Tuesday, September 25, 2019

The meeting of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) convened at Presbyterian Center - Conference Rooms A&B, 2nd floor at 1:00 pm by COGA Moderator, Barbara Gaddis. Vice-Moderator Stephanie Anthony led the opening worship.

Roll Call
The following persons present for all or part of the meeting were:

**COGA Members:**
Barbara Gaddis, Moderator
Stephanie Anthony, Vice Moderator
Wilson Kennedy
Andy James
Lynn Hargrove
Warren Lesane
Cindy Kohlmann, Co-Moderator of the 223rd GA (2018)
Vilmarie Cintron-Olivieri, Co-Moderator of the 223rd GA (2018)
Luis Ocasio Torres
Samuel Bonner
Frank James
Leon Lovell-Martin
Leanne Masters
Sallie Watson
J. Herbert Nelson II, Ex Officio

**COGA members excused:**
Eliana Maxim, urgent family matters
Margaret Elliott, previous commitment
Mark Boyd, continued leave of absence
Diane Moffett (Corresponding Member)

**Guests:**
Byron Elam, GACOR member
Laurie Ferguson, Consultant
The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly was asked to excuse the absences of the three members of the committee, and –

**MOTION MADE, SECONDED AND PASSED** to excuse Eliana Maxim, Margaret Elliott and Mark Boyd.

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly reviewed the proposed meeting agenda, and –

**MOTION MADE, SECONDED AND PASSED** to approve the proposed agenda, as presented at today’s meeting.
The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly reviewed the proposed meeting minutes, and -

**MOTION MADE, SECONDED AND PASSED** to approve the following minutes:

- February 6-8, 2018.
- March 14, 2018 Conference Call.
- May 2, 2018 Conference Call.
- June 15, 2018 – meeting while at the 223rd General Assembly (2018)

Moderator Gaddis gave her report. She reported that new members received orientation prior to the beginning of the meeting today.

Co-Moderators Cindy Kohlmann and Vilmarie Cintrón-Olivieri, gave her report on behalf of the Co-Moderators.

The Stated Clerk gave his report.

Tom Hay, Director of Assembly Operations, reported on results of the survey of participants to the 223rd General Assembly.

Meeting recessed at 2:45 pm

Meeting Reconvened at 3:00 pm with Moderator, Barbara Gaddis, Moderating.

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly -

**MOTION MADE, SECONDED AND PASSED** to enter executive session for the purpose of discussing personnel issues. As is COGA’s practice, corresponding members are invited to executive sessions. Cora Brown is also invited to stay for the committee’s conversation.

The Committee returned from Executive Session at 5:05 pm with Vice-Moderator Stephanie Anthony moderating and -
MOTION MADE, SECONDED AND PASSED to leave executive session. As there were no actions taken during executive session, there is no report.

COGA Nominating Cmte. – Carol McDonald

- Barbara Gaddis and Margaret Elliott are the two members of COGA who are not eligible for an additional term. They will serve as the COGA Nominating Committee.
- Each class of COGA members is asked to select a member to serve on the COGA Coordinating Committee. The classes are asked to report the selection on Wednesday morning. The fifth member of the Coordinating Committee (as the Moderator and Vice—Moderator automatically serve) will be appointed by the Moderator.

Report from PHS Executive Director:

- Beth Hessel, Executive Director of PHS, is reporting on behalf of George Abdo, PHS Board Chair, who is absent due to a death in the family, and Margaret Elliott, COGA Liaison to PHSB.
- PHS Board nominees presented:
  - GEORGE ABDO Second, Four-year term Class of 2022
  - ROBERT MAGGS Second, One-year term Class of 2019
  - GRADYE PARSONS First, Four-year term Class of 2023
  - PERZAVIA PRAYLOW First, partial term due to vacancy Class of 2020
  - CHERYL THURBER First, Partial term due to vacancy Class of 2020

MOTION MADE, SECONDED AND PASSED to approve the PHS Board nominees.

