

MANUAL OF OPERATIONS

NOMINATING COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCTION

- A. The *Book of Church Order (BCO)* of the Presbyterian Church in America has established the guiding principles for the formation of committees within the denomination. These principles appear in Chapter 14 concerning the structure of the General Assembly, as follows:

BCO 14-1

7. *The Assembly's committees are to serve and not to direct any Church judicatories. They are not to establish policy, but rather execute policy established by the General Assembly.*
8. *The committees serve the Church through the duties assigned by the General Assembly.*
9. *The Assembly's committees are to include proportionate representation of all presbyteries, wherever possible.*
10. *The committees are to be established on the basis of an equal number between teaching and ruling elders.*

These principles are based upon the PCA's commitment to be a 'grass roots' denomination, with leadership rising from the bottom up, rather than modeling a hierarchical, top-down form of leadership. Included within these principles is the important concept that committees should not be self-perpetuating, but that the General Assembly should elect its own leadership. This flows from the clear Biblical teaching of verses such as:

- a. *Deuteronomy 1:9-13 (NIV) "At that time I said to you, 'You are too heavy a burden for me to carry alone. The Lord your God has increased your numbers so that today you are as many as the stars in the sky. May the Lord, the God of your fathers, increase you a thousand times and bless you as he has promised! But how can I bear your problems and your burdens and your disputes all by myself? Choose some wise, understanding and respected men from each of your tribes, and I will set them over you.'"*
- b. *Acts 6:2-3 (NIV) "So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, 'It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them...'"*

- B. In order to assist the General Assembly in determining who might be the best qualified men to perform the duties required of the various committees and boards, a Nominating Committee, consisting of members elected directly by the Presbyteries, has been established. The duties of this Committee are set forth as follows:

BCO 14-1

11. *A Nominating Committee shall be comprised of one representative elected by each Presbytery in the following manner. Each Presbytery shall be assigned to a class by the stated clerk based on its date of formation. The members shall serve in classes of three-year terms, alternating between ruling and teaching elders. When necessary, unexpired terms shall be filled by an elder of the same class, teaching or ruling.*

This committee is to present all nominations for which it is responsible to the next meeting of the Assembly from a slate of men nominated by the Presbyteries. Presbyteries shall utilize the nominating forms provided by the stated clerk for their nominations. Each presbytery may present one teaching elder and one ruling elder for each committee or agency.

In addition to nominees for expired terms, the Committee shall nominate for each permanent committee one ruling and one teaching elder as alternates to fill any vacancies that may occur during the year. Each alternate should attend each meeting and fill any vacancy necessary to meet a quorum. In addition to the new nominees from the Presbyteries, alternates not assuming any vacancies during a year will be automatically considered by the Nominating Committee as candidates for nomination to that same committee.

- C. Based on these principles and guidelines, and because of the built-in turnover in the makeup of this group, the Nominating Committee of the General Assembly has adopted the following Manual of Operations to assist with the orderly conduct of its business.

PART I: PURPOSE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE (NC)

A. **PURPOSE:** To glorify Christ by:

1. Helping the General Assembly nominations process to be orderly (1 Cor 14:40). To that end the NC will regularly:
 - a. Review and refine the operating procedures in accordance with General Assembly policies.
 - b. Report to the General Assembly any changes to committee procedures, including any changes to this manual.
2. Presenting a report of a list of the most qualified candidates as nominees for possible election by the General Assembly each year. Committee will also report the number of eligible TEs, REs, and Deacons that were nominated that year by presbyteries for each committee. In developing this list the NC will consider:
 - a. The qualifications of each candidate recommended by the Presbyteries
 - b. The needs of the individual committees, agencies and commissions
 - c. A proportionate representation of all Presbyteries, wherever possible (*BCO* 14-1.9)

B. **DUTIES OF THE MEMBERS:**

1. Prayerful consideration of the nominations process and the nominees beginning with receipt of assembled copies of all nominating forms and ending when elections are completed at each General Assembly.
2. Attendance at ALL meetings of the NC (including the Spring Stated Meeting and the General Assembly Stated Meeting). Members will bring their materials to both meetings.

3. Participation in the process, including:
 - a. Prompt submission of preliminary votes prior to the Spring Stated Meeting (see II.A.5, pg. B-36), if unable to attend.
 - b. Participation in discussion at both sub-committee and full NC meetings.
 - c. Encouraging and instructing their sending Presbyteries to be faithful in developing and recruiting leaders from among their members and in presenting names for possible nomination to the NC in a timely and proper manner.
 - d. Serving as liaison between the NC and the Presbyteries.

C. DUTIES OF OFFICERS: There shall be two officers of the NC:

1. Chairman. His duties shall be:
 - a. Prepare an agenda for and conduct the meetings of the NC.
 - b. Work with the Stated Clerk to accomplish necessary administrative activities.
 - c. Appoint all sub-committee Chairmen and ad-hoc committee members, when needed.
 - d. Communicate to the General Assembly on behalf of the committee.
2. Secretary. His duties shall be:
 - a. To keep an accurate record of minutes of all NC meetings.
 - b. Subject to approval by the Chairman, prepare brief biographical summaries for both committee nominees and floor nominees for the committee's report to General Assembly.
 - c. In the event the Chairman is unable to serve at any given meeting, to act as a convener and conduct the election of a Chairman pro-tem.
 - d. If the Secretary is unable to serve, the Committee will elect a replacement as needed.

