

**The Synod of the Trinity - Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Presbytery Records Review Committee**

Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel
State College, Pennsylvania

2018 Presbytery Record (Minutes) Review Report
April 25, 2018
Virginia Rainey, Convener

PRESENT: David Byers (Beaver-Butler), Jim Speedy (Carlisle), Michael Wilson (Donegal), Ginny Rainey (Huntingdon), Marilyn Tully (Kiskiminetas), Marge Zeigler (Lackawanna), Greg Gillispie (Lake Erie), Marcia Heimann (Lehigh), Bill Knudsen (Northumberland), Kevin Porter (Philadelphia), Carla Campbell (Pittsburgh), Recording Clerk (Redstone), Ralph Hawkins (Shenango), Tim Wilt (Recording Clerk, Upper Ohio Valley), Nancy Youmans (Administrative Assistant, Washington), Maureen Wright (West Virginia) and Wayne Yost, Synod of the Trinity. Guest: Ruling Elder Catherine Gray, Synod Staff.

MORNING DEVOTION & PRAYER: Ginny Rainey

PEOPLE NOTES

Introductions.

Folks retiring: Marilyn Tully – Kiskiminetas Presbytery

The meeting was opened with prayer and devotions by Convener, Virginia Rainey, Huntingdon Presbytery Stated Clerk. Ginny reviewed the purpose of the gathering and the definitions of Exceptions and Delinquencies to the group.

We said farewell to Marilyn Tully, Kiskiminetas Stated Clerk, who will be retiring. We will miss you guy! May the rest of your life be as fruitful as your work among us.

MINUTES READING REVIEW

The minutes for all sixteen presbyteries of The Synod of the Trinity were reviewed. Each set of minutes was reviewed by a clerk from another presbytery who then recited their report to the full group. Each clerk's report was discussed with the entire group and consensus was achieved for each exemption and delinquency before it was designated official.

I have attached a revised checklist for 2019. Again, if you see a need for correction, or you have a bright idea about what should go in or come out—share it with all.

2019 REVIEW DATE

Next year's date will be May 1, 2019 at The Penn Stater in State College from 10am to 3pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ginny

Dr. Virginia Rainey, Huntingdon Presbytery Stated Clerk

Moderator

The Synod of the Trinity
Records Review Committee

DESCRIPTIONS LEGEND

EXCEPTIONS: Items required and not included in minutes.

DELINQUENCIES: Incomplete recordings of actions.

REMARKS: Comments made by the reader of the minutes

Beaver/Butler: Rev. David Byers, Stated Clerk

READ BY: Ruling Elder Dr. Virginia Rainey, Stated Clerk-Huntingdon Presbytery

EXCEPTIONS: (1) No review of Certified Christian Educators.

DELINQUENCIES: (0) There was a question, but writer clarified, and question no longer remained.

REMARKS: Love the items of "Good News" up front, appreciate the transparency of full financial reporting with each meeting, folks know where their money is going.

Carlisle: Ruling Elder Jim Speedy, Stated Clerk

READ BY: Rev. Kevin Porter, Stated Clerk – Philadelphia Presbytery

EXCEPTIONS: (0)

DELINQUENCIES: (0)

REMARKS: Clear, concise, evidence of experience of Clerk Speedy. Appreciated his counsel.

Donegal: Michael Wilson, Stated Clerk

READ BY: Rv. David Smith, Stated Clerk - Northumberland Presbytery

EXCEPTIONS: (0)

DELINQUENCIES: (0)

REMARKS: Well prepared minutes!

Huntingdon: Ruling Elder Dr. Virginia Rainey, Stated Clerk

READ BY: Rev. David Byers, Stated Clerk – Beaver-Butler Presbytery

EXCEPTIONS: (0)

DELINQUENCIES: (0)

REMARKS: Major heading in **BOLD** print, helpful in locating action.

B.O.O. requirements listed in the body of the minutes by pagination.

Detailed terms of call for temporary pastoral relationships, CRE's, and called positions

Minimum terms of call divided between "with a manse" and "without a manse". Very helpful for COM/PNC

Expectations of transitional pastor positions listed.

Revision of Administrative Manual and policy changes provided excellent point and would serve well as a template for other Presbyteries.

