

Meeting Minutes CABF Special Meeting

Feb. 28, 2015 at FBCH

President, John Tonks opened the meeting in prayer at 1:39 pm.

Attendees: See the attached sign in sheet with 26 names.

Regrets: Mary Anne Thomas (given by David Allen)

Agenda:

Review and discussion of the document ‘ORDINATION IN THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR BAPTIST FREEDOMS (Draft Approved by Council: 16 December 2014 (Further amended 29 January 2015 in response to suggestions received. Churchill and Prentice)

(**Note** only the title will be reflected in the final document. All dates will be removed.)

Before making a motion to accept the document being presented, Roger acknowledged his appreciation and thanks to the members of the ordination **committee**: John Boyd, John Churchill, Marilyn Peers, John Tonks (we added Roger’s name). Roger stated that the committee recently dealt with an issue – that was resolved - and it was resolved because of the work, working knowledge and the creditability of the committee members. The party the committee was dealing with recognized the credentials of the committee – and the processes of CABF. Roger stated that realizing that CABF is growing and that, in a positive way, CABF is being watched as we grow and become more recognized in the Atlantic region as well as across Canada, we will continue to be alert and attentive to the standards and procedures we develop.

Roger indicated CABF has one person who wants to be ordained, and others have expressed interest

Moved by Roger Prentice, Chair of Credentials Committee, that we adapt the document, “‘ORDINATION IN THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR BAPTIST FREEDOMS” as our procedures for ordination. **Seconded by John Boyd**. Opened to the floor for discussion. (Outcome on this motion is noted on the last page of these minutes.)

1. **David Gibson** congratulated CABF on the draft document.

David identified 4 typing errors that were revised:

(1) Page 1, Section **1.1. A Church Licence to Minister**, C. The word ‘*they*’ is misspelled. Spelling corrected.

(2) Page 2, Section **1.2. A CABF Licence to Minister**, B, b. There is a *space* before the comma following the work ‘activity’. The space was removed.

(3) Page 2, Section **1.2.A CABF Licence to Minister** B,d. In the last line, there is an *unnecessary* ‘a’ before the work ‘by’. The ‘a’ was removed.

(4) Page 3, Section **1.3. Examining Council for Ordination** B, e. The word ‘none’ should be changed. ‘None’ was **corrected to ‘one’**. **Action: corrections as noted.**

2. **Naomi Nonnekes** asked if the principle of ordination has been previously established for CABF. John Boyd confirmed, the principle of ordination was established in CABF’s original incorporation document. Naomi suggested that this (the fact that ordination was included in the original incorporation) should be referenced within this new document. Gary Nelson (lawyer for CABF) stated that within the original by-laws of CABF space was reserved, for a later date, to insert articles about accreditation and ordination of clergy. At the time of incorporation, CABF did not have the articles of accreditation and ordination developed. **2014 accreditation was developed and approved by the membership.** The focus of this special meeting is the developed document of ordination (see the titled document above). **No action.**

3. **Hugh Kirkeggard** referred to Page 1, the second paragraph, the first line, following the word ‘Christian’ the words ‘*common sense*’. **Hugh moved** these words be omitted and replaced with ‘*character*’. **Seconded by Ed Colquhoun; carried unanimously.**

4. **Richard Manuel** asked if ordination happens at the calling church, what happens if the individual moves from one church to another, does the individual have to be ordained at the new church. Roger (Prentice) and John (Boyd) replied that once an individual is ordained, s/he is ordained for life; the individual does not have to be ordained at each church s/he is called to.

