

## **Standing Rules of the Ministers Council ABC,USA**

As proposed May 2014;  
composed of current procedures plus recommended changes.

### Adoption and Revision

- A standing rule is a rule that relates to the details of the administration of a society and which can be adopted or changed the same way as any other act of the deliberative assembly to which the rule applies.
- Standing rules can be suspended by a majority vote for the duration of the session, but not for longer.

### National Dues

- Shall be collected annually.
- Shall cover the calendar year.
- Shall be received by national Ministers Council by April 30<sup>th</sup> of the year covered.

### National Membership Categories

- Among those individuals eligible under Article VI, Section 1 of the By Laws are ordained individuals, commissioned individuals, lay professionals, and students in seminary.
- Honorary Life membership will no longer be granted as of January 1, 2015. Current Life Members shall retain their Life membership status.

### Discounts in Dues, option 1

- Retirement membership shall be granted to members who have actually ceased to be compensated for ministerial work. Retirement membership dues shall be half of the regular dues.
- Seminarian membership shall be granted to individuals currently enrolled in seminary, full or part-time. Seminarian membership dues shall be half of the regular dues.
- Bi-vocational ministerial leaders whose secular job is part-time shall pay half of the regular dues.
- If Pastoral Couples are working together as one full-time equivalent ministerial leader, each shall pay half of the regular dues.
- National-only missionary membership is granted to ministerial leaders currently assigned to foreign mission fields and who are unable to participate in Ministers Council activities on a regular basis. Missionary membership in 2015 shall be \$10 and thereafter shall be one-half of the regular dues.
- Missionaries who have access to Local Ministers Council Chapters for more than 9 months of the calendar year are expected to pay national dues above and also join their local chapter.

## Discount in Dues, option 2

References to categories (seminarian, retired, missionary) will be removed. Instead, dues will be based on the member's family income, following the chart below.

Family income levels will not be verified; members will pay appropriate amount based on the honor system.

| Annual family income of | should pay dues of |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| > \$55,000              | \$100              |
| \$25,000-\$55,000       | \$ 50              |
| \$10,000-\$24,999       | \$ 25              |
| <\$10,000               | \$ 10              |

## Local Chapters

- A local Ministers Council Chapter is a related organization of this body, which exists within an American Baptist Region, in a portion of an American Baptist Region, or in an area that covers more than one American Baptist Region.
- Local Chapter activities and expenses are covered by national non-profit status only if national dues are paid for its members.
- National members are expected to also join and pay dues to a Local Chapter, unless there are obstacles preventing their participation in Local Chapters.
- When Local Chapters based on geography overlap Local Chapters based on affinity or other associational status, members are expected to pay national dues only once.
- Local Chapters with overlapping memberships are encouraged to discuss ways of cooperating in activities and may consider reduced Local Dues for those members willing to take on dual local chapter memberships.

## Local Chapter Responsibilities

- Organize and select at least a President, Treasurer, and Representative.
- Provide regular workshops, retreats, or other forms of engagement for its members in order to increase professional effectiveness, encourage personal/spiritual wholeness, and make collegial connections.
- Set and collect local dues.
- Collect and remit national dues, including names and addresses of members.
- Provide annual reports, including names and contact information of officers.
- Select a Chapter Representative for every 100 members, or fraction thereof, who shall serve on the Ministries Team (Article IX) and shall participate in the business session of the Annual Meeting (Article X).
- It is recommended that the Local Chapter use part of its local dues to support attendance at the Annual Meeting, paying the expenses of its Representative(s) and/or underwriting attendance by a larger number of members.

## Costs

- National dues cover the operational costs of the Ministers Council, underwrite the Annual Meeting program, and contribute to the fund for stipends for nationally-elected officers, board and council members.
- From 2015 – 2018, the portion of the local representative's expenses for attending the Annual Meeting Business Session will be reduced by 10% a year. In 2015, national will cover 40%; in 2016, 30%; in 2017, 20%; in 2018, 10%. In 2019, there will be no automatic payment by national.
- Local Chapter dues underwrite local programming and may cover or contribute to the costs for their Representative(s) to attend Annual Meetings.
- Local Chapter Representative(s) will cover any of their own expenses not covered by the Chapter. They are encouraged to seek church continuing education and/or conference support.
- Individual Members attend Annual Meetings at their own expense, but receive a discounted rate for members. The meeting is open to all.
- Nationally-elected Officers and Member Representatives to the Board of Governors and any at-large members of the Ministries Team will contribute as able to their own travel and expenses, but will be eligible for stipends from national MC.
- Local Chapters may request discounts for their dues or stipends for their Representative if in financial straits.
- Members of the Development Council will contribute their own travel and expenses, but should this prove a hardship, members may request stipends from national MC.

### Guidelines for a Stipend Fund

By Senate 2015, the Governing Board should recommend a structure for distributing stipends, including limits on available amounts, how to assess need, and who will determine awards.

