

**United Church of God, *an International Association***  
**Council of Elders Meeting Report**  
**August 10-11, 2010—Cincinnati, Ohio**

**Tuesday morning session**

Council met in executive session all morning.

**Tuesday afternoon session**

Council chairman Melvin Rhodes called the afternoon session to order at 1:20 p.m. Darris McNeely opened with prayer.

All Council members were present plus Church president Dennis Luker, Ministerial Services director Victor Kubik, church counsel Larry Darden, Media Operations manager Peter Eddington and several wives and others.

**GCE annual meeting planning**

Peter Eddington, serving as chairman of the GCE Planning Task Force reminded the Council of the GCE annual meeting dates for 2011 on May 14-16, and then he asked and received Council approval for the 2012 GCE annual meeting on May 5-7.

Next Mr. Eddington reviewed the 2010 GCE Exit Survey commenting that overall the results were quite positive:

- 72% of the GCE were physically present.
- 88% of those who didn't physically attend were limited by the cost of coming.
- Sabbath services and the Sunday business meeting were the most online attended parts of the annual meeting.
- 50% of those physically attending had their wives attending with them—which is the typical percentage.

The results of the GCE Exit Survey will soon be posted on the ministerial website at <http://www.ucg.org/ministerial/gce/2010> for all elders to read in detail if desired. Mr. Eddington stressed the importance of highlighting to the ministry the next annual meeting of the GCE in May of 2011. The theme of that meeting will be determined in December.

Darris McNeely offered appreciation for the work of the GCE Planning Task Force and especially for this past meeting's International Evening.

Robin Webber concurred and expressed appreciation for the many elders who spend their own money to come to the conference. He also encouraged announcing next May's

meeting soon after the Feast and that it would be great to see even more elders physically attending in the long term.

Jim Franks asked if we know how many actually are logged-in online. Mr. Eddington commented that we had a large increase of those logged-in online this year.

Chairman Rhodes asked if we send any recordings of the sessions to the international elders. The answer was that recordings of all the sessions of the GCE meeting are on the ministerial website for elders to download and listen to.

Scott Ashley asked if we've ever considered moving the GCE meeting to a Memorial Day weekend so more non-fulltime elders could attend. The answer was that although it has been considered, the U.S. Memorial Day weekend is generally too close to Pentecost, graduations of children and grandchildren as well as our early summer UYC camps.

Bob Berendt asked what was covered in the presentation last May on the subject of the Middle East and Islam. The answer was that it was about the challenges of preaching the gospel in Islamic areas—and that that session was also available to download on the ministerial website.

### **Progress report on sexual misconduct policy**

Melvin Rhodes then asked Ministerial Services operation manager Vic Kubik to present an update on the Sexual Misconduct policy.

Mr. Kubik gave brief background on the policy: “During the August 24, 2009 Council of Elders teleconference, Ministerial Services brought forth a proposal to develop a sexual misconduct policy. It was approved. The plan is to have the Council of Elders Ethics Committee work with Ministerial Services to create this policy for Council approval.”

He went on to explain that nine elders were assigned to a task force to evaluate the biblical principles regarding sexual misconduct. That study is completed and the actual writing of the upgraded policy is still in process. An internal Web page is being used to gather, record and collate the research and writing process. Mr. Kubik recommended, and it was approved, that the new chairman of the Ethics Committee continue the policy writing process in conjunction with Ministerial Services.

### **Council committee process**

Chairman Rhodes next introduced Council member Bill Eddington to oversee the selection of the various Council committees for the coming year.

Mr. Eddington with the aid of Council secretary Gerald Seelig explained the committee selection process. He first reviewed all the standing committees, explaining the parameters and functions of each. Second, membership in all the committees was

officially vacated to facilitate the populating of each by the new Council (“new” since the election at the GCE in May).

Secretary Seelig distributed selection ballots for members to write the three committees they would like to serve on in order of preference. Since no committee can comprise a majority of the Council members, a few had to change one of their preferences. Systematically, Bill Eddington asked the volunteers for each committee to leave the room and from among themselves to choose a chairman for that committee for the coming year. Here are the results of the committee selection process:

**Media & Communications Committee:**

- Darris McNeely – chairman
- Bill Eddington
- Scott Ashley
- David Treybig
- Mario Seiglie

**Roles & Rules Committee:**

- Bill Eddington – chairman
- Bob Berendt
- Mike Blackwell
- Jim Franks
- Aaron Dean

**Strategic Planning & Finance Committee:**

- Robin Weber – chairman
- Scott Ashley
- David Baker
- David Treybig
- Aaron Dean
- Bob Berendt

**Ethics Committee:**

- Mario Seiglie – chairman
- Scott Ashley
- Darris McNeely
- Mike Blackwell
- David Treybig
- Robin Webber

**Doctrine Committee:**

- Jim Franks – chairman
- Mike Blackwell
- David Baker
- Bob Berendt

Mr. Eddington then pointed out that the final committee, the Executive Committee is automatically chaired by the Council of Elders chairman. This committee doesn't meet often and its primary function is to expedite a few legal duties on behalf of the Council. Typically it has been a geographical or time zone based committee to facilitate rapid teleconferences. He then asked for volunteers to serve on the committee for the coming year. The final selection of the committee is this:

**Executive Committee:**

- Melvin Rhodes – chairman
- Aaron Dean
- David Treybig
- Darris McNeely

At this point Mr. Eddington moved that Council ratify the committees and received unanimous approval.

