

**Presbytery of Elizabeth  
Draft Minutes of Council  
December 8, 2009**

**Attendance:**

Ministers present:

John Howard (Siloam-Hope), At-large, Vice-chair of Council  
Lawrence Finn (MaL), Evangelism and Church Vitality Unit, chair  
Rob Martin (Crescent Avenue), Committee on Ministry, chair  
Howard Bryant (HR), Moderator of Presbytery

Elders present:

Alan Ford (Bethlehem), General Assembly Council  
Gerard Nelson (Liberty Corner), Trustees of Presbytery, chair  
Jack Paddon (Liberty Corner), Outreach and Social Concerns Unit, Co-chair  
Susie Krivenko (Rahway First), Vice-Moderator of Presbytery  
Betty Prezzy Bryant (Third-Westminster), Nominating Committee, chair  
Helen Mosley (Siloam-Hope), Education and Discipleship Unit  
Sue Gieser (Westminster), Council chair  
Warren Braunwarth (Central), At-large  
Barbara McLaughlan (Westfield), Former-Moderator  
George Curtis (Basking Ridge), Personnel Committee, chair

Present *ex officio*:

Peter Hofstra (Perth Amboy), Financial Development Committee, chair  
Dave Bomgaars (Central), Treasurer of Presbytery  
Paul Rack (Bethlehem), Stated Clerk  
Sara Burke (Westfield), Administrative Assistant

Excused/absent.

Amy Aaroe (Cranford), Presbyterian Women, President  
Roberta Arrowsmith (Connecticut Farms), Cte on Preparation for Ministry, co-chair  
Jeffrey Wildrick (Dunellen), At-large  
Judy Wussler (Fanwood), Synod of the Northeast  
Brenda Johnson (Siloam-Hope), Committee on Representation, chair

**Minutes:**

The regular monthly meeting of the Council of Elizabeth Presbytery was held on Tuesday, December 8, 2009, at the United Presbyterian Church, in Plainfield.

The meeting was opened at 4:33 pm (EDT) with devotional time by John Howard, who read from Luke 8:22-25, and spoke about “the storms of life,” especially related to presbytery issues.

The Council **VOTED** to approve the distributed agenda for today's meeting.

The Council **VOTED** to approve the distributed Minutes of the October 13, 2009, Council meeting, with the following changes: that Barbara McLaughlan was excused, Howard Bryant was excused, and George Curtis was present. And the Stated Clerk was advised to provide more specific descriptions about the conversation at Council. Finally, the words "in the black" should be added to the Treasurer's Report, after the words "we expect to end the year."

#### **Council Chair.**

1. Sue thanked Council members for submitting written reports in advance.
2. She also presented a leaflet submitted by Peter Hofstra: a guide for first-time commissioners to Stated Meetings of presbytery. The presbytery **VOTED** to send (electronically) a copy to every session, for distribution to all session members and commissioners, and make it available at Stated Meetings.

#### **Stated Clerk.**

1. The Stated Clerk presented a request from Victor Aloyo (United/*Nuevas Fronteras*) that the money in the grant from Synod and GA be deposited directly with the fellowship, rather than passing by paper through the presbytery, which can add an indeterminate length of time. Council could find no reason why this should not be done, as long as there is a "paper trail" that can be accessed and verified. The presbytery needs to be informed somewhere along the way in the distribution of funds, it was decided. The Council **VOTED** that money from the Synod for *Nuevas Fronteras* be direct-deposited to the *Nuevas Fronteras* account, with the Synod and *Nuevas Fronteras* notifying the presbytery Treasurer when this happens.
2. A concern was raised regarding the energy level of ECVU and NCDC, which are assigned the oversight of the *Nuevas Fronteras* project. This led into a discussion of the lack of participation by members of the ECVU; they are apparently having trouble gathering a quorum for a meeting. It was noted that non-participating members may be assumed to have resigned from the unit by virtue of missing three successive meetings (SRA10). This would reduce the number for a quorum.
3. The Council **VOTED** to clearly stipulate that money received from the estate of Adah Grace Roberts Vollmer (Bethlehem) will be devoted to "Mission Projects," as stipulated in her last will and testament.