Kiskiminetas: Ruling Elder Marilyn Tully, Stated Clerk

READ BY: Ruling Elder Margaret Zeigler, Stated Clerk-Lackawanna Presbytery

EXCEPTIONS: (0)

DELINQUENCIES: (0)

REMARKS: (0)

Lackawanna: Ruling Elder Margaret Zeigler, Stated Clerk

READ BY: Ruling Elder Marilyn Tully, Stated Clerk- Kiskiminetas Presbytery

EXCEPTIONS: (0) DELINQUENCIES: (0)

REMARKS: Easy read. If needed to re-visit minutes, items were easy to locate.

Lake Erie: Rev. Greg Gillispie, Stated Clerk

READ BY: Rev. Ralph Hawkins, Stated Clerk-Shenango Presbytery

EXCEPTIONS: (0) (There was a question RE. PJC roster that was answered via clarification)

DELINQUENCIES: (0)

REMARKS: (0)

Lehigh: Ruling Elder Marsha Heimann, Stated Clerk

READ BY: Ruling Elder Maureen Wright, Stated Clerk – West Virginia Presbytery

EXCEPTIONS: (1) No annual review or mentor notation for commissioned ruling elders (CRE)

DELINQUENCIES: (0)

REMARKS: Enjoyed reading these minutes. Well laid out and concise. Practice of listing PJC members and their terms and those from past six years helpful. Would have liked to have read COM policy, “Covenant of Closure and Unity Pledge. I also enjoyed the presbytery’s practice of celebrating ordination anniversaries and the reports of their work with consultant Phil Bergey

Northumberland: Rev. David Smith, Stated Clerk

READ BY: Rev. Michael Wilson, Stated Clerk - Donegal Presbytery

EXCEPTIONS: (3) a. Audit of Financial Records, b. CRE review, c. Annual review of Session Minutes.

DELINQUENCIES: (0)

REMARKS: (0)

Philadelphia: Rev. Kevin Porter, Stated Clerk

READ BY: Ruling Elder James Speedy, Stated Clerk-Carlisle Presbytery

EXCEPTIONS: (2) a. No minimum terms of call for CCRE’s b. Used old checklist instead of new revised version for 2017 minutes distributed. As a result, the following items were not included in the minutes: 1. Manual of Administrative Operations, 2. Sexual Misconduct Policy, 3. Child protection Policy, 4. Youth Protection Policy, 5. Written criteria develop by presbytery for validating ministries within its bounds.

DELINQUENCIES: (1) a. BOO requires that all text of PJC decisions be read aloud at presbytery meeting AND included in meeting minutes. The minutes did not contain the full text of decision.

REMARKS: Suggest the statement identifying the meeting day, time and place be in **BOLD**. If a page is left bland on purpose, mark with statement saying so (**Page Left Blank Intentionally**) or place a **LARGE X** on page.

Pittsburgh: Ruling Elder Carla Campbell, Stated Clerk

READ BY: Ruling Elder John Rogers, Stated Clerk - Washington Presbytery

EXCEPTIONS: (1) a. No record of C.O.R. report

DELINQUENCIES: (0)

REMARKS: Minutes are succinct, well organized and well written.

Redstone: Rev. Richard Noftzger, Stated Clerk

READ BY: Rev. Frank Lewis, Stated Clerk – Upper Ohio Valley Presbytery

EXCEPTIONS: (0)

DELINQUENCIES: (0)

REMARKS: Minutes are well written and clearly tell the story of the presbytery.

Shenango: Rev. Ralph Hawkins, Stated Clerk

READ BY: Rev. Greg Gillespie, Stated Clerk – Lake Erie Presbytery

EXCEPTIONS: (0)

DELINQUENCIES: (0)

REMARKS: Succinct yet complete and very readable. Serves the twin purposes for presbytery archives; accurate record of actions taken, but also a historic story of decisions and issues in the forefront.

These particular items intrigued me: Spring discipleship book challenge, Cluster Groups and “Fireside Chats”, “Shenango 2026” priorities, discernment and funding emphasis.

Upper Ohio Valley: Rev. Frank Lewis, Stated Clerk

READ BY: Rev. Richard Noftzger, Stated Clerk - Redstone Presbytery

EXCEPTIONS: (1) Did not serve communion as directed in Book Of Order G-3.0301b

DELINQUENCIES: (0)

REMARKS: (0)

Washington: Ruling Elder John Rodgers, Stated Clerk

READ BY: Ruling Elder Carla Campbell, Stated Clerk - Pittsburgh Presbytery

EXCEPTIONS: (0)

DELINQUENCIES: (0)

REMARKS: Minutes are complete, concise, well written and organized. I took away a few ideas to propose to our team and was heartened to see that illegible registration by Ruling Elder presbyters is not a problem unique to Pittsburgh Presbytery.

