

(Preliminary minutes – subject to approval by Presbytery of Lake Huron)

PRESBYTERY OF LAKE HURON

Stated Meeting – June 2, 2020

The Presbytery of Lake Huron was called to order with prayer by the Moderator, the Rev. Philomena Ofori-Nipaah, at 9:40 a.m., on Tuesday, June 2, 2020, and was held via Zoom (due to State of Michigan restrictions relating to COVID-19) with a minimum quorum physically present at the First Presbyterian Church of Saginaw, Saginaw, Michigan.

The roll was taken, and the moderator announced that a quorum was present.
[ATTACHMENT A]

MOTION WAS SUSTAINED to adopt the docket as amended.

Welcome was given by the host pastor, The Rev. Timm High of Midland-Chapel Lane. (Note: Midland-Chapel Lane was scheduled to be the physical hosts for the meeting but were made honorary hosts when the need for the meeting to be held via Zoom was determined. Saginaw-First had the technology already available to live stream and use Zoom.)

MOTION WAS SUSTAINED to seat the following as a Corresponding Members: The Revs. Chip Hardwick (Miami Valley), Matt Skolnik (Muskingham Valley) and Doug Portz (Pittsburgh Presbytery).

MOTION WAS SUSTAINED to approve the Consent Agenda which included the following:

1. The minutes of the March 7, 2020 Stated Meeting of the Presbytery.
2. The following actions with regard to the review of Session minutes and Church Registers:
 - a. The minutes of the following churches be approved without exception:
Fairgrove
 - b. The minutes of the following church be approved with exception: Grand Blanc Kirkridge
 - c. The church registers for the following churches be approved without exception:
Fairgrove, Grand Blanc Kirkridge
 - d. The following churches still need to be reviewed: Bay City First, Breckenridge-Emerson, Caro-First, Deckerville-First, Elkton-Chandler, Fenton-First, Fenton-Tyrone, Flint-Unity, Harbor Beach-First, Ithaca-Lafayette, Kinde-First, Linden, Saginaw-Korean, Sandusky, Twining-Maple Ridge, Uby-First and Yale-First

WORSHIP included a **CELEBRATION OF THE LORD’S SUPPER**, sermon by the Rev. Katja Gruening and an **OFFERING** to the Midland and Sanford Flood Relief.

COMMISSIONING OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY COMMISSIONERS the Rev. Matt Schramm and Elder Heather Bailey took place.

A short **BREAK** was taken prior to the Equipping for Ministry workshop.

EQUIPPING TIME was led by the Rev. Matt Skolnik. The topic was “The Small Church and Matthew 25”.

A short break was taken prior to the business portion of the meeting.

The **EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER** report was given by the Rev. Dr. Dan Saperstein. The topic was “The virus of racism.”

The **TRANSITIONAL SYNOD EXECUTIVE** report was given by the Rev. Dr. Chip Hardwick.

The **BOARD OF PENSIONS** report was given by the Rev. Dr. Doug Portz.

The **PRESBYTERY COUNCIL** report was given by the Rev. Lindsey Carnes.

The Presbytery Council presented the following items from the Policies, Bills, and Overtures Team:

1. For a first reading: Recommend the proposed Amendment to Presbytery Bylaw-2.1.d. A vote will be held either at the September meeting or a special meeting held for that purpose. If adopted, the proposed amendment would be effective at the close of that meeting. The amendment decreases the number of days in which notification of a stated meeting scheduled or location change would need to be made [ATTACHMENT B].
2. For a first reading: Recommend the proposed new Presbytery Bylaw B.2.1.g.A vote will be held either at the September meeting or a special meeting held for that purpose. If adopted, the proposed bylaw would be effective at the close of that meeting. The proposed bylaw would allow the Presbytery to hold meetings by electronic means. [ATTACHMENT B].

The Presbytery Council recommended, and presbytery approved:

3. To add the Policy for an Electronic Meeting of the Whole Presbytery to the current Presbytery Electronic Meeting Policy. [ATTACHMENT C]. This would allow use of collaborative techniques such as web-based Zoom, GoTo Meeting and Skype, conference calls, and interactive video teleconferences for Presbytery stated and special meetings.

