

**NECESSARY RULES CHANGES
FOR THE AC FUNDING ASPECTS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN**

Proposed Changes to *The Book of Church Order*

The following amendments to *The Book of Church Order* were approved by the 38th General Assembly. To be enacted, they require the further constitutional change process of approval by majority vote of two-thirds of the 79 presbyteries (53 presbyteries) and a majority vote of a subsequent General Assembly (*BCO* 26-2).

[Additions are indicated by underlining; deletions by ~~strike-through~~.]

Amend *BCO* 14-1.4 to read:

14-1

4. It is the responsibility of every member and every member congregation to support the whole work of the denomination as they be led in their conscience held captive to the Word of God. Consistent with this principle, the responsibility to support the work of the denomination shall include a requirement that churches, teaching elders, and Presbyteries contribute to denominational support services by paying an annual Registration Fee for the support of the ministry of the Administrative Committee.

Amend *BCO* 14-2 to read:

14-2 The General Assembly, which is a permanent court, shall meet at least annually upon its own adjournment. Its membership shall consist of all teaching elders in good standing with their Presbyteries, and ruling elders as elected by their Session. Each congregation is entitled to two ruling elder representatives commissioners for the first 350 communing members or fraction thereof, and one additional ruling elder for each additional 500 communing members or fraction thereof.

Among these members, the voting members of the General Assembly shall consist of: (1) all teaching elders who, before the convening of the General Assembly, have fulfilled their annual responsibilities with respect to the Registration Fees for teaching elders as approved by the General Assembly and who are pastors in relation to churches (*BCO* 22-1) that, before the convening of the General Assembly, have fulfilled their annual responsibilities with respect to the Registration Fees for churches as approved by the General Assembly; (2) all teaching elders serving in needful works (*BCO* 8-4) who, before the convening of the General Assembly, have fulfilled their annual responsibilities with respect to the Registration Fees for teaching elders as approved by the General Assembly; and (3) ruling elder commissioners whose churches, before the convening of the General Assembly, have fulfilled their annual responsibilities with respect to the Registration Fees for churches as approved by the General Assembly. In any case where the failure to fulfill such annual responsibilities precludes voting membership, the Administrative Committee is authorized to negotiate a reasonable accommodation to restore voting membership. Honorably Retired teaching elders are exempted from the Registration Fee.

Proposed Changes in the Rules of Assembly Operations

The following *RAO* changes will be brought to the 39th General Assembly, contingent upon the approval of the *BCO* amendments by two-thirds of the presbyteries and subsequent approval by the General Assembly. *RAO* changes require a two-thirds majority of commissioners present, which must be one-half of the enrollment of the General Assembly (*RAO* Article XX.).

Amend *RAO* 4-11 as follows:

In §4-11, add a new ¶5 and new ¶6.

Financial support for the Administrative Committee shall come from Annual Registration Fees of churches, teaching elders, and Presbyteries. Honorably Retired teaching elders are exempted from this Annual Registration Fee. The Annual Registration Fee schedule needed to support the Administrative Committee Budget shall be presented to the General Assembly annually for approval as part of the approval of the Administrative Committee Budget of that particular year. The management of the Annual Registration Fees shall be by the Administrative Committee. The Administrative Committee shall annually report to the General Assembly all churches that are delinquent two or more years in the submission of Annual Registration Fees in order that the General Assembly may take appropriate action.

The Annual Registration Fee for churches may not exceed four-tenths of one percent (0.4%, 4/10%) of local church Tithes and Offerings unless amended in the following manner:

1. Approval of the proposed increase by a majority of commissioners present and voting in the General Assembly, and its recommendation to the Presbyteries, and
2. The advice and consent of a majority of Presbyteries that report their actions on the proposed increase to the subsequent General Assembly.

In §4-11, the present ¶5 would become ¶7.

After the above amendments to the *BCO* and *RAO* are finally approved and the AC Funding Plan is implemented, the General Assembly Commissioner's Registration Fee (now mentioned in *RAO* 10-4) would need to be eliminated. Elimination of the Commissioner's Registration Fee could be accomplished by either deleting present *RAO* 10-4, or by interpreting the present *RAO* 10-4 in light of the revised *RAO* 4-11, inasmuch as, according to *Roberts Rules of Order*, a specific rule takes precedence over a general rule, RONR (10th ed.), p. 571, ll. 8-23.