

## Changes to Standing Rules:

### [Under Section E of the Standing Rules]

~~7. The Presbytery Council or a continuing committee shall review and bring to the presbytery its recommendation concerning any proposed actions involving the expenditure of presbytery funds; no action may be taken on such proposals without such review and recommendation.~~

7. *Standing Committees shall review and bring to the Presbytery Council its recommendations for grant requests. The Presbytery Council shall have the authority to take action on such requests on behalf of the Presbytery. All other actions involving the unbudgeted expenditure of Presbytery funds must be approved by the Presbytery.*

8. The committee on ministry is authorized to dissolve pastoral relationships in cases where congregations and pastor concur, and shall inform the presbytery of such action at the next stated meeting.

9. The committee on ministry is authorized to appoint a teaching elder as moderator of session in a church without a pastor; it shall inform the session of such action immediately, and shall inform the presbytery at the next stated meeting.

10. The committee on ministry is authorized to dismiss teaching elders to other presbyteries, and shall report such actions to the next stated meeting of the presbytery.

11. *The committee on ministry is authorized to receive ministers from other Presbyteries into membership of the Presbytery of Boston and shall report such actions to the next stated meeting of the Presbytery by including the faith journey and statement of faith in the next Presbytery packet and introducing new members, preferably at the next meeting or as soon as is practical.*

12. *The committee on ministry is authorized to approve terms of call on behalf of the Presbytery.*

~~11.~~ 13. The committee on preparation for ministry is authorized to receive inquirers, approve inquirers for candidacy, and to certify candidates ready for examination for ordination, pending a call. ~~and~~ *The committee shall report such actions to the next stated meeting of the presbytery, include the faith journey statements of new candidates in the packet of the next Presbytery meeting, and introduce new candidates, preferably at the next meeting or as soon as possible.*

~~12.~~ 14. Three unexcused absences from presbytery committee meetings make such persons unable to serve out their terms.

~~13.~~ 15. The presbytery appropriates necessary funds for disciplinary cases originating under its jurisdiction through an advocacy support team.

a. When the stated clerk reports to the presbytery that an alleged offense has been referred to any investigating committee pursuant to the Rules of discipline, D-10.0103, the moderator of the permanent judicial commission appoints an advocacy support team, to consist of three presbyters, each of whom shall be a former member of the permanent judicial commission of the Presbytery of Boston, the Synod of the Northeast, or the General Assembly, and none of whom may be currently serving on the permanent judicial commission of the Presbytery of Boston.

b. When an alleged offense is referred to any investigating committee at a time when an advocacy support team has previously been formed, the moderator of the permanent judicial commission may

choose either to refer the subsequent matter to the existing advocacy support team, or to appoint a new team.

c. An advocacy support team remains active until all disciplinary matters referred to it have been concluded, including during any appellate process.

d. Throughout the pendency of a matter, the advocacy support team is available to the investigating committee, the prosecuting committee and the accused on an impartial basis to:

- i. assist in identifying appropriate advocacy support; and
- ii. facilitate Presbytery's provision of financial support for advocacy expenses.

e. When the advocacy support team, after consultation with any party to a matter, determines that the Rules of Discipline require Presbytery's financial support of advocacy expenses, the team prepares and presents to Presbytery Council a proposed budget as a request for the funds that the team deems to be reasonably necessary to meet Presbytery's obligation.

f. Once the budget has been approved by the Council, and specific expenses have been approved by a majority of the advocacy support team, any member of the team is authorized to submit requests for payment of advocacy expenses to the treasurer of the presbytery. In cases where counsel is retained, the advocacy support team is not involved in the determination of legal strategy, and does not intrude upon the attorney-client relationship.

14. 16. a. The session of a congregation that contemplates seeking presbytery's approval of an action under G-3.0303b (moving, dividing, being dismissed or being dissolved) or under G-5.05 (entering into joint witness with another denomination) may invite presbytery to create a response team. Creation of a response team should occur expeditiously, without further inquiry, and ideally within one month.

b. The function of the response team shall be to accompany the session and congregation as they discern the way in which God is calling them to live out their future ministry as part of the church of Jesus Christ, taking care to seek to hear the breadth of opinions represented.

c. The response team shall consist of three ruling or teaching elders, none being members or staff in the congregation involved. The three members are named, one each, by the session, the chair of the committee on ministry, and the moderator of presbytery. It shall be the responsibility of the moderator to name the last member, with attention to ensuring a balanced team. The intent of the selection process is to choose a response team that will enjoy the trust of the session, congregation and presbytery. The moderator and stated clerk shall maintain a list of ruling and teaching elders who are open to such service, although selection is not limited to those so listed.

d. When the discernment process determines that the congregation's continued ministry within the Presbytery of Boston will most clearly fulfill its call to further the work of the church of Jesus Christ, the response team will report this conclusion to the presbytery with thanksgiving.

e. When the discernment process identifies actions on the part of presbytery, the implementation of which might allow the congregation to continue in good conscience to witness to the Gospel within the Presbytery of Boston, the Team is empowered to recommend to the presbytery, through its Council, any such actions.

f. If the response team and session, in their discernment process, conclude that an action contemplated in paragraph (a) of this rule is warranted, the response team is to work with the session and congregation to propose a plan of action that will (1) treat fairly the interests of both the congregation and the presbytery,

including financial and legal interests; and (2) provide for actions to be taken in such a way that all involved will be able to affirm continued unity in the Church of Jesus Christ, regardless of the forms that their ongoing ministries may take. Once a plan of action is formulated, the session and response team will communicate the plan to the Presbytery Council, along with a request for creation of an administrative commission (G-3.0109b) to implement the plan. No member of the response team will be eligible for election to any administrative commission so created.

g. In the case of any of the outcomes identified in paragraphs d, e, or f, the response team and session are encouraged to plan an appropriate liturgical occasion to allow members of the congregation and presbytery to celebrate their history of ministry together, to offer each other blessings for the new forms of ministry toward which they are moving, and to join in recommitting themselves to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

h. Should the discernment process fail to reach a consensus, the response team shall report this conclusion to the Presbytery which shall dismiss the team with its appreciation.

~~15.~~ 17. When the Presbytery Council learns from the session of a congregation, through direct communication to Council or through indirect communication with an officer, staff member or committee of the presbytery, that the congregation or the session contemplates an action listed in paragraph (a) of Standing Rule E.14, the Presbytery Council will advise the session of the opportunity to seek creation of a response team under that rule. If a response team is not sought, or if a response team is appointed and then dismissed under paragraph (h) of Standing Rule E.14, Council will consider the need for the appointment of an administrative commission to support the congregation through its discernment process and, if an administrative commission is warranted will propose appointment of such a commission at the next stated meeting of the presbytery or at a special meeting called for that purpose.

~~16-~~18. A nomination from the floor must be accompanied by a bio on the literature table before the meeting