### Terms of Local Chapter Representatives

- In selecting its Representative(s), Local Chapters shall consider both sharing the opportunity to serve on the Ministries Team and the need for continuity. A single four-year appointment is recommended.
- A Local Chapter Officer may also serve as that Chapter's Representative.
- National Ministers Council functions on a calendar year, and Representatives for each year should be named by January 1<sup>st</sup>.

### Meetings

- Annual Meeting is open to all ministerial leaders, whether or not they are members of Ministers Council. Ministers Council Members receive a registration discount.
- All dues paying members of the Ministers Council may have voice, but not vote, at the business session of the Annual Meeting.

- The Annual Meeting shall be planned by a committee appointed by the Board of Governors.
- Time and place shall be set by the Board of Governors. On Mission Summit (odd-numbered) years, it will be held at the same location, at or near the same time. On even numbered years, it will be held at Green Lake or move among geographic regions.
- Annual Meeting shall include a business session for Local Chapter Representatives and the Board of Governors, but will focus on education, inspiration, and discussion of items of concern to ministerial leaders. Recommended activities include prayer teams, a Sabbath period, fellowship gatherings, and table conversations.
- The Board of Governors shall convene before and/or after Annual Meeting and at least one other time each calendar year, and electronically monthly or as needed.
- The Ministries Team/Local Chapter Representatives shall conduct quarterly electronic meetings on membership and communication; shall meet electronically as needed on other topics; and shall sub-divide into committees and task forces, recruiting additional members as useful.
- Development Council shall meet twice a year and electronically as needed, and may invite the Budget Officer or President to be in attendance at any given meeting.
- The Personnel Committee shall meet at least annually, but may do so electronically.
- The Nominating Committee shall convene at Annual Meeting and meet electronically between meetings as needed.

#### Nominating Procedures

- The Governing Board (in reference to members and Chairperson of the Development Council) and the Nominating Committee (in reference to all other elected positions) will announce to members at least 2 months in advance the positions that are open and the date that each group plans to meet and discuss candidates for open positions.
- Members may suggest themselves or others to be considered for any given position. National Ministers Council will provide a means for suggesting candidates on the website.
- Suggestions submitted through the web site at least four days before the announced meeting dates must be considered by the Governing Board or Nominating Committee.

#### Appendix: Job Description for Executive Director, Officers, and Representatives

## Working Guidelines for the Ministries Team, Committees and Task Forces

- The local chapter representatives shall convene regularly as the Ministries Team. They will hold an organizing meeting each year at the Annual Meeting.
- They will meet monthly by electronic means and use email or other technology to work on ongoing projects.
- Each local representative will provide reports from and to his/her local chapter at least quarterly.
- The ministries team together will provide written recommendations for annual meeting emphases and speakers to the Annual Meeting Committee; will identify and post on national Ministers Council website the 10 best local chapter activities each year; and will contribute at least 12 new or updated resources (recommended speakers, valuable articles, useful links, etc.) for posting on the website.
- The ministries team will discuss Together In Ministry efforts and resources (funds and in-kind donations), identify needs, and seek means of using in-kind donations and encouraging collegial connections.
- The ministries team will discuss programming possibilities at the local and national levels that will increase the professional effectiveness and/or the spiritual & personal wholeness of members and will identify 2-4 key emphases each year. They will communicate the emphases and various ways of addressing them to their local councils and to national staff and the Governing Board.
- Staff members and the Governing Board are to acknowledge such recommendations within two months of receiving them and are to report progress on recommendations to the Ministries Team at their quarterly meetings, via the Coordinator of the Ministries Team.
- The Ministries Team will select appropriate means of communicating ideas, successful programs, and best practices to members of the Ministers Council directly and/or to local council officers.

## Ministries Team Committees and Task Forces

From the efforts above, the need for committees and task forces will emerge.

- The Coordinator of the Ministries Team (in consultation with the Governing Board) may appoint committees and task forces as needed to fulfill the duties and act on the recommendations of the Ministries Team.
- Local Chapter Representatives are expected to serve on at least one committee or task force.
- The Ministries Team will recommend additional members for each suggested committee or task force and assist the Coordinator in recruiting members.
- A majority of members of each committee and task force must be members of the Ministers Council. But remaining members may be drawn from any valuable source, ministerial or lay, American Baptist or other.
- Committees and task forces shall serve only as long as the specific program or event assigned to them requires.

- Active members of the committees and task forces shall serve at least one year, but may serve as long as the committee/task force continues, even if his/her status (for example, as a local chapter rep) changes.
- Inactive or ineffective members of committee sand task forces may be removed by the Governing Board.

#### Journals and Publications

- National Ministers Council may publish a journal or journals related to its mission.
- The Board of Governors shall oversee such publications, including appointing the editor(s), and determining the funding, subscription rate and eligibility to receive the journal(s).
- The editor(s) and contributors shall provide services and material free-of-charge.
- If the Board requests that the editor(s) or specific contributor(s) attend any given meeting or gathering, the Board will designate the amount of compensation to be offered and its source before making the request.