

**STATED MEETINGS  
SYNOD OF THE MID-ATLANTIC  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)  
Procedural Guide**

**FORWARD**

These rules pertain specifically to the Stated Meeting(s) of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic.

**I. POWERS**

The Meetings of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic shall have the powers granted by the Book of Order (Form of Government, Directory for Worship, and Rules of Discipline) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

**II. MEMBERSHIP**

2.1 Each presbytery within the bounds of the Synod shall elect to the Stated Meeting of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic one Ruling Elder commissioner and one Teaching Elder commissioner. [See Standing Rules, 2.3]

2.2 The outgoing Moderator; the Synod Executive/Stated Clerk; the Treasurer; the chairs of the permanent committees on Nominations, Representation; the Board of Trustees advisory members of the Finance Committee; the Synod staff, and the executives and stated clerks of the constituent presbyteries of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic who are not commissioners shall be seated if they wish as corresponding members without vote. If they request the privilege of the floor, they may be granted voice by vote of the Assembly.

2.3 Presbyteries shall elect Commissioners based on a formula of rotation determined by agreement among Synod Assembly and the presbyteries, so that Commissioners nominated shall represent the broad diversity of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic and so that the Synod Assembly shall represent both the diversity and inclusiveness called for in the Book of Order (especially G-4.0400 and G-9.0104).

**III. QUORUM**

The quorum for the Stated Meeting shall be fifty percent (50 %) of the total number of voting commissioners, which is thirty (28 presbytery commissioners, plus the Moderator and Moderator in Nomination.) Such a quorum shall be comprised of at least seven commissioners who are elders and at least seven who are ministers, and which is constituted such that at least five presbyteries are represented.

**IV. ORDER AND PROCEDURE**

The Stated Meeting shall be governed by the Book of Order, the Standing Rules, this procedural guide and where they are not inconsistent with the foregoing, by Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

**V. EXPENSES**

5.1 The expenses of commissioners attending the Stated Meeting including travel, room, and meals shall be reimbursed by Synod in accordance with the revised expense reimbursement policy (on back of voucher) and upon submission and approval of a

voucher. The travel allowance and other expense categories and amounts shall be determined by the Finance Committee of Synod.

5.2 The expenses of those invited to be present to report, help with worship and/or workshops, and otherwise enhance the understanding and work of the Synod Assembly, and the administrative and support staff for Synod, for mileage and other reasonable and necessary travel, room and board costs, honoraria, etc., shall be paid for by Synod.

## VI. INTRODUCTION OF BUSINESS

Business before the Stated Meeting shall be any matter regularly presented to the governing body by the Stated Clerk. It shall include reports, overtures, resolutions, communications, and audits. All business shall be distributed to the council at least two weeks prior to the convening of the council.

6.1 **Reports.** Any Permanent or Designated Committees (*Standing Rules*, 5.1.1 and 7.1.1) which have matters to present before the Assembly shall take them to the body in the form of reports to Stated Meetings of the Synod Assembly.

6.2 **Overtures.** An overture is the request of a presbytery for action or response by the Stated Meeting upon a specific matter. No overture will be considered by the Stated Meeting until it has first been presented to a presbytery. If approved by the presbytery it will come before the Stated Meeting as an overture of that governing body.

Overtures are ordinarily delivered by the stated clerk of a presbytery to the Stated Clerk of the Synod. Overtures must be received by the Synod stated clerk at least two weeks prior to the opening of the first business session.

6.3. **Resolutions.** A resolution is a request made by at least two (2) commissioners from different presbyteries for a specific action on the part of the Synod. Its form should follow that provided in *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*. [See attached Form A.] A resolution may be offered to the Synod through the stated clerk at any time before noon of the first business day. It must be legibly written and signed by two or more commissioners from at least two different presbyteries. The stated clerk shall recommend to the business meeting a means by which resolutions may be acted upon or referred for consideration.

6.4 **Communications.** A communication is a formal correspondence (including computer-generated documents), received by the stated clerk, to the Synod from other denominations, inter-church agencies and councils, governing bodies, councils, committees and agencies of the PC(U.S.A.) not included in regular reports, and from organized bodies outside the church properly having business with the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic. Ordinarily, communications from individuals shall not be received by the Synod. Voice mails and telephone calls are not proper communications and shall not be presented. If the Synod wishes to take action on any received communication, the stated clerk shall recommend a means by which it may be acted upon or referred for consideration.

## VII. FINANCIAL IMPACT

Any overture, resolution, or motion pertaining to matters or actions which have impact on finances of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic shall be referred to the Moderator, the Vice-Moderator and the Chair of the Finance Committee of Council for assessment of the value of the financial impact, which shall be reported to the Finance Committee or other Designated Committee to consider and recommend to the Synod Assembly for a decision with full information the matter proposed.