Report from PMA Audit Committee – Stephanie Anthony

- The COGA Vice-Moderator no longer automatically serves of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. Therefore there is no report.
Report from GACEIR – Robina Winbush

- Leon Lovell-Martin has been appointed by the COGA Moderator as the GOGA member of GACIER.

Report from Stated Clerk Nominating Committee – Wilson Kennedy

- The Committee will begin its work in 2029
- The committee is looking for a staff person to serve the committee (due to the nature of the committee’s work, the committee is looking for someone not on OGA staff.

The Committee –

**MOTION MADE, SECONDED AND PASSED** to recess for dinner. Andy James offered a closing prayer.

**MEETING RECESSED**

**Wednesday, September 26, 2018**

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly meeting reconvened at 8:32 am by Moderator Gaddis in Conference Rooms A&B at Presbyterian Center.

Moderator Barbara Gaddis recognized Byron Elam, a member of the General Assembly Committee on Representation, to the meeting.

Moderator Barbara Gaddis announced the election of Sam Bonner (Class of 2022) and Andy James (Class of 2020) as members of the COGA Coordinating Committee. The appointment of the fifth member will be announced by the end of the meeting.

The Committee continued informal debrief of the 223rd General Assembly (2018).

Meeting recessed at 8:58 am in order to attend worship in the Presbyterian Center Chapel.

Meeting reconvened at 9:48 am
The Moderator recognized Sam Bonner, COGA’s representative to the A Corp Board, for a presentation of their work to date.

The Committee continued informal debrief of the 223rd General Assembly (2018).

Kerry Rice, Deputy Stated Clerk, presented a list of referrals from the 223rd General Assembly (2018) to the Committee.

MOTION MADE, SECONDED AND PASSED to receive the list of referrals.

Meeting recessed at 10:45 am

Meeting reconvened at 11:00 am by Moderator Barbara Gaddis

The Moderator introduced Laurie Ferguson, a Presbyterian teaching elder and consultant, and Kerry Rice to present an update on the work of the OGA Strategic Planning Process.

Laurie Ferguson led COGA through an exercise of capturing the vision of the Stated Clerk. This work will be added to work already done by staff toward creating an easily communicated summary of the vision.

The meeting was recessed at 11:58 am in order to have lunch with OGA staff on the 4th floor. Luis Ocasio-Torres offered a prayer.

Working groups convened at 12:45 pm. Working groups are:

- General Assembly Cost Reduction
- Statistics
- Mid Councils

Prior to reconvening, Kerry Rice offered a tour of Presbyterian Center for any COGA members.
The meeting was reconvened at 3:45 pm by Moderator Barbara Gaddis.

The Stated Clerk introduced Teresa Waggener, Manager of Immigration Legal Resources and Amanda Craft, Manager of Immigration Advocacy, for a presentation and discussion about using Presbyterian Center as a location of sanctuary for those in danger of deportation by the US government.

MOTION MADE, SECONDED AND PASSED to authorize OGA to continue to investigate the idea of becoming a sanctuary location, by investigating and moving forward on the following:

- costs,
- the need to enable funds for legal fees for the law firm that is currently working on this issue and any future law firms needed for this endeavor;
- find additional pro bono lawyers to work on this endeavor,
- permissions,
- safety for staff,
- safety to persons coming to live in the building,
- educate staff and denomination about the public witness

The Committee –

MOTION MADE, SECONDED AND PASSED to enter executive session to discuss property and personnel matters

The meeting recessed at 6:15 pm for dinner.

Thursday, September 27, 2018

The Committee was reconvened at 8:30 am in Conference Rooms A&B at Presbyterian Center. Lynn Hargrove led morning prayers.

No actions were taken during executive session.
Reports were offered from the three COGA Working Groups.