D. DUTIES OF THE OFFICE OF STATED CLERK:

1. Provide secretarial and record keeping for the NC.
2. Handle the planning and payment of travel, housing, and meeting facility needs for the Spring Stated Meeting. It is understood that expenses to attend the General Assembly Stated Meeting are to be borne by the sending church/agency/presbytery of the NC member.

3. Refer all procedural or policy questions about NC procedures not covered by this manual to the Chairman for appropriate action.
4. Provide all materials needed by the Presbyteries to meet the requirements of the NC annually through the *Handbook for Presbytery Clerks*.
5. Prepare a tabulation form, in consultation with the officers of the NC, on which to tally the preliminary votes of the members of the NC. (See II.B.2, pg. B-38)
6. Advise the Presbyteries that current Alternates on Boards and Committees will be considered automatically by the Nominating Committee as candidates to that same Committee (per *BCO* 14-1, 11) and that the original biographical form will be applied. An alternate must inform the Stated Clerk of his Presbytery and concurrently the GA Stated Clerk if he does not desire to be considered as a nominee in the coming year.
7. Assemble the materials to include:
 - a. Agenda for Spring Stated Meeting
 - b. Extracts from *BCO*, *RAO*, and Bylaws relative to the NC
 - c. List of ineligible members for nominations
 - d. Distribution of committee/boards by presbytery representation
 - e. Spreadsheet of committee/boards by presbytery representation class
 - f. List showing current NC members by class and presbytery, and class needed to elect
 - g. Qualifications, responsibilities and/or job descriptions provided by each committee and board
 - h. Presbytery Nominee Biographical Form and letter of recommendation (on one page, one side for each) from nominees approved by each presbytery and eligible alternates' forms
 - i. Communications from all committees and agencies authorized to communicate directly with the NC
 - j. The Nomination Committee *Manual of Operations*
8. Immediately following the spring meeting of the NC, notify the men who have been nominated by the committee.

PART II: THE NOMINATING PROCESS

- A. Timetable for all events in the nominating process are set in order to meet deadlines for mailing of the *Commissioners Handbook* prior to each General Assembly and will be as follows (see attached chart):
 1. August 31 PCA Stated Clerk sends Nominations Package to the Presbytery Stated Clerks and members of the NC
 2. Fall Presbytery meetings Presbyteries are strongly encouraged to choose nominees at a meeting in the fall of the year.
 3. 4 Months prior to GA a. Presbytery Nominees Biographical Forms must be received by the PCA Stated Clerk's office. No forms will be accepted after this date (see *RAO* 8-4.e).

- b. Names of members of the NC submitted by Presbytery Stated Clerks
 - c. Deadline for receipt by the Chairman of the NC of communications from all committees and agencies authorized to communicate directly with the NC. These communications will be included in the materials for consideration by all members of the NC in their preliminary voting.
- 4. 1st Business Day of March Office of the PCA Stated Clerk mails materials to all members of the NC.
- 5. 5 pm EST Friday prior to Spring Stated Meeting of the NC Preliminary vote forms from members of the NC who are unable to attend the Spring Stated Meeting due at Office of PCA Stated Clerk.
- 6. 4th Saturday of March Spring Stated Meeting of the NC
- 7. 2nd Saturday of April NC final report, including biographical summaries, due at Office of PCA Stated Clerk
- 8. Mid-May (approximately) GA *Commissioner's Handbooks* mailed
- 9. Mid-June (approximately) Meeting of the General Assembly
- 10. After Close of Floor Nominations at GA General Assembly Stated Meeting of NC

B. Forms to be used in the Nominating Process

1. Presbytery Nominee Biographical Form for General Assembly.
This form will consist of two sides. The first side will include all instructions concerning submission of the form and a place for the Presbytery Stated Clerk or a designated representative of Presbytery to sign, authenticating that the individual named in the form was approved by vote of his Presbytery and the date that action occurred. This page may be hand printed. It is then given to the nominee. When submitted to the Office of the PCA Stated Clerk, it will remain in their files and be used if the nominee is ultimately elected to a Board, Committee or Commission.

The reverse side will include at the top an area for the identification of the nominee. The remainder of the page is to be used by the nominee to include any information he would like the NC to consider in his behalf, including (but not limited to) past/present service on Presbytery and GA committees; education; vocational experience; and other pertinent information. A copy of this page will become a part of the packet that is sent to every member of the NC. This form will be designed and periodically revised by the NC after consulting with the Office of the PCA Stated Clerk. The following requirements for this second page will be stressed in the instructions:

- a. On this page Section D MUST be typed or computer printed, with a minimum of one-inch margins and 10-point type size. Handwritten/printed copies will not be accepted.

