

**MINUTES OF THE  
PRESBYTERY COUNCIL  
July 15, 2008**

Presbytery Council met on Tuesday, July 15, 2008, beginning at 10:00 with devotions led by the Rev. Ann R. Held.

Members present were:

Jonathan Bunker, Council Chair  
Charlotte Hott, Council Vice-Chair  
Ron Wilkes, Presbytery Moderator  
Ann Held, Presbytery Vice-Moderator  
Pamela Chamblin, Eastern Panhandle  
Ed Brown, Eastern Panhandle  
Lisa Webb, Mountain Valley  
Sandi Ey, Mountain Valley  
Ramona Sanders, Central Valley  
John Sloop, Central Valley

Pat Klumpp, Highland-Augusta  
Dan Williams, Highland-Augusta  
Barbara Johnson, Nominating Chair  
Ron Potter, Office & Pers. Chair  
Martin Stokes, Communications Chair  
Mimi Moring, PW Moderator  
Joel Thornton, Church Development  
Homer Cornish, World Wide Min. Chair  
Harriet Thompson, Resource Chair

Office Staff:

Jan Owen, Stated Clerk  
Lucille Gohdes, Treasurer  
Doug Sensabaugh, Communications Coord

Lisa Hedrick, Resource Coordinator  
Kim Stroupe, Asst for Constitution

The Rev. Phil Sommer was present representing the Divestment Task Force. *A motion was made, seconded and approved to give Phil voice on the floor.*

The minutes of April 15, 2008 were approved as distributed.

**MISSION COMMUNITY REPORTS**

Central Valley – submitted a written report

Eastern Panhandle – submitted a written report

Highland-Augusta – have not met since last Council meeting. 58 folks will be travelling to Baja this month.

Maury River – two ministers have left the area to take other calls.

Mountain Valley – submitted a written report

Potomac Highlands – meeting monthly with worship.

**STAFF REPORTS**

Stated Clerk – Jan Owen gave a brief verbal report.

Treasurer – Lucille Gohdes reported that \$354 was received from the Hebron Church directing the Council to determine its use. The Council is most sure that those funds are what were collected during the offering of the May 13 Presbytery Meeting held at Hebron Church. The Presbytery Body approved on May 13 to send the offering to PDA for flood relief. In case these are not the same funds, *a motion was made, seconded and approved to send the \$354 to PDA for flood relief.*

In follow-up from Council's directive to contact an attorney to produce an agreement between Shenandoah Presbytery and Camp Paddy Run, the particular lawyer that was suggested has not responded to communications from Lucille. *A motion was made, seconded and approved to contact the pastor of*

***Winchester First Church for a suggested member within First Church that would be willing to perform this service.***

Resource Coordinator – Lisa Hedrick gave a brief verbal report.

Communications Coordinator/Hunger Action Enabler – Doug Sensabaugh reminded everyone that phone extensions have changed in the Presbytery Office as well as office reshuffling with the Stated Clerk's office moving upstairs. Doug will be travelling with Martin Stokes to Ethiopia August 5-28 to lead communications and computer training in Addis, including setting up a wireless network.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Budget & Finance – received a written report regarding the first reading of the 2009 budget.

Church Development – Joel Thornton reminded everyone of the Magnetic Church Conference November 14-15 at Opequon Church with keynote speaker Andy Weeks. Brochures will be circulated as well as information on [www.shenpres.org](http://www.shenpres.org).

Communications – Martin Stokes reported on the successful Front Page Workshops led by Patrick Lanaghan with 28 churches represented.

Nominations – Barb Johnson submitted a written report that includes requests for elders to fill vacancies on various committees that will occur in 2009. Charlotte Hott was asked to obtain a male elder to fill a vacancy on the Nominating Committee.

Office & Personnel – Ron Potter reported that the Presbytery Office is in need of a part-time person for when Cheri Bowman is out of the office.

Presbyterian Women – submitted a written report.

Professional Development – working on a 2009 event with keynote speaker Brian McLaren from the Emergent Church.

Paddy Run Outdoor Ministries – submitted a written report.

World Wide Ministries – submitted a written report. The Committee recommends that Council ask the Presbytery to approve a Mission Season in February with an offering and a goal to raise \$50,000 (less than \$3 per member) in support of a new position for Agricultural Development in the Mekane Yesus Church in Ethiopia. ***A motion was made, seconded and approved to refer the recommendation back to the Committee for further consideration.*** The committee also ***recommends that Council approve distributing at the August 23 meeting of Presbytery the document "An Invitation to Expanding Partnership in God's Mission" for study by all churches.*** The committee also ***recommends that Council award \$500 to the best mission display at the November Presbytery meeting in the event that the Moffett Grant monies are not made available.*** This was defeated

## **TASK FORCE ON INVESTMENT POLICY**

A written report was circulated and the Rev. Phil Sommer spoke on behalf of the Task Force. Other members of the Task Force include Elders Amy Diduch, Ann Grisdale, and Jeff Zoller; ministers Carl Howard, Rob Hill and Beth Pyles; Roller Shipplett from the Shenandoah Presbytery Corporation; and Tom Hay, General Presbyter.

