

United Church of God, *an International Association*
Council of Elders Meeting Report
Aug. 12 and 13, 2009—Cincinnati, Ohio

Aug. 12, 2009

For the meetings on Wednesday, Aug. 12, the Council was in executive session.

Aug. 13, 2009

Chairman Holladay called the meeting to order at approximately 9 a.m. Eastern Daylight Savings Time with prayer by Victor Kubik. All members of the Council (except Jim Franks) were in attendance as well as several of the wives of the members of the Council, some home office staff members and guests.

Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws

Paul Kieffer discussed a proposed amendment to Article 8, Section 8.6.2, of the Bylaws. The proposal was submitted at this point by six members of the Council—Scott Ashley, Bill Eddington, Roy Holladay, Paul Kieffer, Victor Kubik and Robin Webber. Paul Kieffer asked if this proposal can be considered as being put forward by the entire Council.

Doug Horchak agreed that there needs to be consistency between the governing documents. He said that the Bylaws are subservient to the Constitution, and the Bylaws speak to specifics. He mentioned that there is a reason why there was a distinction when the governing documents were originally drafted. He stated that the discussion then was about whether the Council manages or gives direction to management—and when he was last on the Council, it was that the Council gives direction. So the way it currently is written, he continued, is how the Council saw its role in working with management.

Scott Ashley said that he sees that there is actually more detail in the Constitution than in the Bylaws with regard to the activities of the Council. Bill Eddington said that this amendment spells out the direction the Council has wanted to go for the last two years or so. Doug Horchak said that the current wording of the Bylaws addresses the way the Council directs and controls. Paul Kieffer said that the six putting forth this amendment believe just the opposite about this issue. He commented that some people quote from the Constitution and some then quote from the Bylaws to establish their position on the issue of the Council's interaction with the administration.

Victor Kubik stated that he has very little recollection of how these two statements came about. In the beginning the Transitional Board of Directors was acting as management. Since then we have varied in how much direct involvement the Council has had in management. The Council has the right to step in when and where needed. There has been an ebb and flow of involvement over the years. He further commented that some

organizations have an institutional board, being distanced from day-to-day operations, but we have been somewhere in the middle where the Council has been more involved in matters, such as with the functioning of Elder's Forum.

Roy Holladay commented that over the years many of the members of the General Conference of Elders have quoted the Bylaws—the Council only has oversight—while others have quoted the Constitution—the Council has direct involvement in the affairs of the Church. This amendment will make it consistent between both of those governing documents.

In his opinion, Paul Kieffer said, the Council should not be involved in the day-to-day affairs of the Church. Bill Eddington mentioned that the words “direct and oversight” are not very descriptive and the Roles and Rules Committee was given the job of defining what those terms mean.

Paul Kieffer asked if the other five (Jim Franks not being present) members of the Council would support this proposed amendment. Robert Berendt, Aaron Dean and Darris McNeely each lent their support.

Council of Elders Communication Strategy

Darris McNeely distributed and discussed a proposed Council of Elders communication strategy. He stated that the Media Committee unanimously approved this document going forward. The various strategies are as follows:

1. *About Our Father's Business.* During quarterly meetings, have the chairman interviewed by the president. Various Council of Elders members can be interviewed as well. We could also have the chairman interview other Council members. At least two to three interviews could be done each quarter.
2. Council travel. Reinstitute travel of Council members to congregations. Use the budget allocated for travel and interaction with various groups. Send Council members to churches on Holy Days and other special occasions.
3. Council speaking at Annual Meeting of the General Conference of Elders (GCE). Consideration of Council members speaking at services during the annual GCE meeting, giving two split sermons each year.
4. Consideration of Council members or GCE members giving keynote address at the annual meeting of the GCE.
5. Council recordings of opening session of each meeting. Archived recordings of president's report and selected business discussions?
6. Write and send to the GCE a chairman's letter and agenda before each quarterly meeting. The chairman can emphasize particular issues facing United and the Council's role in addressing them.
7. Write and send to the GCE a chairman's summary at the end of each quarterly meeting. This gives the chairman a chance to review what was actually discussed

