Council of Elders Meeting Report**  
**July 7, 2004 – Teleconference**

The Council of Elders met today at 12:30 p.m. EDT in teleconference to deal with three matters in open session and then concluded in executive session. The first order of business was to select a Council representative to attend this year's Ambassador Bible Center graduation. Second, there was a need for edits to the newly released Sexual Misconduct Policy and Youth Protection Guidelines. And finally, the Council discussed a proposed resolution to establish a restricted fund for the purpose of developing a media center at the home office for video and audio productions.

**Council Representative at ABC Graduation**

This year marks the first time the Council will not be in session in Cincinnati at the time of the ABC graduation. It was felt, however, that the Council should be represented at the ceremony. Clyde Kilough opened the discussion by suggesting that there are two members who live within driving distance of Cincinnati. Leon Walker stated that it would be appropriate for Mr. Kilough, as chairman, and Les McCullough, who was the Church's president when ABC was established, to represent the Council. Mr. Kilough deferred, due to an already heavy travel schedule in July and August. Mr. McCullough agreed to represent the Council at the graduation on August 8.

**Edits to Sexual Misconduct Policy**

Specific situations have come to light requiring edits to the Sexual Misconduct Policy and Youth Protection Guidelines, which was sent to all U.S. pastors a few weeks ago. As written, the two-deep leadership structure described in Part D of the policy states that, "...there should always be two (2) supervisors/leaders (at least one of whom is 21 years of age or older) present when caring for minor children under the auspices of the Church." However, leaders in our Church camps are often under the age of 21, with no one older available to assist. This same circumstance may also occur in some congregational activities, where there are fewer volunteers and smaller programs.

The Council unanimously passed a resolution to edit the policy deleting the statement that one of the two adult leaders must be 21 years or older. The resolution also adds a paragraph to the policy that provides for dealing with emergency or specific situations that require judgment on the part of the leader(s). This paragraph also gives permission to Ministerial Services to grant written interpretations, clarifications or exceptions as necessary. The resolution also extends the implementation date of the policy from June 30, 2004 to August 31, 2004.

A copy of the edited policy will be sent to UCG pastors.

## **Restricted Fund for Media Center**

Mr. Kilough asked Church President Roy Holladay to introduce discussion of a resolution composed by Media and Communications Services Operation Manager Peter Eddington, proposing the establishing of a restricted fund for the development of a media center at the home office. Dr. Tom Kirkpatrick, Church treasurer, also assisted in writing the resolution.

Mr. Holladay commented that on many of his visits to UCG congregations members have expressed a willingness to contribute, in addition to tithes and offerings, to a special fund for the purpose of such a facility. Mr. Holladay pointed out that the Council, in previous discussions and resolutions, has already expressed a desire to move in this direction. The restricted fund would expedite the process. Mr. Eddington and Mr. Holladay both emphasized the importance of moving forward on this matter as quickly as possible so the Church will have a quality production facility and will be in a position to take advantage of opportunities such as the rapid expansion of streaming video on the Internet.

After careful and thorough deliberation, Aaron Dean officially put forward the resolution and the Council voted in favor of its acceptance by a 9-3 margin (Robert Dick, Mr. McCullough and Mr. Walker were opposed). Each Council member participated in the discussion.

- Tony Wasilkoff commented that this was an opportunity for the Council to be moving forward and be proactive. He also expressed that the amount of contributions to the fund will determine member interest and whether we will be able to go forward with the project..
- Mr. Walker expressed objections, not to the media center itself, but to the use of a restricted fund. First, he was concerned whether members would send contributions above and beyond tithes and offerings. Second, he felt that if a project is necessary and important, it should be funded through the normal budgetary process rather than relying on member contributions.
- Victor Kubik, chairman of the Council's Media and Communications Committee, stated that the proposed media center would provide a facility for the productions such as video clips for the Internet, interviews, ABC presentations and radio programs. As a general-use facility it would provide flexibility for various productions, without "boxing us into" any particular format.
- Mr. Dick was expressed concern about making such a large and long-term commitment based on what he felt was insufficient financial data and projections. By comparison, he said, that information was available for previous major financial commitments such as moving the home office to Cincinnati and building the home office facility. Mr. McCullough agreed, adding that this effort appears to be "open-ended" and that we don't really know what the full cost of the program will be. Mr. Eddington responded that detailed financial projections for the media center had been provided to the Council previously, as well as a detailed description of the programming philosophy.

- Mr. Kilough commented that, while he was comfortable with the financial estimates and projections, he was concerned about the timing of establishing a restricted fund. He pointed out that the Council is in the process of developing a comprehensive media strategy and that it might be better to wait until that effort is finished and then introduce the media center as part of that strategy.
- Richard Thompson stated that he would not want us to wait too long to get started, so that once there is an agreement we would then have to wait for funding. He felt that it would not be best for the Council to postpone a funding decision until the next fiscal year (2005-2006).
- Doug Horchak agreed, adding that there comes a point when it's time to take action. If necessary, he stated, the Council could continue to study the figures and make a decision in August. But this resolution allows things to move ahead. There will likely be some flexibility in the budget at the end of the current fiscal year, but establishing the restricted fund indicates the Council views the media center as a high priority.
- Mario Seiglie added that a media center would provide the capability of an even higher quality cable-access television program, which would more appropriately represent the Church.
- Mr. McCullough expressed concern that members would assume that we are making a commitment to the production of a broadcast television program. Mr. Eddington explained that the resolution clearly states how the media center would be used and that there is no plan to produce a commercial television program without further Council approval.
- Jim Franks said he didn't feel it would take away from the comprehensive media strategy to introduce the restricted fund for a media center at this time. He also commented that there seems to be a reasonable chance that during the current fiscal year the budgetary requirements will be met, including financial reserves, and that if the media center is an important priority, excess funds could be allocated for it at that time.
- Mr. Dean stated that he was fully supportive of the restricted fund for the media center.
- Joel Meeker commented that in the long run it seems inevitable that we will have a studio of some sort. His question is based on whether a media center would be worthwhile if it turns out that the comprehensive media philosophy suggests that video should only be used on the Internet and for in-house productions.

Mr. Holladay will present details of the restricted fund for the media center to the membership in a letter or article.

The Council concluded open session at approximately 2:05 p.m. and concluded its business in executive session.

Don Henson

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