The Presbytery Council presented the following items for information:

4. In response to the coronavirus health care crisis, Council met via Zoom to issue an advisory statement on March 13. Actions included:
 - Strongly encouraging all congregations to suspend public gatherings including worship through April 5.
 - Cancelling all Presbytery face-to-face activities through April 12th including the Hunger Summit at Trinity United Presbyterian Church on April 6th. Committees and other groups could choose to meet electronically using the Presbytery's zoom meeting service.
 - Keeping the Presbytery Office open on an essential staff only basis for the near future. Staff would remain available by phone, email, and text, but most staff were asked to work from home during this time.

5. On March 23, 2020, Council met to issue an update to the first advisory statement. Actions included:
 - Approved the Emergency Policy to Support Congregations Experiencing Financial Hardship Due to Pandemic.
 - Approved the Emergency Policy to Support Pastoral Leaders Experience Financial Hardship Due to Pandemic. This policy also includes CRE's.
 - Board of Trustees and Council approved postponing loan payments for churches with a presbytery-issued loan for up to six months beginning March 23, 2020.
 - Board of Trustees and Council authorized grants and zero-percent interest loans for congregations experiencing financial stress. The initial limit for the grants and loans is \$4,000 (\$2,000 grant + \$2,000 loan), but that limit could be revisited as the extent of the need becomes known. The loans will be repayable without interest for up to 20 months from the issuing of the loan.
 - Approved assisting congregations in obtaining and using electronic meeting services from Zoom meeting services, up to 50% of a group discounted rate through TechSoup with a deadline for application of April 1, 2020.
 - The Executive Presbyter reported that two weekly Zoom meetings were set-up. One for Presbytery leadership and larger churches and one for smaller church pastor or clerks of session (if there is no pastor).
 - Advised per CDC guidelines adopted March 15 that church sessions and congregational leadership be advised to suspend face-to-face meetings until May 10.
 - A link to resources for churches who live-stream their services is available on the Presbytery's website at www.presbylh.org.
 - In compliance with Governor Whitmer Office's shutdown order on March 23, 2020, the Presbytery Office was closed. Staff worked from home but were available by email until further notice to meet the needs of the Presbytery.

6. On April 27, 2020, Council met via Zoom to approve an update to the second advisory statement. The Council:
 - Urged congregations to continue to observe the directives of state and local authorities regarding personal activity and public assemblies as an act of loving our neighbors by promoting public health and safety; to continue to suspend face-to-face gatherings through May 30, resuming in-person worship on Pentecost Sunday, May 31, with limited numbers of participants under carefully observed protocols should circumstances permit; and to use the month of May to prepare their congregations and gathering places for safe meetings, observing protocols provided by the presbytery and civil authorities for such meetings. Preliminary guidance including protocols can be found on the coronavirus response page of the Presbytery’s website at www.presbylh.org.
 - Extended actions regarding telecommuting and suspending face-to-face meetings.
 - Increased limits on grants and loans from \$2,000 each to \$4,000 each since fewer requests were received than expected. The same repayment terms for loans will apply. Congregations that have already received grants and loans could reapply. An updated application form has been posted on the Presbytery website at www.presbylh.org.
 - Authorized the distribution of Benchmarks and Protocols for Reopening Churches During the COVID-19 Pandemic. Due the amount of material presented, an abridged version which includes sections “A Model for Returning To Church”, “Phase One” and “Questions for Church Leadership to Consider” were posted as “Benchmarks and Protocol – Abridged version” on the coronavirus response page of the Presbytery’s website at www.presbylh.org. An unabridged version which includes all phases has also been posted on the website.
 - Authorized Lindsey Carnes, Council Moderator, to designate the June Presbytery meeting based on the recommendation of the Midland Chapel Lane session.
 - For the June Presbytery meeting offering, designated a gift of \$250 be given towards the designated offering recipient. Funds from account #000-110-51030 (Presbytery Meetings) will be used to cover costs. The gift is in addition to any offerings received through electronic fund giving.

