

## **FIFTEEN CHANGES MOST IMPACTING THE LOCAL CHURCH**

### *ISSUES CREATED BY ADOPTION OF THE NEW “FORM OF GOVERNMENT”*

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1. Congregation and Session must provide by rule for their own quorum and process for calling a meeting,
2. Robert’s Rules is no longer required for congregational meetings. If not specified in By-Laws, it needs to be inserted as quickly as possible..
3. Congregation must provide by rule for make-up of Nominating Committee (other than one active Ruling Elder). .[e.g. Nominating Committee was 7 long paragraphs; now one short one.]
4. No more “Inactives”. A member is an Active Member or they are not a member. (Or they are an “Affiliate Member”—which still takes a long paragraph to define.) Problem is folk presently ON the Inactive Roll; are they restored to active membership on July 10—or deleted—or do we keep an Inactive Roll because it’s easier for us? Just because it’s not in the Form of Government doesn’t mean you can’t do it. The key question is why would you do it? Note also that the whole section on Minutes and Records is now three short paragraphs instead of 20 fairly long ones.
5. We’ve joined the Retro movement. We’re back to **Teaching Elders** and **Ruling Elders**—now that’s Presbyterian.
6. “Ruling Elder”. G-2.0301. Explains what “ruling” means. This concept of “discern and measure” has real possibilities for significant new understandings of this office/order.
7. Lovers of linguistic evolution will be pleased to know that **Governing Bodies**, aka **Judicatories**, aka sessions/presbyteries/synods/General Assembly will henceforth be referred to a **Councils**. **F-3.0203-09. and G-3.0101** I have no idea how to distinguish a “presbytery council” from “presbytery as a council”, but I have no doubt but that creative linguists will find a way around this.
8. Presbyters (Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders) and Deacons together comprise “**ordered ministries**”. **G-2.0102**. Not sure if they are “decent” but at least they are ordered.
9. “Duties” of Elders and Deacons eliminated. Details regarding meetings of Deacons eliminated..
10. Entry in to Membership. G-1.0303. four long paragraphs condensed into three short sentences. “No nonsense” definition.
11. There is now an option for interims and associates being called as next installed pastor. However, Interim Pastor Network encouraging presbyteries to continue to include non-

succession clauses in contracts of Intentional Interims. Language in nFoG is that temporary pastors will not be eligible to serve as next installed pastor. In either case, a 3/4<sup>th</sup> favorable vote by the full presbytery required to grant **exception**. (G-2.0504b & c)

- 12 CPM** Many stages in the process will require presbytery rule as several mandatory sections have been removed. Presbytery of call now examines. See old G-14.1410 where 13 paragraphs are replaced by 5 much smaller ones. Exceptions section reduced from four paragraphs to 1. Whole question of examining and ordaining a candidate is now one short sentence. (G-2.0702). Final assessment and Negotiation for Service is one very short paragraph. **Will require manuals for the CPM process.**
- 13** No committee structure mandated at presbytery/synod level. (former G-9.0900ff) and no Committee on Ministry per se (old G-11.0501 ff) Doesn't mean you can't have COM (or CPM), just that you don't have to—nor do you have to call them that.
- 14** Presbyteries have to create their own formula for equalizing number of Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders.
- 15** The insertion of F-1.0303 of language from the Scot's Confession on Proclamation, Sacraments, and Covenant Community. However, you'll find this theme running through the whole revised Form of Government. E.g. F-1.0404 "Marks of the true church". See esp whole new section at G-3.0101 and 3.0201 and 3.0301.