

**AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES OF RHODE ISLAND  
BOARD OF MINISTRIES MEETING**

**Minutes**

**JANUARY 31, 2022**

This evening's meeting was conducted In-Person, at Meadowwood, and via Zoom.

**Present:** President Beth Berry, Rev. Clayton Lord, Vice-President, Rev. Dough Harris, Interim Executive Minister, Rev. Wendy Kiefer-O'Brien, Past President, David Coon, Esq., Treasurer, Robert Butzier, Judy Butzier, Rev. Dr. Linda Bausserman, Tom Archer, Jim Ellison, Eva Irby-Davis and Rev. George Barclay (in-Person). Rev. Dr. Dan Cottrel and Rev. Dr. Courtney Davis Olds, newly appointed Executive Minister, joined the meeting via Zoom. Also present was Lynn Linden the in-coming BOM Clerk, who was invited to observe the proceedings.

**Opening time of Worship:** Led by President Berry who read passages from the book "Wherever You Are My Love Will Find You" by Nancy Tillman. Scripture texts from Roman 8 and Ephesians 3 were used to lift up the book's message. President Berry presented the book to Doug as a gift for him to read to his two young grandchildren. Doug graciously accepted the book.

**Call to Order:** President Berry called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes from November 17, 2021 and January 9, 2022:** The minutes of the November 17, 2021 Meeting were approved as presented. Corrections to the January 9, 2022 1) Jim Ellison's name was added as being present; and 2) Regarding the matter of a \$25,000.00 gift from the Estate of Rev. Joyce Duerr. Moved by Linda Bausserman; Seconded by Jan Fletcher.

**Continuing Business:**

- **Treasurer's Report** – Profit and Loss Budget Performance Reports for January 2017 through December 2021 and December 2021 along with a printed narrative highlighting some of the line items with substantial variations between budget and actual spending were presented. This report was approved and placed on file for audit.
- Treasurer Coon also submitted the following statement and recommendation for bylaws amendment.

From time to time it has been thought advisable to consider spending amounts in excess of the budget adopted at the annual meeting. It has been our practice to allow the Executive Committee to authorize that overspending. The bylaws do not currently give this power to the Executive Committee and I recommend that the bylaws be brought into conformity with

practice. Accordingly, I ask the Board of Ministries to approve the following amendment to the bylaws and to recommend its adoption at the next annual meeting of ABCORI:

“The bylaws shall be amended by adding thereto a new paragraph 3, Section E, Article VIII, to read as follows:

- “3. The Executive Committee is authorized and empowered from time to time, and if deemed necessary by the committee to do so before the next meeting of the Board of Ministries, to authorize expenditures in excess of budgeted amounts. The total of such excess expenditures shall not exceed Ten Thousand (\$10,000.00) Dollars in any calendar year. The committee shall report all such excess expenditures to the next meeting of the Board of Ministries. The Board of Ministries may from time to time decrease or increase the authority of the Executive Committee under this paragraph.”

After some discussion, the portion of the recommendation stating..*The total of such excess expenditures shall not exceed Ten Thousand (\$10,000.00) Dollar in any calendar year* was amended to read: *The total of such excess expenditures shall not exceed 10% of budgeted expenses in any calendar year.* Moved by David Coon; Seconded by Bob Butzier. The motion carried.

A copy of the amendment shall be sent out two weeks prior to the annual meeting of ABCORI.

- **Committees**

- **Recruitment** – Wendy gave the following report:

- Staff, Teams & Other Representatives to BOM

- Standing Committee on Ordained Ministry Representative– One vacancy to be filled. Beth may appoint this person.

- Board of Ministries –

- Members-At-Large - Two vacancies to be filled: one one-year term ending 023; one two-year term ending 2024. Rev. George Barclay has agreed to serve a 2<sup>nd</sup> three-year term ending 2025.

- Recruitment Committee

- Ministers Council President – Rev. Dr. Reppa Cottrell is willing to serve.

- Members-At-Large – Two vacancies to be filled: one two-year term ending 2024; one three-year term ending 2025.

- Executive Minister’s Relations Committee

- Two one-year terms ending 2024; one two-year term ending 2024; one three-year term ending 2025.

- Standing Committee on Ordained Ministry

- Vacancy – Chair. Appointed from one of clergy members.

- Two vacancies to be filled: : One lay member for a two-year term ending in 2024; one clergy member for a three-year term ending in 2025.

### Operations Team

Vacancies for Investment Chair and Properties Chair need to be filled.

### Investment Committee (Pooled Investment Fund)

Vacancy for Chair needs to be filled. Doug recommended Rev. Jake McGuire, Pastor, First Baptist, Bristol; stating that he was very impressed with his knowledge of investments. Wendy will contact Rev. McGuire.