**Roles & Rules Committee projects report**

After a short break Chairman Rhodes reconvened the Council and returned the floor to the chairman of the Roles & Rules Committee Bill Eddington.

Mr. Eddington remanded some of the Roles & Rules discussion to be discussed during executive session later. He then addressed the following items needing attention:

- Conflict Between Council Committees and Human Resources Policy

The Council needs to consider a conflict between the Member Appeal Policy (MAP), the Elder Expulsion and Suspension Appeal Policy (EEAP) and HR Policy 2.17. Employed elders have access to either the MAP or EEAP to appeal a disciplinary action taken against them, but the HR policy also allows such an appeal to be made. The issue was remanded to the administration to consider whether the HR policy 2.17 should be amended in order to rectify the conflict.

- Membership of Fundamental Beliefs Amendment Committee

Mr. Eddington explained that Council members and outgoing Council members are not eligible to sit on the amendment committee, but similar restrictions are not included in the "Provisional Manner of Amending the Fundamental Beliefs." However, new Council member David Treybig is presently a member of the Fundamental Beliefs Amendment Committee (FBAC). The Council discussed possible past precedents and the pros and cons of a Council member sitting on the FBAC and whether the restrictions on Amendment Committee membership should also apply to the FBAC.

As no items were presently before the FBAC, Council determined that the concern should

be decided later.

- Elder Expulsion Appeal Committee, Policy and Procedures

Mr. Eddington sought approval from the Council to submit three documents to the GCE for comment and balloting as required. The documents in question are:

- Elder Expulsion Appeal Committee Scope and Responsibilities
- Policy and Procedure for Suspension and Expulsion from the General Conference of Elders
- Procedure for Appeal of Suspension or Expulsion from the General Conference of Elders

Mr. Eddington explained that the Roles & Rules Committee creates procedures for the other committees and has done so for the Elder Suspension Appeal Committee. The committee has been specified to have a certain number of international elders and a certain number of U.S. elders. The Council made one change which to specify that there be no distinction between U.S. and international elders when populating the committee.

The new procedures were unanimously approved and will be sent in due course to the GCE for formal adoption.

- International Report Frequency

Mr. Eddington next presented a proposal to reduce the frequency of progress reports from the international areas to the Administration and Council from the current semi-annual to annual. After a somewhat humorous discussion by several Council members who must submit said reports, the unanimous consensus was to require only annual reports. The Council also approved the annual report deadline to be June 30<sup>th</sup>—to coincide with the end of the fiscal year. One key argument for annually submitted reports is that conditions tend not to change rapidly in the international areas—but if they should change, the consensus also was that special reports should then be submitted to keep the Council and Administration fully informed.

At that point the Council shifted from open to executive session.

#### **Wednesday morning session:**

Council met in executive session all morning.

#### **Wednesday afternoon session:**

Council met in executive session until 2:15 p.m.

## **Council seat selection on Employment Committee**

Just after 3:00 p.m. Chairman Melvin Rhodes opened the meeting and turned the first part of the session over to Bill Eddington to complete his Roles & Rules Committee report and business.

Mr. Eddington addressed the need to select one Council member to sit on the Employment Committee. The committee consists of no less than three individuals, at least one of whom is to be a Council member.

Mike Blackwell nominated David Baker to represent the Council on the committee. Mr. Baker expressed his willingness to serve if the workload was manageable. Aaron Dean asked if the time frames for processing the committee work were long enough to accommodate Mr. Baker's travels as senior pastor to the Philippines and Asia. When Mr. Eddington checked the HR regulations and verified that there was plenty of time built in to the processes, David Baker's nomination to the Employment Committee was unanimously approved.

Mr. Eddington then addressed the need for the Council to assign a review team to review governance documents. He explained that the proposed list of men to serve and the scope of the review will be sent to the Council members for their consideration and the final decisions and approvals will be made at a later date.

The final item of the day was a presentation by Chairman Rhodes to outgoing church Treasurer Jason Lovelady for his years of service to the Church. This day was his last official day as treasurer and his final day on the job in the transition to incoming Treasurer Aaron Dean will be September 17. Mr. Rhodes thanked Jason and Wendy Lovelady for their service and presented them on behalf of the Council with a special gift of a GPS unit. Everyone in the room applauded and expressed personal appreciation to the Loveladys.

This quarterly meeting of the Council of Elders concluded with Bob Berendt thanking God for His blessings and appealing to Him for His special guidance in the challenging days ahead.

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Randy Stiver  
*Council reporter for these meetings*