

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
Presbytery of Yellowstone  
January 26, 2011

**ü Note actions taken by Council or recommendations to Presbytery**

The Council of the Presbytery of Yellowstone met via conference call on January 26, 2011 at 10:00 a.m.

Members Present:

Rev. Leon Rathbun (Moderator)  
Elder Dan Holland (B&F)  
CLP Editha McKay (Presbytery Moderator & COM)  
Rev. Jody McDevitt Presbytery Vice- Moderator)  
Elder Cal Boyle (St. Timothy's)  
Rev. Mary Davis (Vocations)  
Elder Curt Kocher (Camping & Youth)  
Rev. Neva Rathbun (COM)  
Elder Suzanne Bratsky (PW)

Members Absent/Excused:

Elder Ken Siroky (Mission)  
Elder Bob Culbertson (Higher Ed.)  
Elder Claudia Stanton (Representation)

Committee on Ministry Members Present:

Elder Russ Kline  
Elder John Clark

Others Present:

Rev. George Goodrich, Co-General Presbyter  
Rev. Kathy Goodrich, Co-General Presbyter  
Elder Debbie Blackburn  
Elder Ron Hanson (Stated Clerk)

1. Call to Order – The meeting was called to order at 10:08 by Moderator Leon Rathbun who provided an opening prayer.
2. Roll Call – Ron Announced he had taken the attendance and that a Quorum of the Council was present.
3. Docket – The basic purpose of the meeting was announced. That purpose being to decide on a process for presenting the New Form of Government (nFOG) proposed amendment to the PC(USA) Constitution to Yellowstone Presbytery at its annual meeting in February/March. Other purposes were to discuss a process for presenting the proposed amendment of G-6.106b to the presbytery and to suggest changes to the draft Docket for the February28 – March 1 meeting of presbytery.

4. Proposal - Jody outlined a proposal she had developed. Her proposal involved determining if a consensus existed within the Council for a recommendation to presbytery on the nFOG. If a consensus did not exist then we would select two people from council to make a 5 minute presentation on the opposing points of view on nFOG. Those presentations would be followed by period of time for people to ask questions or make comments. This period of time would be 30 minutes unless the presbytery voted to extend the time. Following this a vote would be called for.
5. Consensus? – Moderator Leon asked if there was a consensus on a recommendation from council on a recommendation to the presbytery on nFOG. It was concluded that a consensus did not exist.
6. Pro's and Con's of nFOG – Moderator Leon allotted 10 minutes for people to express their support for nFOG and 19 minutes for people to express their opposition to nFOG.the following comments were made:

Pro:

- Flexible and adaptable for different parts of the country.
- Only part of the Constitution is changed – not all of it.
- The Book of Order should not be used as a club (By inference the existing Book of Order is used that way sometimes).
- While it will require updating polisy and procedure manuals many churches probably need to do that anyhow.
- The world is changing rapidly – we should also consider changing.
- The nFOG modernizes and updates language.
- The nFOG provides direction rather than rules.
- Changing back to “Ruling Elder” and “Teaching Elder” is a plus.

CON:

- Now is not the time to change. The effort of this change will take away from the work we should be about.
- The change will require too much administrative work at the Session and Presbytery level.
- Too much change at one time. The proposal should be implemented in phases.
- We are already loosing members. This proposal may increase the rate of loss.
- The proposal will eliminate due process for many.
- The proposal reduces checks and balances currently in existence.
- The Association of Stated Clerks are not in favor of nFOG.

7. Presenters for and against nFOG:

- ü By consensus Dan Krebill was selected to make a 5 minute presentation for adoption of nFOG.
- ü Council voted to have Kathy Goodrich make a 5 minute presentation against adoption of nFOG. It was understood that Kathy would not be speaking from her position as Co-General Presbyter but rather as an individual member of presbytery.

- ü Council voted to docket 5 minutes for Dan and Kathy to speak and then a 30 minute block of time for discussion by the presbytery and then proceed to a vote.
8. Mission Project at the Presbytery Meeting – Curt announced St. Andrew had selected Family Services of Billings as the Mission Project at the February 28/March 1 Presbytery meeting. The project will be done from 9a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on Monday, February 28<sup>th</sup>. Curt will send a note on the project to Susan so it can be posted on the web site along with other meeting materials. It is important for people to let St. Andrew know who will be participating so they can make the necessary arrangements.
    - ü Council voted to donate the offering which will be received at the Monday evening service to Family Services of Billings.
  9. Ordination Standards – The group discussed the process for presenting the proposed amendment of G-6.0106b and made the following decisions.
    - ü The room will be arranged with chairs in a circle with a table for the Moderator and Stated Clerk for the entire meeting. The rationale being that such an arrangement places people in community with each other.
    - ü Only members and commissioners of Yellowstone Presbytery will be allowed to speak to this proposed amendment.
    - ü Each speaker will be allowed 2 minutes to make their points.
    - ü Speakers will alternate between those in favor of the proposed amendment and those opposed to it.
  10. Adjournment – Following a closing prayer by Rev. Mary Davis the meeting was adjourned at 12:07 p.m.