7. On May 13, 2020, Council authorized the distribution of the Supplemental Guidelines Regarding Phased Reopening of Churches. A Framework for Resuming In-Person Gatherings and COVID-19 Prevention Strategies For Faith Communities were attached to the letter and can be found on the coronavirus response page of the Presbytery’s website at www.presbylh.org.

8. At the request of the Mission Coordination Committee, authorized the re-designation of funds of \$1,939.06 from account #000-000-21030 (Presbytery Disaster Refund Fund); \$1,616.00 from account #000-000-21521 (Mission Grants) and \$1,444.94 from account #000-000-21521 (Peace & Global Witness) to meet the community food insecurity in the following areas/amounts: Flint area relief - \$2,000; Isabella/Gratiot area relief - \$2,000 and general relief: \$1,000. Distribution would be coordinated with the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan and the Food Bank of the Greater Lansing Area.

The **COMMISSION ON MINISTRY** report was provided in writing. The Commission on Ministry reported that it took the following actions on behalf of presbytery:

1. Approved the request of Midland-Memorial to move the Rev. Matthew Schramm from Designated Pastor to Called and Installed Pastor.
2. Approved the full-time Interim Pastor contract renewal between the Rev. Philomena Ofori-Nipaah and Saginaw-Second, effective date to be determined. Terms are as follows:

Cash Salary	\$56,631.78
Housing Allowance	\$15,000
Pension, medical, disability, <u>dental</u> and death benefit coverage under the Board of Pensions	\$26,503.76
SECA Offset	\$5,479.83
Moving Expense Reimbursement	Up to \$4,000
Travel Reimbursement	Up to \$,500 at IRS rate
Continuing Education	\$1,500
Professional Expenses	\$700
Vacation Time	4 weeks including 4 Sundays
Study Leave	2 weeks including 2 Sundays

The **TRUSTEES** report was provided in writing. The Trustees presented the following items for information:

1. Authorized Council or its designee to issue grants and zero-percent interest loans to congregations as part of a grant/loan package using funds from designated use account #000-000-21485 (Restricted Gift for Church Loans) and then unrestricted reserves as needed. The initial limit for the grants and loans will be \$4,000 (\$2,000 grant + \$2,000 loan) but the limit can be revisited as the extent of the need becomes known. The loans will be repayable without interest for up to 20 months from the issuing of the loan.
2. Approved tolling (postponing) payments on existing loans to churches by the Presbytery for up to 6 months beginning March 23, 2020 with no interest assessed during the tolling period.

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3. Increased the amount available for church grants and loans from \$2,000 to \$4,000 for both, with the same conditions, due to the extended stay-at-home directive and fewer requests than anticipated.

The **STATED CLERK’S REPORT** was provided in writing. The Stated Clerk reported the following items for information:

1. The Stated Clerk received the following resignations: Rev. Dr. Joseph Novak from the Nominating Team; Rev. Linda Graham from the Commission on Ministry. The Nominating Team will be informed of these resignations.
2. Schedule of Presbytery Meetings:

September 15, 2020	Fairgrove
December 1, 2020	Flint-First
Saturday, March 6, 2021	Invitations being accepted
June 1, 2021	Invitations being accepted
September 14, 2021	Invitations being accepted
December 7, 2021	Invitations being accepted

If you are interested in hosting one of those Presbytery meetings, please **e-mail** the Stated Clerk’s office – tmcculloch@presbylh.org. All meetings start at 9:30 AM. Meeting host churches should be handicap accessible.

Attendees were informed that feedback questionnaires would be emailed to them prior to the end of the week.

The meeting adjourned following prayer by the Moderator at 12:30 pm.