***A motion was made, seconded, and approved for Council to forward the report of the Presbytery Council Divestment Task Force to Shenandoah Presbytery for a first reading at the August Stated Meeting, with action to be taken at the November Stated Meeting.***

*A motion was made, seconded, and approved to request the stated clerk to send a letter of appreciation to each member of Task Force for their diligence and service.*

#### **TASK FORCE ON PRESBYTERY MEETING PLANNING**

*The Council approved and will recommend to the August 23 Presbytery the following Manual change:*

##### **4.3.4. Presbytery Meeting Planning Team**

A. Membership:

The immediate past Moderator of Presbytery (serving as chair), the current Moderator of Presbytery (serving as liaison to Council), the current Vice-Moderator of Presbytery, the Stated Clerk, the Assistant to the Constitution, three at-large members who would serve in three separate classes of three years each to provide for the representation of the following gifts, skills, and responsibilities with the Presbytery: music, education, and lay pastors.

The Resource Coordinator, General Presbyter, and Hunger Action Enabler would serve as ex-officio members.

B. Duties:

- To provide vision long range and logistical planning for stated and called meetings of Shenandoah Presbytery, which would include the recommendation of the presbytery meeting sites while seeking balance among geographic localities;
- To introduce educational opportunities, themed agendas, guest speakers as appropriate to the benefit of the larger presbytery;
- To provide for worship at each meeting and, at least annually, for a roundtable worship and communion opportunity modeled after the Westminster-Canterbury April 2006 meeting of Shenandoah Presbytery;
- To consult with host churches well in advance to ensure that space and meeting format are coordinated;
- To set agendas for meetings of Presbytery and to provide support to the Assistant to the Constitution for visiting host churches, finalizing plans and coordinating meeting needs with host church representatives;
- To provide for appropriate evaluation and refinement of Presbytery meeting experiences to ensure the good stewardship of the Presbytery commissioners, staff and host churches time and resources.

#### **PAY DAY LENDING TASK FORCE**

In accordance with the charge given by the presbytery council, the task force met at Presbytery's Office on July 14, 2008. There were 10 persons present including representatives from the Virginia Interfaith Center Council.

We watched the video on payday loans. Several very helpful documents were also distributed. After a lengthy discussion, we agreed to make the following recommendations to council:

- 1) Distribute copies of the Payday Loans video to each of the mission communities and encourage them to use it as an educational event for the churches within their community.

2) Send an announcement to the Key Church Communicators concerning the upcoming August 6 meeting of the VA Interfaith Center Council in which the topic of payday loans will be discussed.

3) Seek ways in which we can continue to educate, update, and encourage involvement by Christians in our communities in the issues surrounding legislation concerning Pay Lending.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Received a request for by-law changes for the Westminster Foundation Inc. *The following changes were approved:*

Article I, Section 5, Location: address updated to show 3218 Chamberlayne Ave., Richmond VA 23227

Reason: The Presbytery of the James bookkeeper also serves as bookkeeper for the Foundation. The Presbytery Office moved its location last year.

Article II, Section 3, Advisors: Delete the number three in the first sentence and replace with the number four.

Reason: The board would like to be able to add a fourth advisory member if geographical distribution or presbytery involvement seems to call for this.

\*\*\*\*\*

GA Commissioner Dan Williams gave a verbal report on the 218<sup>th</sup> meeting held June 2008 in San Jose, CA. *The following motion was made, seconded and approved:*

### **2008 AUTHORITATIVE INTERPRETATION – G-6.0108**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That in response to the recent action of the 218th GA in adopting another Authoritative Interpretation (AI) on G6.0108, COM be requested to clarify that, as things now stand constitutionally, the previous action of Shenandoah Presbytery taken in January 2008 is unaffected by this recent GA action. If possible, this clarification should be reported to the August meeting of Shenandoah Presbytery.

#### **RATIONALE**

In January 2008, Shenandoah Presbytery responded to the Peace, Unity and Purity Report by adopting the following statement: “Ordaining and/or installing bodies, in determining their membership, are required to uphold all the standards of the Constitution and of essential Reformed theology.”

At the recent 218th GA meeting, another Authoritative Interpretation (AI) was adopted to clarify the 2006 AI on G-6.0108 (PUP Report Recommendation #5), in light of a recent GAPJC decision that stated what the Presbytery statement affirms: that behavior in reference to ordination standards could not be scrupled.

To many, the new AI is as confusing as the previous one that it affirms and amplifies. However, emerging opinion seems to be that nothing of substance has changed, as long as the current text of G-6.0106b remains in the Book of Order. This would support the understanding that the action Shenandoah Presbytery took in reference to the 2006 AI (PUP-5) has neither been altered, suspended, or rendered of no effect.

Nevertheless, for the sake of clarity, we believe some official statement needs to be made that confirms this understanding for the entire presbytery, and her sessions. Since COM ordinarily deals with examination issues for ordination and installations, they seem to be the logical group to do this.

*A motion was made, seconded and approved that the current Presbytery Moderator and Vice-Moderator, Council chair and vice-chair, Stated Clerk, General Presbyter and GA Commissioner Dan Williams meet before the October Council meeting to discuss matters arising from the 218<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.*

The next meeting of Council will be October 14 at 10:00 with Harriet to lead devotions.

The meeting adjourned at 2:14 with prayer by Jonathan Bunker.

Submitted by,

Kim Stroupe, Recording Clerk