West Virginia: Ruling Elder Maureen Wright, Stated Clerk

READ BY: Rev. Michael Wilson, Stated Clerk - Donegal

EXCEPTIONS: (0)

DELINQUENCIES: (0)

REMARKS: Super minutes - easy to read!

GLEANINGS

Indices: Indices help future users of your minutes locate material. If you create them, Wayne recommends PDF Index Generator. Clerk creates a list of words or phrases to be included in the index. Generator program creates the index. Contact Wayne on how to acquire the program.

Commissioned Lay Pastors' training: All of us referenced decline in Ministers of Word and Sacrament (except Carla, who has ones she could be persuaded to give away....), and several presbyteries are creating CLP training programs. So, if your presbytery is contemplating this, check with your neighbors for best practices and possible combining of efforts.

Financial reporting in minutes: Broad discussion. Several presbyteries found inclusion of full income and expense statements helpful and trust-building; others not. Consideration of privacy issues in raised in the reporting of terms of call. It was pointed out that it is required that pastors' terms of call be approved by congregations, which are open meetings; and that new calls are also approved in open presbytery meetings, so confidentiality is already breached. Nonetheless, it is a good practice to use some form of password protection if either pre-presbytery packets or post-presbytery minutes are posted on line. And, if renewed terms of call are not recorded in presbytery minutes, they need to be recorded in the minutes of the COM or equivalent body. Also, that regardless of form of posting (or not), all commissioners to any presbytery meeting have the right to review the minutes of that meeting to which they were commissioned.

Permanent Judicial Commission decisions and presbytery minutes. (D-11.0702) Reporting the Decision. Good discussion, but consensus—whether or not the decision in a disciplinary case is read in open or closed session, the decision shall be recorded in the open minutes of presbytery. It can't be kept "confidential." Stated clerks, in their training of their PJC's prior to trials should alert them to avoid confidentiality agreements in their decisions.

Rules of Discipline rewrite: Greg Goodwiller and the Rules of Discipline Taskforce are seeking comments. The draft can be found at www.pcusa.org/resource/draft-rules-rules-discipline. There is a link entitled "FORM" on that webpage for submitting comments.

Other Commissions: If your council has designated bodies as commissions of presbytery, such as COM or CPM, or Trustees or whatever, they should report their actions to presbytery and are encouraged to make "For information" reports, but their minutes do not have to be spread on the minutes of presbytery. They may be so spread but are not required to be. However, the minutes of

these commissions are official records of presbytery. They must be maintained, and it is the clerk's job to ensure they are kept.

Policies: If you adopt or amend a policy, record that in the minutes. Full text of the amendment (if long) or policy goes in an appendix. Consensus this year that once you have a required policy, as long as that policy is in force, you don't have to revisit it or make a notation of its existence in your minutes.

For checklist purposes, where councils are required by the Book of Order to have a policy, the checklist will ask you "What date did your council adopt this policy?", which means you must know the date, but it doesn't have to go in your minutes every year. So, just put dates on the policies in your Manual or wherever you keep policies.

Required policies for presbyteries

- Manual of Administrative Operations [G-3.0106]
- Sexual misconduct policy [G-3.0106]
- Child and youth protection policy [G-3.0106]
- Written criteria developed by the presbytery for validating ministries within its bounds [G-3.0306]
- Christian Educator Minimum Terms of Call: Form of Government says you must have them, even if you have none. But if you have none, you don't have to change them annually. Just checkoff that you established a floor and the date. [G-2.1103b]

The Synod of the Trinity - Checklist for Review of Presbytery Minutes 2019

Meeting of Records Review Committee:

Please indicate the page numbers where these items may be found in your presbytery minutes. If this activity did not occur during this year, type N.A. in the space provided. Where it is optional whether the activity is handled by presbytery or by appropriate committee, list the group in whose minutes the activity is found, if not presbytery.