## VIII. COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

### 8.1 Purpose and Responsibilities:

1. The purpose of the Executive Committee is to conduct the affairs of the Synod Assembly when it is not in session. These responsibilities emanate from and are authorized by the *Book of Order* and by the *Standing Rules*. Ordinarily, these responsibilities are:
  - a. To carry out the decisions, policies and procedures of the Synod Assembly between Stated or Called meetings in the areas of Grants, Finance, Administration including Personnel, and response to the initiatives of presbyteries.
  - b. To plan Synod Assembly Stated or Called meetings in consultation with the Synod Executive/Stated Clerk.
  - c. To sit as a Commission to authorize the celebration of the Lord's Supper at Synod-sponsored events as granted authority by the Synod Assembly (*Book of Order W-2.4012*). In order to be in compliance with *Book of Order* requirements (G-90504b(2)), the Executive committee, when sitting as a commission, shall report its action to authorize celebration of the Lord's Supper at the next Synod Assembly.
2. The purpose of the Grants and Awards Committee is to provide oversight of the administration and distribution of awards, making sure that the wishes of the donor are honored when requests are made, to applicants and to unify the procedure for making awards for those funds which the Synod has responsibility for administering.
3. The purpose of the Finance Committee is to administer and review the receipt and expenditure of monies of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic, to provide for an annual independent audit of the financial records of the Synod, to provide fiduciary oversight over the designated funds of the Synod and to draft for the Spring meeting of the year the operating and governance budgets annually to the Synod Commissioners.
4. The purpose of the Administration Committee is to provide for the smooth operation of the Synod Assembly and its committees and for its staff in a manner which promotes the objectives and rationale of Book of Order sections G-4.0400 and G-9.0104 and G-9.0704 as well as other Constitutional mandates.
5. The purpose of the Presbytery Initiatives Committee is to respond to initiatives by two or more presbyteries when such an initiative will enable a more efficient and effective accomplishment of the need.

### 8.2. Procedures:

1. A Committee shall consider all matters referred to it by the Synod.
2. A Committee may schedule at its convenience one or more hearings on matters before it. The committee may limit the time for the presentation by any person during the hearings.
3. A Committee shall have available to assist in its work designated persons from the appropriate institutions or agencies, presbyteries, General Assembly, and/or the Synod Council with responsibility for providing information, but who shall not participate in the debate of the committee.

4. A Committee shall choose a recorder from its membership. The recorder shall keep an accurate record of the actions of the committee and shall draft the committee reports with the assistance of the chairperson and put the report into electronic form for reproduction by the Synod.

8.3. Reports:

1. The recorder and chairperson shall draft the report of the Committee.
2. The action of the Committee on matters referred shall be as follows.

The committee recommends:

- a. that Synod adopt . . . , or
- b. that Synod amend as follows . . . and adopt . . . , or
- c. that Synod not adopt for the following reasons . . . , and refer back to \_\_\_\_\_ for further study, or
- d. to state that the committee is unable to arrive at a recommendation and returns \_\_\_\_\_ to the governing session for action.

8.4. Minority Reports:

The minority of a Permanent or Designated Committee, acting individually or together, may submit their views in the governing sessions of the Synod or proposed recommendations that are different from those contained in the report of the committee in writing. When the chair of the committee affirms, in writing, that the positions expressed in a written minority report were presented to the whole committee during its consideration of the matter, the Stated Clerk shall reproduce the minority report and distribute it with the report of the committee. A minority report can be considered and acted upon only after the report of the committee has been moved. Proponents of the minority report may then move it as a substitute for the portion of the report of the committee from which it differs.

**IX. DEBATE, PRESENTATION, AND ACTION ON MOTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 Debate shall be free and open, insofar as possible, with time limits given to proponents and opponents. No commissioner, advisory delegate or corresponding member with the privilege of the floor shall speak on the same motion or recommendation more than once until all desiring to speak have done so.
- 9.2 Each speaker shall be limited to three (3) minutes.
- 9.3 All motions, except those that are procedural, shall be presented in writing [see attached Form A and Form B] and read by the Moderator before being voted upon. The Synod need not entertain a complex motion which has not been reduced to written form before being made.
- 9.4 Only commissioners are allowed to make a motion or vote on a motion. The commissioner must be recognized by the moderator in order to make a motion. This applies particularly to the motion to end debate by calling for the question.

