

# **Recommendations from the Governing Commission to the October 2018 Synod Assembly**

## **The Governing Commission recommends amending the by-laws of the Synod inserting at line 49 and renumbering consecutively**

In accord with most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order (11th Ed, pgs 96-99), the Corporation, Synod Assembly, Governing Commission, and other commissions, committees and task groups may meet electronically/digitally. Authorization for an electronic/digital meeting of the Synod Assembly and Governing Commission may be given by the Moderator or Stated Clerk. Authorization for other commissions, committees and task groups may be given by the chairperson of that group. An email/mail/phone notice of an electronic/digital meeting shall be sent a minimum of three (3) days to all anticipated participants. The notice must include the date, time, URL and alternate phone number for calling into the meeting.

## **The Governing Commission recommends amending the standing rules by striking the current lines 66-68**

~~10.25 Committees and/or Commissions, may conduct meetings by telephone conference 67 calls, and/or by using web conferencing as long as all participants can hear, participate in 68 discussion and vote.~~

and inserting, and consecutively numbering the following:

### **I. Meeting Types**

An "Electronic/Digital Meeting" as used in these rules means a meeting at which all participants are joined electronically/digitally. It is expected that each participant will attend the meeting individually on a computer or device, rather than one being shared by multiple members. Multiple attendees on a single device requires approval of the chair in advance and may limit members' rights. Meetings of all boards and committees of the Synod of the Trinity are authorized to meet electronically at the direction of the chair, provided that all members have access to the necessary equipment.

### **II. Equipment**

Electronic/digital attendance currently utilizes Zoom technology ([www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us)). Other technologies may be used at the discretion of the Synod Executive as technologies evolve. Participation requires high speed internet access on a computer or device. Audio is provided either through the computer, which requires computer audio capabilities (microphone and speakers – preferably earbuds or a headset), or connection by phone. Video capability is optional, but strongly encouraged. While tablets and smart phones are acceptable, laptop or desktop computers are preferred, because the screen content can become very small on

tablets and phones, and only certain portions of the content can be displayed at a time. Immediate access to email is also a requirement.

### III. Sign-In Procedures

A. Prior to meetings, members will receive either a meeting id code or a link to a webpage. Clicking on the link should open a web browser and go directly to the meeting. If it does not do so, or if only the 9-digit meeting id (which is at the end of the link) was distributed, the participant can go to the appropriate login page such as: [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us), choose "join a meeting," and enter the id manually.

B. Members shall make every effort to sign into the meeting sufficiently in advance of the time of the meeting to enable their connections to be verified and, if necessary, assisted by troubleshooting. The following process shall be followed in entering meetings:

C. If using a laptop or desktop computer, complete a full "re-boot" just before entering the meeting.

D. Enter the meeting as described in Section III.A. If prompted, download the appropriate software and choose to run or install. If prompted, enter your name and choose to enter the meeting.

E. Choose the method by which you will connect your audio and follow the prompts on the screen. If connecting by computer, check your speakers and microphone to ensure that you can hear and be heard.

F. Mute your microphone when you are not speaking (on a computer, click on the microphone icon to toggle mute. On a tablet or phone, touch the icon).

G. Click on the webcam icon to activate, if using.

H. Click on the "Participants" and "Chat" icons to make those items visible. If a screen share has been initiated and a document is visible in the center of the screen, move the "Participants" and "Chat" windows to the side of the screen, so that the document is visible.

### IV. Connection Issues

A. Each attendee is responsible for his or her connection to the Internet and the meeting room; no action shall be invalidated on the grounds that the loss of, or poor quality of, a member's individual connection prevented him or her from participating in the meeting, provided that at least a quorum of members remains connected and adequately able to participate.

B. The chair may cause or direct the temporary disconnection or muting of an attendee's connection if it is causing undue interference with the electronic meeting. The chair's decision to do so, which is subject to an undebatable appeal that can be made by any member, shall be recorded in the minutes.

C. The chair may rule that any meeting be recessed to allow the meeting room to be reset; upon which ruling the meeting shall be ended and a new meeting shall

be established – with the new meeting id being sent by email to all participants who shall then enter the new meeting room.

#### V. Recognition and Assignment of the Floor

A. To seek recognition by the chair, a member shall activate the “raised hand” icon. Upon recognition of a member, that member and any others with raised hands activated shall lower them, which may also be accomplished by the facilitator if members do not promptly do so.

B. Another member who claims preference in recognition shall thereupon promptly raise (or raise again) his or her hand icon and the chair shall recognize the member for the limited purpose of determining whether that member is entitled to preference in recognition.

C. Upon being recognized, a member shall unmute his or her microphone. Upon yielding the floor, the member shall mute his or her microphone.

#### VI. Interrupting Motions

A. A member who intends to make a motion that under the rules may interrupt a speaker (Point of Order, Appeal from the Ruling of the Chair, etc.) shall activate the member’s “No” icon (red X). The member shall be recognized to determine the purpose for which he or she is seeking recognition.

B. In the event that a member intends to make an interrupting motion during a vote when the “No” icon is in use to indicate a negative vote, the member may unmute and make the motion orally. A member may also make interrupting motions orally if not immediately recognized by the chair.

#### VII. Motion Processing

A. A member intending to make a main motion, offer an amendment, or propose instructions to a committee, shall, immediately after being recognized and assigned the floor, post the motion in writing to the chat window.

B. The secretary is responsible for the display of meeting materials, including all such motions, in the document that is displayed in the shared screen.

C. When any motion has been stated by the chair, the secretary shall copy and paste it into the document and shall be responsible for accurately displaying any proposed amendments under consideration, as well as the final version as adopted or rejected.

#### VIII. Voting

A. When the chair seeks unanimous consent on a matter, a raised hand shall constitute an objection to unanimous consent, and voting shall then proceed by another method.

- B. Voice votes shall be taken by means of the “Yes” or “No” icons and shall be considered a Division (not a counted vote). A motion for a division shall therefore not be in order following such a vote.
- C. Counted votes, when ordered by the chair or the assembly, shall be taken by an additional “Yes” or “No” vote using the icons.
- D. A roll call vote may be ordered by the assembly.
- E. No secret ballot votes are in order.

#### IX. Roles

- A. There shall be three designated roles with specific duties, any or all of which may be accomplished by one individual, at the discretion of the chair: the host/facilitator, the chair, and the secretary.
  - B. The host/facilitator shall initiate the meeting, and therefore have control of the various features for meeting management such as the ability to manually mute one or more participants and clear status icons (raised hand, Yes, No, etc.).
  - C. The chair shall preside at the meeting. In addition to normal duties, the chair shall direct the facilitator and secretary as necessary related to their duties in these rules.
  - D. The secretary shall keep a record of meeting. In addition to normal duties, the secretary shall open a document on his or her computer (such as a blank document or the meeting agenda), change the “zoom” level to no more than 85%, and share the document in the meeting via screen share. The secretary shall then assist in processing the motion as stated in Section VII.
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