Vacancies to be filled: two one-year terms ending 2023; two two-year term ending 2024. Bob will call Tom Kennedy to see if he will chair this committee.

### Personnel Committee

Vacancies to be filled: One two-year term ending 2024; one three-year term ending in 2025.

### Properties Committee

Vacancies to be filled: One one-year term ending 2024; one two-year term ending 2024; two three- year term ending 2025.

### Baptist Fund of Rhode Island

Need: Ministers Council Representative. Vacancies to be filled: two persons for a two-year term ending 2024; two persons for a three-year term ending 2025.

- **SCOM** – Rev. Dr. Linda Bausserman stated she is completing her 2<sup>nd</sup> three-year term as Chair. There have been five ordinations. There are two candidates who are in the final stages of the ordination process. We are investigating ways to provide field education for track 2 and 3 candidates.
- **Operations** – Bob Butzier reported there are three active members on the Properties Committee who work diligently with Matt Black to keep the properties up. Along with some volunteers, they have upgraded a number of facilities in preparation for the arrival of our new executive minister.
- **ABCORI Ministry Task Force** – This team will be sending out a survey to local churches regarding “What is the interest in owning Canonicus Camp and Conference Center?” and “What is the vision for Canonicus?” The goal is to have this information for the meeting in March.
- **Reports from Staff**
  - **Elder Care Ministries**

Kathryn Palen provided a written report summarizing activities and programs this ministry has engaged in to include an Advent Zoom Coffee Chat Series; a series of blogs on “*Traveling the Advent Journey*” which provided resources for each week of Advent; A Christmas Party for residents at John Clarke Senior Living and a Christmas Luncheon for retired regional clergy. Looking forward to 2022

for which a number of new programs and ministries are being planned. Keep your eyes on *Connections*.

Kathryn has preached at six of our local churches and participated in the Ordination of Rev. Natasha Gordon at Ebenezer Baptist Church. She is also working with churches who are in pastoral transition.

o Interim Executive Minister

Doug Harris submitted his report with the title of: "Final Board Report from the Interim Executive Minister."

This report was a summary of his observations regarding deficit spending by looking at the last five years, 2017-2021. The average deficit has been more than \$100,000.00 per year. During the past two years, the deficit would have been even greater if it were not for \$90,000.00 each year from the pandemic relief funds provided by the federal government.

Doug observed that owning and operating Canonicus Camp and Conference Center is the reason for the yearly deficit. The fixed costs of owning and operating the property are not covered by the income generated by programing. Even if the camping and conferencing program were to break even, the property expenses carry a significant burden of fixed costs. The yearly property expenses average approximately \$250,000.00. Income from the property, i.e., house rental and other incidental income is around \$50,000.00 per year.

The unrestricted funds being used from our endowment will last about another three to five years at the present rate of the deficit. This gives us time to think creatively, and act intentionally to turn this situation around. The Canonicus Task Force currently at work is a start in determining what the churches need in outdoor ministry in 2022 and beyond.

It is the responsibility of the board to make a decision as to the best course of action for the region to take regarding the property. Doug stated it is his responsibility to say that if we do not address this now, we will soon face a crisis point where selling the property becomes the only option to remain financially viable as a region.

Doug cited how several churches in the ABC Metro Chicago area handled these types of situations.

**Old business:**

- Dam restoration – This report was prepared by the Operations Committee. The Operations Committee is unanimously in favor of repairing the dam on Lake Adams. However, the committee is not unanimous on whether the project should proceed now or at a later date. The purpose of this report is to give you, the Board of Ministries, information that will allow you to decide whether repair of the dam is something ABCORI should undertake now or instead at a later date.

Background information included the name of the selected contractor, T Ford Company, Inc., along with a total income budget of: \$725,000.00. There was

much discussion on the matter, pro and con. Judy Butzier Moved that the project to repair the dam at Lake Adams move forward now. Seconded by Rev. Dr. Cal Lord. In Favor: 11; Opposed: 0. The Motion carried.

**New business:**

- Budget for 2022  
Beth brought the budget forward for discussion. Questions were asked and answered. Total Expenses: \$748,992.00; Total Income: \$633,383.00  
Total Deficit \$113,609.00. Rev. Wendy Kiefer-O'Brien Moved that the 2022 Budget be approved as presented; Seconded by Judy Butzier. The Motion carried.
- New Executive Minister Transition  
Beth stated that Kathryn will be in-charge during the transition period between Doug's last day, February 14, 2022 and Courtney's arrival on April 4. David and Beth will meet with Courtney remotely on March 7.
- The Board of Ministries wished to express gratitude to Matt Black for single handedly plowing the way to Meadowwood this evening which allowed the meeting to take place.

**Adjourn/Closing Prayer:**

Rev. George Barclay Moved for Adjournment; Seconded by David Coon. Doug gave the closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann M. McGloshen  
Clerk