Richard asked what about the person going from CABF to a Convention church? John Boyd advised it was unlikely that **Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches** (CABC i.e. **Convention**) would recognize an ordination of CABF. **No action.**

5. Articles 54 and 55, in the **Index To By-Laws** it appears that ordination rather than credentialing, is the first step for an individual who feels called to ministry. The by-laws may need to be amended – at least to get the text and the **Index To By-Laws** in sync. Ordination is separate from credentialing. It was suggested that we may want to add Article 55a – regarding ordination. Council will re-visit the **Index To By-Laws** and bring necessary amendments to the membership. **Action: Council to discuss and bring necessary amendments to the membership.**

6. Gary Nelson, referred to Section 1: Process towards ordination; **1.1. A Church Licence to Minister** D. – Gary felt that there should be a descriptive word before the word ‘leadership’. Discussion followed. Gary raised this suggestion because he has seen situations where ministers come in and dictate their style on the church and when s/he leaves the church there are gaps. This is his thinking around adding a descriptive word about leadership (referring to leadership of the church). **Gary Nelson moved** that the word ‘**servant**’ be added before ‘leadership’ in this section. **Naomi Nonnekes seconded; carried unanimously.**

Discussion took place about how much depth and detail should be in this section of the document. It was recognized that we have modeled the process of ordination from Convention.

We realize that other Conventions have more detail. We feel we will continue to add to the depth and detail of this article of the by-laws as we have more experience with the ordination process. **Naomi Nonnekes** noted the current amount of detail almost speaks to the word ‘freedom’ in the name of the association. That is, although we need to have a reasonable amount of information and legal information, we like the idea of having the freedom to add to the process and therefore, to the document. It was shared that when the by-laws were originally established the committee was aware that we did not want to have the ‘legalise’ that other organizations have.

7. **Pauline Alsop** and **Ed Colquhoun** encouraged the committee to be sure to include the date on the document. The committee confirmed the date of today’s meeting will be added to the document.

Hugh Kirkeggard stated that he feels caught between two structures of ordination: one about being ordained in Atlantic Canada and the other in BCOQ. In the BCOQ, ordination was ‘very congregational and more Baptist’. That is, the Ordination Council was held in the local church. Being held in the local church made the process seem refreshing – not so much a ‘top-down’ approach. Therefore, in keeping with the direction and principles of CABF, Hugh would like to keep that ‘church approach’. **Roger** clarified that CABF will facilitate the process for the local church – and having the Ordination Council meet in the local church is certainly acceptable.

Ed Colquhoun stated that because of the important role of the local church it might be worthwhile revising the document (in **1.3.A Examining Council for Ordination A.**) to indicate that CABF will call the Examining Council to meet in the church of the person being ordained.

Moved by **XXXX** and **seconded by Ed Colquhoun**, that the second last sentence of **1.3.A Examining Council for Ordination - A.** be revised so that ‘*where reasonably possible the Examining Council will convene in the ordaining church*’ will be added following the last word ‘accreditation’ of the current sentence.

Discussion about the educational requirements of CABF was addressed. Roger stated that CABF requires at least one clinical training unit for ordination.

As another example, Roger shared the situation where CABF currently has a candidate for orientation, who does not have a Baptist background. Therefore, after an interview with the candidate, in order for the candidate to be ordained, one thing the Committee felt the candidate needed was an education on Baptist history. A professor, who teaches Baptist history, has agreed to present the credited course (used at the Divinity College) on Baptist history to this individual. Upon successful completion of this course, the candidate will be closer to being eligible for ordination.

Richard Manuel inquired about the order of process for ordination. The three steps, in order include: (1) a church licence (2) CABF licence and (3) CABF Ordination. It was explained, that the reason for the church licence was to **allow the** local congregation, (of the person), the

opportunity to speak to the individuals' call. There are no educational requirements by the local church. Rather, the church is stating its confidence in the person. This is normally done by the Board of Deacons of the individual's church. Convention has a format for the church licence. CABF does not have an equivalent format at this time. However, there are similarities with CABF's process and that of Convention.

It was **carried unanimously** that the document presented, with the revisions noted from this meeting and in these minutes be accepted.

In response to David Gibson's notification to revise the Index of the by-laws, John Boyd moved or caused to be **moved that the CABF by-laws be amended to include authorization to facilitate the ordination of clergy on behalf of member churches.**

Meeting adjourned at 2:39 pm by President John Tonks.