

**STANDING RULES**  
**YELLOWSTONE PRESBYTERY**

with changes adopted by the Presbytery through February 22, 2014

**S1.0 BOUNDARIES**

The Presbytery of Yellowstone is a corporate expression of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), consisting of all the churches and teaching elders within the counties of Beaverhead, Big Horn, Broadwater, Carbon, Carter, Custer, Daniels, Dawson, Deer Lodge, Fallon, Fergus, Gallatin, Garfield, Golden Valley, Granite, Jefferson, Judith Basin, McCone, Madison, Meagher, Musselshell, Park, Petroleum, Phillips, Powder River, Prairie, Roosevelt, Rosebud, Sheridan, Silver Bow, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Treasure, Valley, Wheatland, Wibaux and Yellowstone; that portion of Powell County that lies south of 46 degrees 40 minutes north latitude; and Richland County with the exception of the City of Fairview; all in the state of Montana.

**S2.0 MEMBERSHIP**

- S2.01 Membership in the presbytery shall consist of teaching elders and ruling elders, in numbers as equal as possible.
- S2.02 All teaching elders enrolled by the presbytery as active members, members-at-large, or honorably retired shall be voting members. All temporary members of presbytery shall be voting members.
- S2.03 Each church in the presbytery shall be represented by at least one ruling elder commissioned by the session to be a voting member, and enrolled by the presbytery at each of its meetings.
- S2.04 Each church with an active membership of three hundred and one (301) persons and larger shall be represented by two ruling elders commissioned by the session to be voting members, and enrolled by the presbytery at each of its meetings.
- S2.05 Commissioned Ruling Elders in Pastoral Service (CRE) when granted a local commission will have a voice and vote in meetings of presbytery for as long as the commission is validated.
- S2.06 A ruling elder, holding office in the presbytery as moderator, vice moderator, stated clerk, treasurer, or as moderator of the leadership cabinet, or as moderator of a ministry team of the presbytery shall be a voting member of the presbytery for the duration of the term of such service. When the moderator of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Yellowstone is a ruling elder, or the moderator of the St. Timothy's Memorial Chapel Committee is a ruling elder, he or she shall be a voting member of the presbytery for the duration of the term of such service..

S2.07 Annually, the stated clerk shall ascertain the number of resident teaching elder members on the first day of the year, and the number of ruling elders whom the churches are entitled to enroll as voting members of the presbytery. When the number of teaching elders is larger than the number of ruling elders, the stated clerk shall bring the imbalance to the attention of the presbytery at its first stated meeting of the year. The presbytery shall redress that imbalance by inviting sessions of particular churches to elect additional ruling elder commissioners for the second meeting of the calendar year thru the first meeting of the following year.

### **S3.0 MEETINGS**

S3.01 The presbytery shall hold stated meetings three times each year, at a time and place determined by the presbytery at its final stated meeting of the previous year, upon the recommendation of the leadership cabinet.

S3.02 The moderator shall call a special meeting at the request, or with the concurrence, of two teaching elders and two ruling elders, the ruling elders being of different churches. Should the moderator be unable to act, the stated clerk shall, under the same conditions, issue the call. If both moderator and stated clerk are unable to act, any three teaching elders and three ruling elders, the ruling elders being of different churches, may call a special meeting. The synod may direct the presbytery to convene a special meeting for the transaction of designated business. Notice of a special meeting shall be sent no less than ten days in advance to each teaching elder and to the session of every church. The notice shall set out the purpose of the meeting, and no other business than that listed in the notice shall be transacted. Special meetings may be held by telephone conference call, or at a particular place, at the discretion of the stated clerk and the moderator; costs for such meetings may be assessed to the persons or congregations for whose benefit the meeting is called.

S3.03 All meetings of the presbytery shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*, except in those cases where the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) provides otherwise. Meetings of committees, ministry teams, commissions, and entities under the authority of the presbytery may be conducted according to the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, or may, at the discretion of the entity, suspend the rules in favor of more informal process as situations warrant, provided that the decision to use more informal processes is noted in the minutes of the entity. Nothing in these standing rules shall be construed to permit the presbytery to abrogate or waive any requirements of the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), or the laws of the state of Montana.