## Treasurer.

David Bomgaars, the Treasurer of Presbytery, presented his written report. We are carrying a positive cash flow of \$69K. Letters have gone out to all churches for 2010 mission pledges, 2 have been received back so far. We hope to receive them all by December 17, and dedicate them at the January 23, 2010, Stated Meeting of presbytery. Lawrence Finn noted that some ECVU money has been spent, but is not appearing in the report. Vouchers are being collected to account for this and correct the record.

## Discussion Items.

1. Future Presbytery Meetings. Susie Krivenko reported on the follow-up after the last Council meeting. She has been diligently putting together the pieces for the Informational Workshop time at the January Stated Meeting. There will be two sessions, with the same workshops at each. Lunch will be at 1 pm.
2. Unit/Committee Activities and Reports. Most reports came in on the proper form.
3. Helen Mosley showed some books that will be available at the presbytery meeting. The EDU will need 5 minutes on the docket.
4. Trustees: received thank you from Bethel for cupola money and announced a celebration. Gerry Nelson also answered questions about the loan the Trustees made to the Christ church for a new HVAC plant.
5. OSCU: sending out calls for applications for New Hope Initiative Grants to churches.
6. Financial Development Committee. The Council **VOTED** to start the process to amend the by-laws to change the name of the FDC to the Stewardship Committee, and bring this to presbytery for a First Reading. This uses more ecclesial language, and less business-like.
7. There are no changes in the second reading of the budget from the first reading. The financial package for the IEP will total *ca.* \$100K. This includes \$36K from per capita, plus rolled-over funds from 2009, plus a \$50K grant from the General Mission side. (A further increase in per capita is anticipated for 2011 to continue the process of shifting administrative costs to that side of the budget.)
8. The FDC is considering requesting WATT to do a small group Mutual Invitation process at a Stated Meeting of the presbytery on "What is Mission?"
9. The Council **VOTED** to recommend a new 5-year copier lease with Konica-Minolta effective January 1. Staff members who will be working with the machine have approved of this deal and machine. This is the company we have been working with for some time.
10. The Council **VOTED** to approve upgrades to the presbytery office computers, as recommended by Bruce Pereyra, the presbytery bookkeeper, who also serves as IT wizard.

11. The FDC is working with churches that for whatever reason have announced that they are not willing to pay their full per capita.
12. The FDC will obviously need docket time in January at the Stated Meeting of presbytery.
13. Global Mission/Peacemaking Committee. The committee requested a few minutes in January and an hour in March. The Council **VOTED** to give the Peacemaking Committee 5 minutes in January and an hour prior to the May meeting as a Consultation Hour on Israel/Palestine.

### **Moderator.**

Howard expressed concern with the lack of participation in presbytery units and committees. He encourages members of churches whenever he visits to consider working in the presbytery.

### **New Business.**

1. Council **VOTED** to give the Self-Development of People committee 15 minutes on the Docket of the January Stated Meeting of presbytery.
2. The chair noted that a Special Council Meeting is anticipated for sometime in December, to review the candidate from the Interim Executive Presbyter Search Committee.
3. Requests for time on the Docket of the January Stated Meeting of presbytery need to be lodged with the Stated Clerk no later than January 7.
4. Council **VOTED** to devote 5 minutes at the January Stated Meeting of presbytery to a remembrance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (January 15 will have been the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth.)

### **Vice-Moderator.**

Susie Krivenko reported on the recent meetings of the Worship and Theology Team. They are anticipating using different themes and formats for worship at upcoming presbytery meetings. A renewal of baptismal vows is planned for January, with Victor Aloyo (*Nuevas Fronteras/United*) preaching.

### **Staff.**

1. Questions were raised about the Administrative Commission that has been working with Elizabeth First for some time, and from whom we haven't heard very much lately. The Council **VOTED** to assign to the Stated Clerk and the Council Chair the responsibility to find out what is going on with the AC.

2. In a related matter, it was also suggested that there may need to be a conversation with the new Pastor at Elizabeth First. Council is concerned about their apparent curtailment of their participation in PRISM, and the general direction of the church. Input may be received from the AC. It was suggested that the Warrant for that AC be redistributed to Council for their information.
3. The Council was reminded that the New Church Development Commission needs some new members! They cannot make decisions without 7 active participants, which they do not currently have.

**Adjourn.**

The Council **VOTED** to adjourn at 6:10 pm, with prayer by Lawrence Finn.

Attest:

Paul F. Rack  
Stated Clerk