

ATTACHMENT B – Electronic Meetings Policy

Presbytery of Lake Huron Policy for Electronic Meetings

Policy for an Electronic Meeting of the Whole Presbytery

- 1) Electronic meetings of the Presbytery may be held only when the Council deems it necessary for or preferable to the holding of a traditional meeting.
- 2) For an electronic meeting of the Presbytery at least ten days notice will be provided to every congregation and/or commissioner. Instructions on how to participate technologically shall accompany the call for the meeting.
- 3) Electronic meetings must provide for simultaneous audio communication among all participants in order to allow for discussion of the issue being considered. Collaborative technologies such as web-based Zoom, GoTo Meeting and Skype, conference calls, and interactive video teleconferences fit the necessary requirements for maintaining the deliberative character of meetings held in accordance with the most recent edition of Roberts Rules of Order.
- 4) The same rules regarding participation apply in electronic meetings as in traditional ones: the body may but is not obligated to grant the privilege of the floor to a guest, who may not vote or speak to an issue once debate closes. A guest in an electronic meeting is someone who is not a continuing member of the Presbytery, nor a commissioner to the Presbytery meeting, nor a corresponding member, nor a retired member Minister of the Word & Sacrament, nor otherwise granted voice and/or vote at a Presbytery meeting as provided in the Presbytery's By-Laws or Policies.
- 5) Minutes of the proceedings shall be recorded and added to the minutes record of the Presbytery.
- 6) Motions shall be processed in the same manner as in a traditional meeting. The chair shall also give careful consideration to technological issues that might impact a person's ability to participate fully and give opportunity for adjustments before business is taken up. Before a vote is taken or consent measured, the chair will also determine whether any members are no longer present due to a technological disruption.
- 7) Prior to the meeting, the Stated Clerk, in consultation with the Executive Presbyter and Moderator, may determine if an item of business should be considered at a later Presbytery meeting. Reasons may include but are not limited to the complexity, controversiality, or lack of urgency of the item. Such items may be presented to the Presbytery as an omnibus motion to postpone consideration to the next stated meeting.
- 8) In the course of a meeting, the Moderator, in consultation with the Stated Clerk, may determine that an item of business presents issues that prevent its just or expedient deliberation, and entertain a motion to postpone further consideration to the next stated meeting or a special meeting called for that purpose. Examples would be, but are not limited to, a motion determined to have become too unwieldy or confused to have an informed vote; the processing of substitute motions; the need to refer to one of the Presbytery's committees or other entities.
- 9) The moderator shall give attention to ensuring that all persons are included in the discussion and reasonably have the capability of hearing and participating fully in the meeting.

ATTACHMENT B – Electronic Meetings Policy

Policy for an Electronic Meeting of all other units, standing or otherwise, of the Presbytery

- 1) Electronic meetings may be held when the Council or other entity acting on behalf of the Presbytery must conduct business that is time sensitive and in need of action before the next traditional meeting, or when the cost of a traditional meeting is not justified for the business at hand when electronic alternatives are available.
- 2) Electronic meetings are permissible only if every member of the Council, committee or other Presbytery entity has reasonable access to the technology that allows participation in the meeting.
- 3) Electronic meetings must provide for simultaneous audio communication among all participants in order to allow for discussion of the issue being considered. Collaborative technologies such as web-based Zoom, GoTo Meeting and Skype, conference calls, and interactive video teleconferences fit the necessary requirements for maintaining the deliberative character of meetings held in accordance with the most recent edition of Roberts Rules of Order.
- 4) Only the chairperson or moderator of the Council, committee, or other Presbytery entity may call an electronic meeting and may do so upon the request of three members.
- 5) Notice of an electronic meeting shall be given by the chair or moderator of the Council, committee, or other Presbytery entity at least 3 days before the meeting and shall include the purpose of the meeting. Instructions on how to participate technologically shall accompany the call for the meeting.
- 6) A quorum for an electronic meeting shall be a majority of members of the Council, committee, or entity of the Presbytery and shall be declared at the beginning of the meeting.
- 7) Just as in a traditional meeting, electronic meetings shall begin and close with prayer.
- 8) The same rules regarding participation apply in electronic meetings as in traditional ones: the body may but is not obligated to grant the privilege of the floor to a guest, who may not vote or speak to an issue once debate closes. A guest in an electronic meeting is someone who is not a member of the Council or committee.
- 9) Minutes of the proceedings shall be recorded and added to the minutes record.
- 10) Motions shall be processed in the same manner as in a traditional meeting. The chair shall also give careful consideration to technological issues that might impact a person's ability to participate fully and give opportunity for adjustments before business is taken up. Before a vote is taken or consent measured, the chair will also determine whether any members are no longer present due to a technological disruption.
- 11) The chair shall give attention to ensuring that all persons are included in the discussion and have the capability of hearing and participating fully in the meeting.
- 12) When e-mail is used for sharing information and coming to consensus on a matter, the resulting decision shall be confirmed or rejected by vote at the next meeting of any entity of the presbytery.

Resource links:

http://oga.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/mid_council_ministries/electronic_meeting_sample_rules_ronr.pdf

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/pcn/2017/07/05/tips-hosting-successful-online-meeting/>