I. GENERAL FORMAT

- _____ 1. The dates, times, places of the council meetings (RRONR-11, 468)
- _____ 2. The name of the moderator presiding and the type of meeting - stated, adjourned, special (RRONR-11, 468)
- _____ 3. The call of any special council meeting with the reason for the meeting (RRONR -11, 91)
- _____ 4. The opening of each meeting with prayer (G-3.0105)
- _____ 5. The closing of each meeting with prayer (G-3.0105)
- _____ 6. The roll of teaching and ruling elder commissioners present, excused, absent; churches represented and not represented (G-3.0104)
- _____ 7. Review and approval of minutes (RRONR-11, 469)
- _____ 8. Sacrament of the Lord's Supper (G-3.0301b). (Authorized for presbytery functions, celebrated at least annually by presbytery.)
- _____ 9. Record of dissents or protests (G—3.0105a & b)
- _____ 10. Plan for numerical parity of teaching and ruling elders (G-3.0301).
- _____ 11. Signature of stated clerk and/or moderator on the permanent record of minutes (RRONR-11, 471)

II. OFFICERS AND STAFF

- _____ 12. Election or removal of officers from office (G-3.0104 and G-3.0110)
- _____ 13. Reports of the stated clerk (RRONR-11, 476)
- _____ 14. Reports of the treasurer (RRONR-11, 477)
- _____ 15. Reports of other officers or staff (RRONR-11, 480)

III. PRESBYTERY FINANCIAL & PROPERTY ACTIONS

- _____ 16. Audit/full financial review report (G-3.0113)
- _____ 17. Annual budget (G-3.0106)

_____ 18. Report of mortgages and transfers of property (G-4.0101)

_____ 19. Leases (G-4.0206b)

IV. COMMITTEE /COMMISSION REPORTS (ANNUAL, OR AS NECESSARY) (G-3.0108a requires all committees or entities to report at least annually)

_____ 20. Nominations (G-3.0111; (RRONR-11, 430-38; nominations from the floor, 435)

_____ 21. Committee on Representation (G-3.0103)

_____ 22. Other committees, including Council, if there is one. (G-3.0109)

_____ 23. Record of administrative commissions relative to ordinations and installations. (G-3.0109b)

_____ 24. Reports of other administrative commissions. Include creation, composition, description of the commission's powers and authority; actions & dismissal (G-3.0109b)

V. ACTIONS ON STATUS OF PERSONS (COM and CPM)

_____ 25. Examination and reception of new teaching elders (G-3.0306; G-2.0104b)

_____ 26. Action on validated ministries (G-2.0503)

_____ 27. Presbytery minimum terms. (G-3.0303c; G-2.0804, G-2.0504b)

_____ 28. New terms of call and new or renewed contracts. (G-2.0502, G-2.0504b, G-2.0804)

_____ 29. Teaching elders removed from the roll (G-2.0506 - 09, D-12.0104, D-12.0105). List the date and the provision under which removed.

_____ 30. Teaching elders restored to roll (G-2.0507. and D-12.0200).

_____ 31. Orderly exchange of ministers with Full Communion Partners or with denominations in correspondence with the General Assembly (G-2.0506, G-5.0202)

_____ 32. Certification of Christian Educators (G-2.1103a)

_____ 33. Other certified persons: services of recognition (G-2.1102)

_____ 34. Rolls of presbytery (G-2.0503 (categories); G-3.0104 (rolls)

_____ 35. Report of teaching elders not engaged in validated ministry or fulfilling criteria for membership-at-large (G-2.0508)

- _____ 36. Ruling elders authorized to administer Sacrament of Lord's Supper (G-3.0301b, G-2.0606, W-2.4012c)
- _____ 37. Commissioned ruling elders who are granted commissions, congregation(s) to which commissioned, authorities granted to them, and names of mentors, length of commission (G-2.10)
- _____ 38. Commissioned ruling elders: Annual review required (G-2.1001)
- _____ 39. Preparation reports. (G-2.06) (All committees shall report (G-3.0109)
- _____ 40. Enrollment of inquirers (G-2.062)
- _____ 41. Service in covenant relationship. (G-2.0606)
- _____ 42. Report of candidates certified ready to receive a call (G-2-0607)
- _____ 43. Report of removal from inquiry or candidacy (G-2.0609)
- _____ 44. Report of any extraordinary examination process for candidates (G-2.0610)

VI. ACTIONS REGARDING CONGREGATIONS

- _____ 45. New congregations organized (G-1.02)
- _____ 46. Congregations dissolved (G-3.0301a)
- _____ 47 Congregations united (G-3.0301a)
- _____ 48. Congregations divided (G-3.0301a)
- _____ 49. Reception of congregations (G-3.0301a)
- _____ 50. Dismissal of congregations (G-3.0301a)