S3.04 A quorum of the presbytery shall be any three teaching elder members, and the ruling elder members present, provided that at least three churches are represented by ruling elders. A quorum for all committees, ministry teams, commissions, and other entities under the authority of the presbytery shall be a majority of the membership of the committee, commission, or entity. Presbytery may, at its discretion, establish a higher quorum for a particular committee, commission, or entity.

- S3.05 The first stated meeting of the year shall be the Annual Meeting.
- S3.06 All regular elections to the offices of the presbytery, its ministry teams and commissions shall take place at the last stated meeting of the year, except as otherwise provided in the standing rules. The officers of presbytery shall be installed and assume office at the annual meeting.
- S3.07 Elections for commissioners to General Assembly and synod for the next term shall take place at the last stated meeting of the year.

#### **S4.0 OFFICERS**

- S4.01 The officers of the presbytery shall be a moderator, a vice moderator, and a stated clerk.
- S4.02 The moderator shall be elected by the presbytery at the last stated meeting of the year, and shall assume office January 1 of the new year. Installation will be done at the first meeting of the new year, and shall serve in that office until January 1. The moderator shall possess the authority and carry out the responsibilities of that office set forth in the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
- S4.03 The vice moderator shall be elected by the presbytery at the last stated meeting of the year, and shall assume office January 1 of the new year. Installation will be done at the first meeting of the new year, and shall serve in that office until January 1. The vice moderator shall carry out such duties as may be assigned by the moderator. In the event of the inability of the moderator to carry out required moderatorial responsibilities, the vice moderator shall act for the moderator until the presbytery is able to elect a person to exercise the duties and privileges of that office.
- S4.04 In the event of the inability of the moderator and should the vice moderator also be unable to carry out the moderatorial responsibilities, the most recent moderator available shall act for the moderator until the presbytery is able to elect a person to exercise the duties and privileges of that office.
- S4.05 The stated clerk shall be elected by the presbytery at the last stated meeting at which the term of the incumbent expires, and shall assume office upon installation at the close of said meeting. The term of office shall be three years; the stated clerk shall not serve for consecutive terms, full or partial, for more than six years. The stated clerk shall possess the authority and carry out the responsibilities of that office set forth in the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The presbytery may provide an assistant to the stated clerk, to be appointed by the stated clerk.

#### **S5.0 LEADERSHIP CABINET**

- S5.01 The leadership cabinet is composed of 6-9 members. This includes a moderator, the immediate past moderator of presbytery, the moderator and vice moderator of presbytery, a person skilled in financial practices, a person skilled in personnel practices and up to 3 at large members elected by the presbytery. No person may serve as member of the

leadership cabinet for consecutive terms, full or partial, for more than six years. The leadership cabinet can invite others to participate with voice and no vote for such matters as new church development, visioning, etc.

- S5.02 The leadership cabinet moderator shall be elected by the presbytery for a three (3) year term with no more than 2 consecutive terms.
- S5.03 The stated clerk of the presbytery, the general presbyter(s), and other elected staff serving the presbytery shall be ex-officio members of the leadership cabinet, without vote. The stated clerk shall serve as secretary of the leadership cabinet.
- S5.04 The leadership cabinet shall be responsible for the coordination of the presbytery's mission and its program, arrange all aspects of presbytery meetings, long range planning and the review of the functional relationship between the presbytery's structure and its mission purposes. The duties and powers of the leadership cabinet shall be those herein set forth, subject to the constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Those duties are:
  - S5.04.01 To recommend annually to the presbytery a presbytery mission program based on plans of the leadership cabinet and ministry teams, in light of the suggested programs of the Synod of the Rocky Mountains and the General Assembly, together with a budget for the implementation of the presbytery mission program.
  - S5.04.02 To negotiate with representatives of other councils as needed for partnership in mission, and to recommend to the presbytery the results of that negotiation for the benefit of the whole church.
  - S5.04.03 To consider and make recommendations to the presbytery all requests from individuals, congregations or special groups for financial appeals, whether for current operations or capital campaign funds.
  - S5.04.04 To prepare annually a budget for the administrative costs of the presbytery, and recommend that budget to the presbytery for adoption, together with requisite costs to be assessed each particular church based on the number of members most recently reported to the stated clerk of the General Assembly.
  - S5.04.05 To prepare the docket for stated meetings of the presbytery, and cause that docket and related reports to be distributed to all members and commissioners of the presbytery and interested persons at least fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting.
  - S5.04.06 To report to the presbytery at each stated meeting every action taken by the leadership cabinet since the last stated meeting.
  - S5.04.07 To nominate to the presbytery for election, a moderator and members of representation/nominating ministry team, said nominations being distributed with the call and docket for the final stated meeting of the year; and to organize itself in a manner to fulfill its responsibilities.