Mid Council Working Group

Sessions’ Annual Statistical Report. The working group presented their recommendation and COGA -

MOTION MADE, SECONDED AND PASSED to approve the following supplemental questions to be included in the year end questionnaire:

1. Young Participants in Your Congregation
   a. Age 4 and under
   b. Elementary School (K-5th)
   c. Middle School (6th-8th)
   d. High School (9th – 12th)

2. Leadership: How many elders or deacons are 25 or younger?

3. Sexuality: How many people would identify as LGBTQIA? (Provide definitions)

4. Ethnicity
   a. For Native Americans, please identify the nation/tribe:
   b. For Asians, please identify the country of origin:
   c. For Africans, please identify the country of origin:
   d. For Hispanic, please identify the country of origin:
   e. For Middle Eastern, please identify the country of origin:

5. Church Staff
   a. How many full-time ordained pastoral staff?
   b. How many part-time ordained pastoral staff?
   c. How many other full-time staff members?
d. How many other part-time staff members?

General Assembly Cost Reductions

The Moderator asked for volunteers and appointed members of the following task forces for COGA:

- Review of COGA Manual of Operations – appoint team to report February 2019; appointed Andy James and Frank James, with Tom Hay and Kerry Rice assisting
- Review of GA Standing Rules – appoint team to report in February 2019 (particular look at the Advisory Committee on the Constitution); appointed Leanne Masters and Stephanie Anthony. With Tom Hay assisting

The meeting recessed at 9:45 am

The meeting was reconvened by Moderator Gaddis at 10:00 am

The recent Mid Council Leaders Gathering (October in Chicago), attracted more than 270 attendees. This represented the second year of our partnership with the Board of Pensions in sponsoring this event

The 2019 event is being planned and continues as a partnership with the Board of Pensions. For the 2020 event, the Stated Clerk would like to explore an event jointly sponsored by all six agencies.

Kerry Rice reported that the Stated Clerk is working with PMA on naming staff to each of the 19 special committees created by the 223rd General Assembly (2018). In addition, the Co-Moderators are hard at work, with the assistance of the General Assembly Nominating Committee and in consultation with the General Assembly Committee on Representation, to appoint the more than 118 slots available on the committees.

Cora Brown reported on several new additions to the OGA staff:
• Wilma Scott, Church Leadership Connection Consultant, is retiring after more than 30 years of service
• DeAmber Clopton is the new Budget Manager based in Louisville
• Rick Jones is the new Director of Communications based in Louisville
• Everdeith Landrau is the new Manager for Ecumenical Relations Networking, Resource Development and Education
• Clorinda Moore is the new Development Associate based in Philadelphia
• Elizabeth Wittrig is the new Pam Byers Memorial Fund Program Archivist, a term position based in Philadelphia for a one-year contract term

John Wood, Director of Administrative Services in Philadelphia, presented an update on the OGA and per capita budgets:
• Rates of per capita payment seem to be holding to past trends
• We should be able to write off lower amounts of per capita as uncollectible; there is a 7% positive change in uncollectibles
• We are working with our partners in Finance and Accounting of PMA to “clean up” many of the 14,000+ accounts that currently exist between PMA and OGA; the reduced number of active accounts should assist us in the development of more timely and accurate reports
• We are developing the final list of cuts for 2019 to address the required $400,000 reduction as part of the approved 2019-2020 budget

Committee on the Office of the General Assembly proposed meeting dates 2018-2020
• February 4-6, 2019 in Houston, TX
• April 23-25, 2019 in Philadelphia, PA with PHSB
• September 25-27, 2019 in Louisville
• February 12-14, 2020 in Baltimore with PMAB
• April 14-17, 2020 at Ghost Ranch, NM
MOTION MADE, SECONDED AND PASSED to approve recommendations as presented.

The Stated Clerk offered appreciation to the OGA staff for all of their work and assistance to aid him in his work and the work of this office.

Rev. Leon Lovell-Martin lifted up Wilma Scott – for all of her hard work in CLC. She is retiring and the COGA Committee wants to personally thank her for a job well done.

Having no further business before the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, Closing Prayer was offered by Leon Lovell-Martin.

Meeting adjourned at 10:45 am on Thursday, September 27, 2018

Respectfully submitted,

Brunhilda Williams-Curington
Recorder