VII. CONNECTIONAL REPORTING

- _____ 51. Election of Synod and General Assembly commissioners (G-3.0302)
- _____ 52. Full text of any overtures to General Assembly (G-3.0302d; G-6.04a)
- _____ 53. Notation of any concurrences to overtures to General Assembly from other presbyteries. [Include at least a statement of the content of the overture. If your presbytery adds an additional rationale full text should be included either in body of minutes if brief or in an appendix if long.] (Manual of the General Assembly)
- _____ 54. Voting on proposed amendments sent by General Assembly (G-6.04)
- _____ 55. Report of annual session minutes review (G-3.0108a; G-3.0202f), including oversight of ensuring congregations have sexual misconduct policies.
- _____ 56. Report of any special administrative review of a session (G-3.0108b)

- _____ 57. Statistical information provided to the synod and Office of the General Assembly (G-3.0202f; G-3.0302e)
- _____ 58. Report of review of the Synod’s Presbytery Records Committee (G-3.0108a & c; G-3.0302c)
- _____ 59. Review of compliance of sessions with requirement to have sexual misconduct policy and a child protection policy. (G-3.0106)

VIII. ACTIONS REGARDING THE RULES OF DISCIPLINE

- _____ 60. Reporting that an offense has been alleged (D-10.0103)
- _____ 61. Reporting formation of any investigating committee or committee of counsel as provided by presbytery rule. (D-10.0201)
- _____ 62. Permanent Judicial Commission reports – including the full text of decisions and a statement that the decision has been read to presbytery. Includes decisions of higher PJC’s on appeals (D-7.0701 & D-11.0701).
- _____ 63. Alphabetical roster (in classes) of former PJC members whose terms have expired during the last six years (D-5.0206b)

Items you must have, but don’t have to consider annually

Date adopted	Item	
_____	Manual of administrative operations	[G-3.0106]
_____	Sexual misconduct policy	[G-3.0106]
_____	Child and youth protection policy	[G-3.0106]
_____	Written criteria for validating ministries	[G-3.0306]
_____	Christian Educator Minimum Terms of Call:	[G-2.1103b]

STYLE & CONSENSUS– Some ideas to consider for your Presbytery Minutes

1. Put the page number and date of meeting at the top of each page. Number pages consecutively through the year.
2. Index the final annual minute book.
3. Save space on appropriate pages for signatures.
4. Print pages front and back. If there are blank pages or large blank portions, note that a page is blank or "x" it out.
5. Inkjet can fade. Photocopied papers or laserjet work well for final copies.
6. In general, unless specifically directed by the presbytery, written reports, policies, and tributes should be in an appendix. But reference the location where the text can be found.
7. Records of administrative commissions. A summary report and any actions taken on behalf of presbytery as a result of the A.C.'s actions are what is required for presbytery minutes. Keep the file of A.C. records for an appropriate time, then either dispose of or transfer to P.H.S.
8. Failed motions: Include failed motions in minutes.
9. Repetitive items done at every meeting: This deals only with the checklist; it does not alter the requirement to do these things and record them in your minutes. Where there are repetitive items (such as opening and closing with prayer, stating the name of the moderator, etc.), your checklist compiler need only demonstrate your compliance with the rule three times.

Options Exercised that Mean Required Reporting (Somewhere)

1. **Dockets:** You are not required to have a docket. But if you have one, record approval of it in the minutes because it is a motion. RRONR requires all motions be recorded in minutes.
2. **Dates of Future Meetings:** You are not required to list them pro forma, but if they are approved via a motion, record the motion.
3. **Clerk's correspondence.** In general, do not report it to presbytery, but use wise discretion and report formal, important correspondence meant for the presbytery at large.
4. **Receiving reports.** If you take action on reports, record it. But you do not have to vote to "receive" a report. If the report has been presented, it has already been "received."
5. **Bylaws, Articles of Incorporation, handbooks, major policies:** If your presbytery makes changes in these, include the full text (in the body of the minutes if brief, in an appendix if lengthy).
- 6 **Scruples:** G-2.0104b states that examination for membership must include determination of the candidate's ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation, so minutes should indicate the results of this examination, including the specifics of any scruples.
7. **Distribution of presbytery minutes:** Whether or not your presbytery has a minutes review group assigned to scrutinize your minutes for errors, all commissioners need to be afforded access to your minutes.

SYNOD RECORDS REVIEW REPORT

**The Synod of the Trinity
Presbytery Records Committee
[Date: TBD]
10 AM State College, Pennsylvania**

Presbytery_____

Exceptions

These are things that are required and are not found by the reader of your minutes.

Delinquencies

These are incomplete recordings of actions.

Remarks

These are items worthy of special mention.

Read By_____

Date_____