- and decided from the agenda. He can put emphasis where needed and give a preview of what will be done in advance of the next meeting.
8. In December take one hour and go into the Ambassador Bible Center classroom to talk and have a “town hall meeting” with the students. Let the students get to know the Council and what it does within the Church. We should not assume they understand the role of the Council. In fact, most of them have no clue. We need to educate them. Do this for an hour or so before lunch and then treat the students to a pizza “lunch with the Council.”
 9. Rename the *MSNJ* as *The Ministerial Journal: A Publication for the General Conference of Elders*. The lead letter each month would be alternately written by the chairman and the president. Operation managers give reports within the publication. Committee chairs can provide updates on the business of their committees. Other Council members may contribute occasionally. Production of this publication would stay within Ministerial Services and would liaison with the Council Media Committee.
 10. Regularly put Council member sermons on sermon DVDs. Have a Council member speak in the home office congregation at every quarterly meeting to facilitate taping.
 11. Produce occasional sermons by Council members to be played in all churches (start with one on the need for preaching the gospel).
 12. As needed, have a town hall meeting with home office employees and Cincinnati area elders. This could be held at the end of a day’s session and combined with a meal at the office.

Victor Kubik recommended that any Council travel be coordinated with Ministerial Services. In the past we used an internal Web site that listed all the congregations that have been visited by a member of the Council, as well as those congregations that have requested visits by a Council member.

Paul Kieffer said that he likes the current practice of having the sermon, on the Sabbath during the Annual Meeting of the GCE, alternate between the president and chairman. Robin Webber commented that both the president and chairman will address the GCE during the meetings and this recommendation will give a variety. Robert Berendt said that he believes it is important for everyone to see and hear the president and chairman and therefore supports the way it is currently done. Scott Ashley said that the president or chairman gives the sermon on the Sabbath, then one of them gives the keynote address the next day and the rest of the Council is not heard from.

Aaron Dean said that, in most businesses, the keynote address is generally given by the president or chairman. Bill Eddington said that Aaron Dean is correct, but he does not believe we need to follow that standard. Bill Eddington continued and said that the keynote address is very important, but the best keynote address he ever heard was from a man who has never been on the Council. It needs to be someone who can give inspiration

and direction. Victor Kubik said that the keynote needs to be rotated among those who can inspire and motivate the GCE.

Paul Kieffer stated that he would like to have the recording of the open sessions of the Council done on a test basis first and then see what the feedback is from the GCE. Robin Webber said that little snapshots here and there of the meeting would also be good to make it interesting.

With regard to the Council having a “town hall meeting” with the ABC students, Roy Holladay pointed out that this was done when ABC first began.

With regard to point 9, Ministerial Services would continue producing the journal. David Johnson expressed two concerns: 1) getting the input on a timely basis; and 2) will reviews of the articles submitted be required? Darris McNeely mentioned that he certainly understands the first point and does not see a great deal of issues with the review process. Doug Horchak mentioned that it would be better to discuss the change of the name and direction of the *MSNJ* with Jim Franks, who was not present.

Addressing point 11, and with a question from Bill Eddington, Darris McNeely said that this would be done based on a specific need.

Darris McNeely moved, Scott Ashley seconded and the Council members present unanimously approved the Council of Elders Strategy. However, with regard to point 9, the renaming of the *MSNJ*, that is pending based on further input from Jim Franks, operation manager for Ministerial Services, who was not present at the meeting.

Executive Session

The Council went into executive session through the middle of the day.

Branding

Darris McNeely started the next session by presenting the findings of the Branding Task Force. Branding, for the Church, is about a compelling story of the gospel—a story of telling people what the meaning of life is. It is about creating a crystal-clear message about what God the Father and Jesus Christ are doing.

With Clyde Kilough as chairman, Darris McNeely mentioned that the other members of this task force were: Roy Holladay, Larry Salyer, Darris McNeely, Peter Eddington, Linda Register, Scott Moss and Brian Shaw. He said that four agencies made presentations to the task force at two different meetings. After meeting with these agencies, the task force made its recommendation that the Northlich Company of Cincinnati would serve the needs of the Church the best.