- S5.04.08 To exercise responsibility for the oversight of persons employed by the presbytery, including its officers, through the development of appropriate personnel policies, position descriptions, criteria for satisfactory performance, regular review and evaluation of performance, and recommendation to the presbytery requisite salary and allowances.
- S5.04.09 To develop and regularly to review an administrative manual for the presbytery, which shall include the presbytery's standing rules, policies, position descriptions, procedures and guidelines for leadership cabinet, ministry teams and commissions, and all related documents. The administrative manual shall be adopted by the presbytery by majority vote, and shall be subject to amendment at any stated meeting of the presbytery, upon recommendation of the leadership cabinet.
- S5.05 The leadership cabinet shall constitute the board of trustees of the corporation of the presbytery, as provided in the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and shall perform the duties and functions established for the board of trustees in the articles of incorporation, according to the laws of the state of Montana. The leadership cabinet shall make recommendation to the presbytery concerning the disposition, sale, or lease of all property held by the presbytery and its particular churches, according to the requirements of the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

## **S6.0 MINISTRY TEAMS**

- S6.01 The presbytery will delegate particular aspects of their task to cabinets, commissions, and ministry teams as is needed for the mission and ministry of the presbytery and as may be required by the Book of Order.
- S6.02.01 The Representation/Nominating Ministry Team elected by the presbytery shall be broadly representative of the member churches of the presbytery, with a membership of four members including two teaching elders and two ruling elders as equally divided by gender, and geographically representative as possible. This ministry team shall consist of three classes, each serving for a three-year term except where initial classes of one- and two-year terms are necessary to establish regular rotation. Nominations to this ministry team are made to the presbytery by the leadership cabinet at the last presbytery meeting of the calendar year.
- S6.02.02 No person may serve as an elected or appointed member of a particular, cabinet, ministry team, commission, task force or related governing body for consecutive terms, full or partial for more than six years.

## **S7.0 VOTING**

- S7.01 All motions before the presbytery, leadership cabinet, ministry teams, commissions and any other deliberative bodies within the presbytery shall be decided by a majority vote unless otherwise noted in these standing rules.
- S7.02 The presbytery, leadership cabinet, ministry teams, commissions, and task forces are authorized to conduct voting via e-mail or other electronic means on actions before the

body that are deemed to be non-controversial. Provided that at least half of the body has responded within 48 hours of the request for action, if any negative vote is received, the item will need to be brought to the next meeting of the body where real-time deliberation can take place, including telephone conference meetings, for final action. The results of any e-mail or electronic vote will be reported to the next meeting of the body and recorded in its minutes.

## **S8.0 GENERAL PRESBYTER**

S8.01 The presbytery may employ a general presbyter.

S8.02 The general presbyter shall be elected by the presbytery in accordance with the policies in the personnel manual.

S8.03 The general presbyter shall serve as the pastor to pastors and according to a presbytery approved job description, helping the presbytery fulfill its stated vision and mission.

## **S9.0 AMENDMENTS AND SUSPENSION**

S9.01 These standing rules may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members of the presbytery present and voting at any stated meeting of the presbytery, providing that notice in writing has been given at the preceding stated meeting.

S9.02 These standing rules may be temporarily suspended at any stated meeting of the presbytery by a four-fifths vote of the members of the presbytery present and voting.

S9.03 All former “Standing Rules for Yellowstone Presbytery” are hereby declared null and void.

### **Document History:**

Approved by Presbytery January 29, 1994, Miles City

Revision #1 – June 3-4, 1996, Harlowton

Revision #2 – November 14-15, 1997, Anaconda

Revision #3 – February 3, 2001, Terry

Revision #4 – February 14, 2004, Springhill

Revision #5 – March 4, 2008, Miles City

Revision #6 – March 3, 2012, Bozeman

Revision #7—November 3, 2012, Lewistown

Revision #8 – February 22, 2014, Billings