- b. This page is to be just that - ONE PAGE. If more than one page is submitted to the Office of the Stated Clerk, only the first page of that submission will be included in the meeting materials.

Each nominee is encouraged to obtain a letter of recommendation from any elder (Teaching or Ruling) in the PCA, who can attest in the letter that he knows the nominee and has observed his demeanor and work, provided that the letter writer may not provide recommendations for more than three (3) men being considered by the NC in any one year. The nominee is responsible for ensuring that the letter of recommendation he submits complies with this three-letter-maximum rule. If it does not, all letters written by that elder shall be removed from the materials before they are sent to the NC.

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This recommendation is limited to one page and must be typed. It must be submitted to the Office of the PCA Stated Clerk along with the nomination form. When the members of the NC receive the materials, the letter of recommendation will be copied on the back of the Nominee Biographical Form.

2. The following instructions apply to the entire submission of the forms listed above:
 - a. The nominee is responsible to email or file online his submission to the Office of the PCA Stated Clerk.

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 - b. The Biographical Form and letter of recommendation must be submitted together. The Office of the PCA Stated Clerk will not be responsible for forms that arrive separately.

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 - c. The forms must be emailed or filed online by the deadline date printed in Section B. LATE SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED BY THE NC.
3. NC Preliminary Vote Forms. A form will be designed each year by the Office of the PCA Stated Clerk, in consultation with the officers of the NC, on which to tally the preliminary votes of the members of the NC. This preliminary vote tally will show the raw numbers of votes per place (e.g. 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.). This preliminary vote tally will be used to set the initial motion for each committee and agency at the in-person meeting according to highest total raw votes for candidates in preliminary voting.

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PART III: SPRING STATED MEETING OF THE NC

- A. Time and place: This meeting will normally be held on the 4th Saturday of March (with adjustments made so as not to conflict with Easter weekend). Any change in date will be determined by vote at the previous Spring Stated meeting. The meeting will normally be held from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at a hotel/conference center near the Atlanta Airport, thus allowing for same-day fly in and fly out by many members.

B. Items of business will include:

1. Making recommendations for nominees for each of the GA Boards, Committees, and Commissions.

The aggregated preliminary vote forms received from the members of the NC shall constitute the initial list of recommendations of the NC as the main motion. The NC will evaluate the candidate qualifications as a committee to form the final list of candidates. NC members may move to substitute another candidate for any on the main motion. No more than one substitution at a time may be offered. Each substitution shall thereafter be voted on individually.

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2. Making recommendations on any other business referred to the NC from the General Assembly, such as Overtures.
3. Making recommendations for changes to the Manual of Operations, when needed.
4. At the close of the meeting, electing a Chairman and Secretary for the following year (seeking to rotate the offices between Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders whenever possible).

PART IV: GENERAL ASSEMBLY STATED MEETING

- A. Time and Place: This meeting will be held after the close of floor nominations at the General Assembly each year, at a time and meeting room to be announced by the Chairman. Members of the NC in attendance at the General Assembly are responsible to watch the announcements for the call to the meeting.

B. Items of Business will include:

1. Respond to any new vacancies not identified at the time of the Spring Stated Meeting. NC nominees for these vacancies will be made from names which had been submitted by the Presbyteries for the Spring Stated Meeting. (It is important that all members of the NC bring their materials to the General Assembly and to the meeting for this purpose.)
2. Review all floor nominations for eligibility and approve them for submission to the General Assembly. The Committee shall elect a sub-committee to include the Chairman, Secretary, and at least two at-large members to prepare Biographical Summaries for the floor nominees that the committee certifies as eligible for nomination for inclusion in the Committee's Supplemental Report. The sub-committee shall prepare the Biographical summaries of floor nominees, employing the same standards and care used in the preparation of Biographical Summaries of committee nominations.
3. Making recommendations on any other business referred to the NC from the General Assembly up to this time.
4. The Chairman and Secretary, with support from the Office of the Stated Clerk, will prepare the supplemental report to the General Assembly.

5. All floor nomination forms timely received by the floor clerks shall be delivered to the Office of the Stated Clerk immediately following the deadline for floor nominations (*RAO* 8-4 i). The Office of the Stated Clerk shall retain the original forms and the staff will make copies for use by the Chairman, Secretary, and subcommittee which prepares the Biographical Summaries. The original and one copy of each floor nomination form shall be kept by the Office of the Stated Clerk for at least two years.

6. After the chairman has approved the Biographical Summaries of all floor nominees (Manual of Operations of the Nominating Committee, Section I.C.2.b), the Supplemental Report shall be delivered to the Stated Clerk's Office for publication and distribution to the Assembly.

PART V: AMENDMENTS TO THE MANUAL

This manual may be amended by a majority vote of those attending any meeting of the NC. The Amendments must be submitted in writing in advance of the vote, giving members of the NC at least two weeks to consider possible changes. The NC will report to the General Assembly any changes to this manual.