He further stated that the task force was very comfortable with Northlich and believes the company will work very well with the Church—with the task force being

highly involved and giving direction at all times. Additionally, he reported that key administrative staff, some of the Council members, some of the other home office staff, as well as some members of the Church will eventually be interviewed.

Doug Horchak referred to the report, which said that this company has had limited dealings with other churches, and asked what the company had done for other churches. Darris McNeely responded that what the company is doing for United is not like anything it has done for other churches.

Bill Eddington asked what budget the charges would be applied to. Jason Lovelady responded that the charges would be applied to the Media budget.

Darris McNeely then moved, Roy Holladay seconded and the 11 members of the Council present voted unanimously to approve using the recommended agency to assist the Branding Task Force in establishing a brand for the United Church of God.

Where Do We Go From Here?

Aaron Dean presented the “Where Do We Go From Here?” document as edited by the Strategic Planning Committee. Jason Lovelady asked the Council to consider the potential real estate investment of the Denton, Texas, property with the idea to hold on to it for five years or so, with expectations of appreciation in its market value and a better chance of receiving a more advantageous sales price later. He further mentioned that this is not a good time to sell the property. Aaron Dean responded that there is talk of appreciating value, but the opposite could be just as likely with today’s economy.

Doug Horchak mentioned that he is not against selling the Denton property, but does not want to sell the property to send a message that Cincinnati is where we are. He stated that he is worried that “quick” could mean losing money on a sale of the property.

Jason Lovelady asked the Council to consider how the Church can maximize its value in this property. He said holding on to the property may bring substantially more than the original purchase price.

Aaron Dean then moved, Scott Ashley seconded and, of the 11 Council members present, 10 voted “yes” and one voted “no” (Doug Horchak), to adopt the following:

Whereas, the Council recognizes the need to preach the gospel, yet recognizes that the deteriorating economic and job situation in the U.S. will most likely result in decreased income, and

Whereas, the Denton property is an isolated asset that tied up considerable cash, and

Whereas, the Council wishes to reevaluate its space needs and options locally,

Now therefore, it is hereby resolved, that:

1. There be no new study on home office relocation at the present time.
2. The Denton property will be listed for sale and sold when an acceptable offer, as determined by the Council in conjunction with the treasurer, is made.
3. That a space-needs study be undertaken to determine what we can do with and without expansion of the present home office building.
4. That administration do a cost-benefit study of off-site space relating to residential housing for approved UCG education/training programs.
5. Although some pastoral trainees may need to take part in the ABC program, it shall remain a nine-month program. An additional period of education/training, if implemented, will be part of the pastoral training program, not ABC, and is for pastoral candidates and the occasional ABC student who would be asked to participate in the additional period.

Upcoming Teleconference

Chairman Holladay mentioned that there are three issues the Council still must address, not including the retirement policies presented earlier in these meetings. These issues can be addressed by teleconference. Chairman Holladay then called a teleconference of the Council for Monday, Aug. 24, 2009, at 5 p.m. Eastern Daylight Savings Time to discuss those issues.

As well, Chairman Holladay called a Council teleconference for Thursday, Sept. 10, 2009, at 5 p.m. Eastern Daylight Savings Time, to consider and discuss the treasurer's market analysis and other issues with regard to the property in Denton, Texas, as well as to address the retirement issues discussed earlier in these meetings.

Acknowledgement of Service on the Council

Chairman Holladay, on behalf of the Council of Elders, acknowledged the eight years of service by Clyde Kilough on the Council of Elders with a plaque and gifts for both him and his wife, Dee. Chairman Holladay stated that gifts will be sent to John Foster, previous Council reporter, and Richard Thompson, who served many years on the Council of Elders.

Roy Holladay adjourned the meeting just before 4 p.m. by asking Darris McNeely to close with prayer.

-end-

Gerald Seelig
Council Reporter

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