

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

RULES OF ASSEMBLY OPERATIONS (RAO)
AMENDMENTS ADOPTED BY THE 50th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
2023

ITEM 1: Amend *RAO 4-21.d* by addition of a paragraph [4-21.d.4)] – underlined).

RAO 4-21.

- d. The contents of the minutes should include the following items:
- 1) The names of persons leading in opening and closing prayers at all sessions;
 - 2) In the event of a called meeting, the portion of the call stating the purpose of the meeting should be recorded verbatim in the minutes;
 - 3) A recording of the actions of the Committee or Board, including all motions adopted and business transacted, together with such additional information as the Committee or Board deems desirable for historical purposes. Ordinarily in church courts, motions that are lost are not included in the record unless an affirmative vote for the lost motion is recorded, in which case the lost motion must be shown. Each main motion should normally be recorded in a separate paragraph. Subsidiary and procedural motions may be recorded in the same paragraph with the main motion to which they pertain. Main motions may be recorded in the same paragraph, if they are closely related and pertain to the same item of business.
 - 4) A recording of information sufficient to demonstrate the Committee's or Board's implementation of instructions received from General Assembly and of material policies and material policy changes adopted by the Committee or Board in that year.

ITEM 2: Amend *RAO 16-3.e.6* as follows (new wording underlined):

RAO 16-3.e.

- 6) Minutes of presbytery relating to ministerial calls shall record that the specific arrangements (*BCO 20-1, and BCO 8-7 as applicable*) ~~and~~ of the call were found to be in order. The call document need not be attached to the minutes.

ITEM 3: Amend *RAO 16-3.e.5* by the addition of a *BCO* reference (underlined) in three places:

RAO 16-3.e.

- 5) Minutes of presbytery relating to examinations must list all specific requirements and trials for licensure and/or ordination which have been accomplished, including that each candidate being examined for ordination was required to “state the specific instances in which he may differ with the *Confession of Faith* and Catechisms in any of their statements and/or propositions” (*BCO 19-2; 21-4*). This does not mean that a separate vote on

each item must be recorded. Presbytery minutes shall record ministers' and ministerial candidates' stated differences with our Standards in their own words. Each presbytery shall also record whether:

- a) the candidate stated that he had no differences; or
- b) the court judged the stated difference(s) to be merely semantic; or
- c) the court judged the stated difference(s) to be more than semantic, but “not out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine” (*BCO* 19-2; 21-4); or
- d) the court judged the stated difference(s) to be “out of accord,” that is, “hostile to the system” or “strik[ing] at the vitals of religion” (*BCO* 19-2; 21-4).

ITEM 4: Amend RAO 16-3.e.8) as follows (strike-through for deletions, underlining for new wording):

RAO 16-3.e.

- 8) Minutes of presbytery dealing with judicial cases shall not be dealt with by Committee on Review of Presbytery Records (~~*BCO* 40-3~~) when notice of appeal or complaint has been given the lower court (*BCO* 40-3), ~~but still~~ Nevertheless, minutes of judicial cases must always be submitted for review as part of the record of presbytery.

ITEM 5: Amend RAO 16-10.a as follows (strike-through for deletions, underlining for new wording):

RAO 16-10

- a. Presbyteries shall be advised of exceptions of form; however, they shall take note in their minutes of exceptions of substance taken by the Assembly, together with their responses adopted by the presbytery to these exceptions. These responses should normally be adopted by Presbytery in the same calendar year as the exceptions were taken by the Assembly. Regardless, responses must be filed ~~no less than one month prior to General Assembly~~ in accordance with RAO 16-4.d.