The next stated meeting of the Presbytery of Lake Huron is scheduled to be held Tuesday, September 15, 2020 at Fairgrove Presbyterian Church, Fairgrove, Michigan, beginning at 9:30 a.m. The location may change due to COVID-19.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ted McCulloch
Stated Clerk

ATTACHMENT A – Attendance (Continued)

NAME OF CHURCH	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Elder Commissioner(s) Present</u>
Alma-First		1	
Bay City-First	1		Ellen Pearson
Bay City-Westminster		1	
Beaverton-First	1		Caroline Johnson
Birch Run-Taymouth	1		Kathy Maurer
Breckenridge		1	
Caro		1	
Cass City-First		1	
Cass City-Fraser		1	
Croswell		1	
Davison-St. Andrews	1		Phidge Howe
Deckerville		1	
Elkton-Chandler		1	
Fairgrove		1	
Fenton-First		1	
Fenton-Tyrone		1	
Flint-First		3	
Flint-Trinity United	1		Georgia McCall
Flint-Unity		1	
Flushing	1		Sylvia Keeler
Grand Blanc-Kirkridge		1	
Harbor Beach		1	
Holly	1		Jim Lyles
Houghton Lake		1	
Ithaca-First		1	
Ithaca-Lafayette		1	
Kinde-First		1	
Lapeer-First	1		Kathryn Lawter
Linden	1		Nancy Robare
Marlette-First		1	
Marlette-Second		1	
Midland-Chapel Lane		1	
Midland-Memorial	2		Linda Kennan, Vincent Oriedo
Mt. Pleasant-First	1		Martha Miller
Rosebush		1	
Saginaw-Countryside Trinity		1	
Saginaw-First	1		Janie Gugino
Saginaw-Korean		1	
Saginaw-Second		1	
Sandusky		1	
Swartz Creek-Mundy	1		Jim Graham
Tawas		1	
Twining		1	
Ubyly		1	
Vassar		1	
Yale		1	
Total Present	14		
Total Represented	13		
Total Not Represented		33	

ATTACHMENT A – Attendance (Continued)

ELDER MEMBERS	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Excused</u>
Andrea Drapp (Trustee)			1
Adam Engel (Presbytery Council)	1		
Sarah Martin-Fanone (Presby Council)			1
Janie Gugino (COM Moderator) ***			
Linda Langrill (Vice Moderator)	1		
Georgia McCall (PW Moderator)			

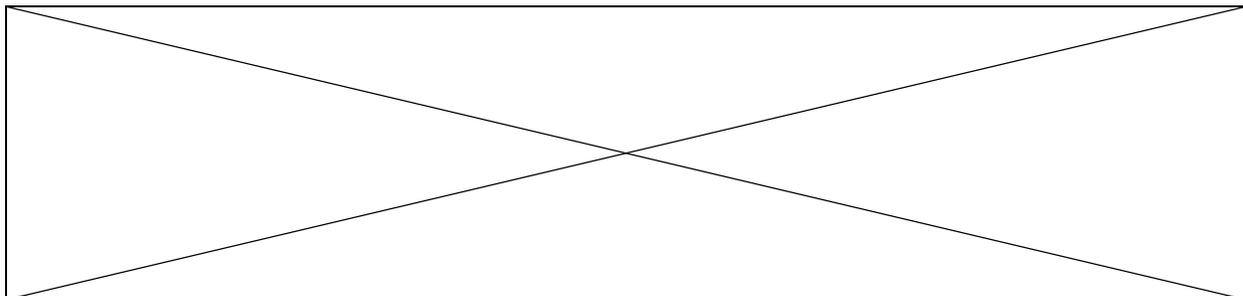
Delphine Moore (Presbytery Council)			1
Roger Scovill (Treasurer) ***			1
Total Elder Members	2	0	4

*** Signed in as Elder Commissioner, did not count here

COMMISIONED RULING ELDERS	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Excused</u>
Baker, Jon			1
Essex, Jon			1
Shaun Hardimon			1
Liz Long			1
Peggy Ronk			1
Kathleen Rowe			1
Wixson, Don			1
Chris Wolf	1		
CRE Attending	1		
CRE Not Attending	0		
CRE Excused	7		

MEETING ATTENDANCE TOTALS

CATEGORY	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Excused</u>
Members of Presbytery	22	0	45
Corresponding Members	3		
Commissioned Ruling Elders	1	0	7
Church Commissioners	14	33	0
Elder Members	2	0	4
Visitors (Including LHP Staff)	10		
Total People in Attendance	52		
Churches represented	13		
Churches not represented		33	



