

**AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES OF RHODE ISLAND
BOARD OF MINISTRIES MEETING
November 6, 2023**

Minutes

The regular meeting of the ABCORI Board of Ministries was held by Zoom on November 6, 2023.

Present: Rev. Dr. Cal Lord, President; Eva Irby-Davis, Vice President; David Dolce, Treasurer; Lynne Linden, Clerk; Rev. Dr. Courtney Davis Olds, Executive Minister; Rev. Kathryn Palen, Associate Executive Minister; Beth Berry, Robert Butzier, Joanne Brown, Jan Fletcher, James Ellison, Rev. Dr. Daniel Cottrell; Judy Butzier, Rev. Leigh Johnson.

Call to Order: President Cal Lord called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

Opening prayer and Devotion: Rev. Lord opened the meeting with a devotion and with prayer.

Employee Manual: Dan Cottrell presented the revised employee manual completed by the Personnel Committee. The committee spoke with the ABCORI staff, ABCUSA, private HR professionals and reviewed manuals from other denominations. It was noted that the employee manual should be reviewed every two years. The recently adopted ABCORI mission statement will need to be inserted in place of the current one. Dan said any significant changes needed would go to the Personnel Committee and then come back to be approved by the BOM.

Board members complimented the Personnel Committee on their work. After a discussion, Beth made a motion that the Employee Manual, with the amended mission statement adopted in 2023 and with a review scheduled for 2026, be adopted. Lynne seconded the motion. Dan said that he wanted to clarify that the Personnel Committee will be responsible in proposing any interim changes before 2026 to the Board for approval.

The motion was passed by a show of hands.

Structure for 2023-2025: The Executive Committee make the following recommendation for the BOM's consideration: That ABCORI continue working with the amended by-laws and interim structure for one additional year with the understanding that the Board of Ministries appoint a By-laws Task Force early in 2024, prior to the annual meeting, with the goal of having the by-laws revised in advance of the annual meeting in 2025. The BOM will acknowledge at the 2024 annual meeting that we are moving in a positive direction, have met with a consultant, and are looking to put together a structure that will incorporate our purpose and better achieve our goals as a region. As the By-laws Task Force undertakes its work in 2024, we will look for ways to communicate its process and progress to the body.

It was asked if this committee would consist of Board of Ministries members only. The current by-laws do not restrict any task force to only BOM members. It was asked if the structure changes made at the 2023 business meeting resulted in all the elected members of the BOM being elected for a one year term only. It was confirmed that the understanding at the annual business meeting was that all elected members were for a one year term. Any current members agreeing to continue for another year would need to be re-elected. It was also confirmed that any nominations from the floor at the upcoming business meeting would need to be accepted and voted upon.

Cal said this proposal for continuing the interim structure for an additional year would be communicated to ABCORI members in advance. It was also stated that the Board would want a By-laws Task Force available to be introduced at the business meeting. This committee wouldn't be open to nominations from the floor since it is a responsibility of the Board.

Decision Making: This item was moved to the January meeting.

Reports:

- **Treasurer's Report** – David Dolce offered the report on the current budget. *See report.*
- **Executive Minister's Report** – see *written report*. Courtney presented her report and stated that direction is needed from the Board in order to create a 2024 budget for staffing and programs. A discussion followed. It was indicated that any possible decisions to come from the Property Task Force proposals would not be able to go into effect for at least a year. This is true for any income generated from those proposals also.

New Business:

- **Quidnick Baptist Church:** The Quidnick Baptist Church wishes to sell the church and its property. The title search determined there are three warranty deeds from the RI Baptist State Convention (precursor to ABCORI). The Executive Minister and the Finance Committee will research this further and determine if legal advice is needed. A special meeting may need to be called.
 - Jan Fletcher made a motion to authorize the Finance Committee to retain legal counsel if needed and to approve the expenses of such action. Lynne Linden seconded it and the motion was approved by a show of hands.
- **General Secretary of the Board of General Ministries of ABCUSA:** Jan Fletcher announced that the Board of General Ministries of American Baptist Churches USA affirmed the call of the Rev. Dr. Gina Jacobs-Strain to be the next General Secretary.

Minutes of September 9, 2023: The minutes of the September 9th meeting of the Board of Ministries were reviewed. A Motion to accept the minutes as written was made by Beth Berry. The motion was passed unanimously by a show of hands.

Next meeting: The next meeting will be held on January 20, 2024.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:41 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynne Linden

Clerk