- 9.5 Synod Commissioners will recuse themselves from voting in committee on matters before the Synod which bear directly on that Commissioner's Presbytery or church. The moderator of Synod or of the committee may require those Commissioners to excuse themselves from the room during the discussion of and voting on that particular matter. Those Commissioners may be called upon to provide specific factual information regarding the particular matter, and shall have the privilege of addressing the body with specific opinion about the matter prior to excusing themselves.
- 9.6 Recommendations made by Permanent or Designated committees or task groups do not require a second.
- 9.7 The Moderator shall ordinarily use a short form in putting the question, or say "You have heard the recommendation/motion. Any objection? If not, adopted." If there are objections, the recommendation/motion will be presented for debate, amendment, and vote.
- 9.8 Motions and recommendations that appear to be clear and non-controversial may be collected by the Stated Clerk and presented as an Omnibus Motion.
- 9.9 Any commissioner may request to have one or more items removed from the Omnibus Motion for consideration in the normal manner.

## Annotation Page

Revised in 2/13/09, 10/19/09, 3/8/10

Revision approved during Synod Assembly 4/17/14

### 9.5 Previous

Before revision, "Synod Commissioners will recuse themselves from voting, either in committee or in plenary session, on matters before the Synod which bear directly on that Commissioner's presbytery. The moderator of Synod or of the committee shall remind those Commissioners to absent themselves from the room during the discussion of and voting on that particular matter. Those Commissioners may be called upon to provide specific factual information regarding the particular matter, and shall have the privilege of addressing the body with a specific opinion about the matter prior to absenting themselves."

### 9:5 Current

Synod Commissioners will recuse themselves from voting in committee on matters before the Synod which bear directly on that Commissioner's Presbytery or church. The moderator of Synod or of the committee may require those Commissioners to excuse themselves from the room during the discussion of and voting on that particular matter. Those Commissioners may be called upon to provide specific factual information regarding the particular matter, and shall have the privilege of addressing the body with specific opinion about the matter prior to excusing themselves.

### Revised 9/16/2015

Changing the Title from Standing Rules and Procedures to Procedural Guide

Revised 9/12/2017

VI. Introduction of Business- Amended to include "All business shall be distributed to the council at least two weeks prior to convening.

### Revised 9/11/18

VI. – Last sentence amended to read, "All business (including overtures) must be submitted to the council at least two weeks prior to the convening of the council".

6.2- Overtures- amended to read, "must be received by the synod stated clerk at least two weeks prior to the opening of the first business session".

**FORM: A**

**Synod of the Mid-Atlantic Stated Meeting**

**Resolution/Motion**

A main motion - particularly an original main motion - is frequently offered as a resolution, either because of its importance or because of its length or complexity.

A resolution contains two (2) parts.

1. Preamble: When special circumstances make it desirable to include a brief statement or background, provide little-known information without which the point or merits of a resolution are likely to be poorly understood, or where importance is attached to making the certain reason(s) for an action a matter of record, or the like, a preamble is placed before the resolving clauses.

2. Resolving Clauses: Stating action to be taken.

**OUTLINE**

Whereas, the \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(text of the preamble clause above)

Resolved, that \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(starting action to be taken).

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Name

Presbytery

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Presbytery

**It is recommended that this format be followed.**

**THIS FORM IS TO BE GIVEN TO THE MODERATOR AFTER THE MOTION IS MADE.**

**FORM: B**

**Synod of the Mid-Atlantic Stated Meeting**  
**Amendments/Substitution**

An amended/substitute main motion is offered to clarify or improve a main motion and is frequently offered because of the length or complexity of the main motion.

An amendment must:

- 1. Be germane to the main motion, not be extraneous. (It must clarify, add, substitute or modify the motion in order to enhance understanding, narrow, or broaden the intent of the main motion).
- 2. Not change the intent of the motion. (To insert "not" after the word "shall" is an example of changing the intent of the main motion).

I move to amend the motion by \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(starting action to be taken)

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Presbytery

This is to be given to the Moderator after making the amendment.

**SPACE FOR USE BY CLERKS ONLY**

Form # \_\_\_\_\_ Report of \_\_\_\_\_

Page: \_\_\_\_\_ Paragraph \_\_\_\_\_ Recommendation # \_\_\_\_\_

Adopted \_\_\_\_\_ Not Adopted \_\_\_\_\_ Amended (see Form # \_\_\_\_\_)



**Synod of the Mid-Atlantic**  
**(Assembly #, ie 236<sup>th</sup>) Synod Assembly**  
**Committee Name**  
**Venue (i.e. Ginter Park Presbyterian Church)**  
**City, State**  
**(Dates of Assembly)**

**OPENING**

Moderator (Name) called the meeting to order at (Time typed here) with prayer.

**ATTENDANCE**

Present were: (Names typed here)

Excused were: (Names typed here)

**APPOINTMENT OF RECORDER**

(Name) was appointed as recorder.

**QUORUM**

The Moderator attested that a quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF DOCKET**

The docket was approved as presented.

**MINUTES**

(Record meeting Minutes here)

**OTHER BUSINESS**

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting followed by prayer from (Name). Meeting was adjourned at (Time typed here).