ATTACHMENT B –Proposed Bylaw Changes

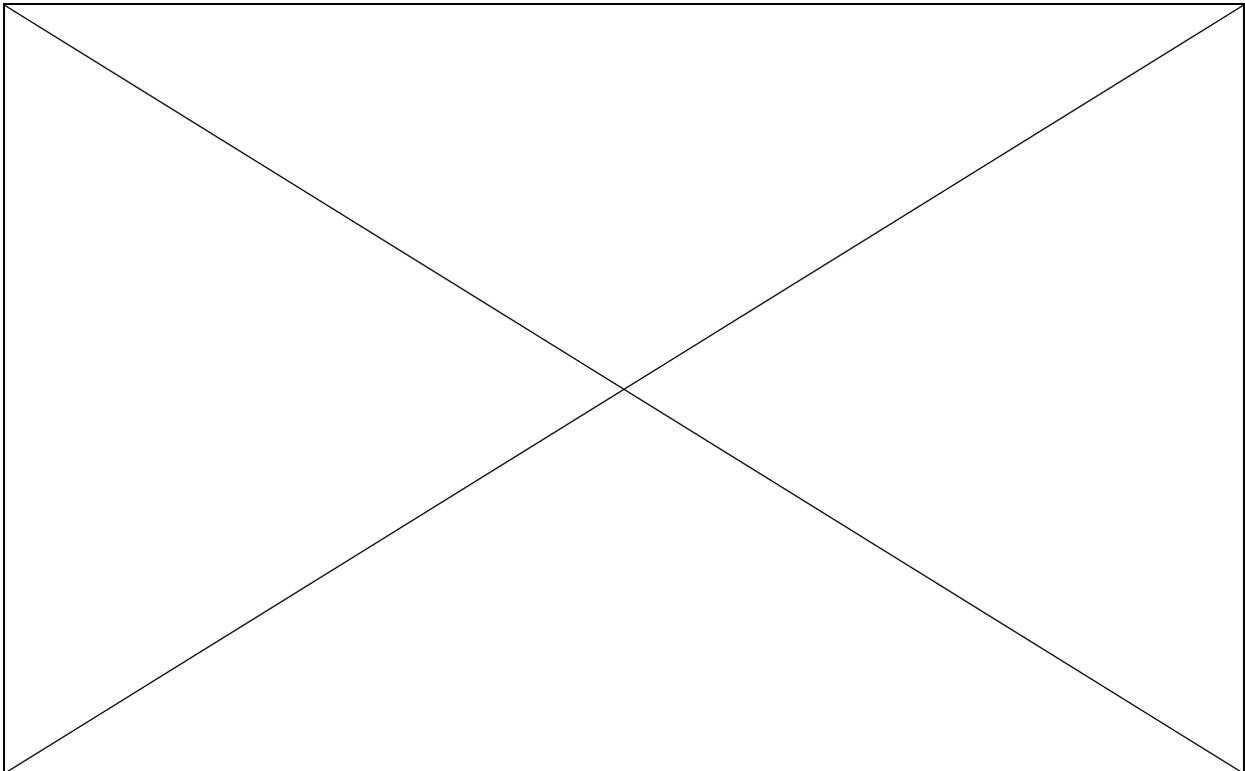
Proposed Amendment to Bylaw B-2.1.d

Ordinarily, the Stated Clerk will maintain a rolling schedule of stated meetings one year in advance of the current meeting. The schedule and location of a stated meeting may be changed by action of the Council but no later than ~~twenty-one~~ **ten days** before the originally scheduled date.

Rationale: Given that almost all our communications are now electronic, changing it to ten days is not only doable but makes all notification timelines consistent.

Proposed new Bylaw B-2.1.g

The presbytery may meet by electronic means if all ministers of Word and Sacrament members and ruling elder commissioners have reasonable notice of the electronic meeting and the ability to discuss, deliberate, discern the will of God, and vote on business items. The quorum for electronic meetings shall be the same as for any stated or special meeting of the Presbytery.



ATTACHMENT C –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 C –Electronic Meetings Policy (Continued)

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_s ample_rules_ronr.pdf

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