

OVERTURE 32 from Tennessee Valley Presbytery (to CCB, OC)

“Amend RAO 8.4 to Add an Item to the Annual Report of the GA Nominating Committee”

Whereas Article VI of the PCA Corporate Bylaws stipulates that the five denominational agency Boards may ask presbyteries to nominate specific men for their Boards, and then, if so nominated, the Boards may recommend and endorse these men to the GA Nominating Committee (“NC”). Below is the pertinent excerpt from the PCA Bylaws, which is essentially the same sentence for each of the five Boards:

The Board may make requests to the Presbyteries to nominate specific men to the Board and may submit to the Assembly Nominating Committee letters of recommendation concerning particular nominees from the presbyteries.

and

Whereas the five Boards oversee separate corporations:

Bylaw Article V.G. Boards of Agencies - When it is necessary for the handling of civil matters, the General Assembly may authorize one of its committees or agencies to incorporate and to form a board. The relationship of the board to the Assembly remains as a committee, and the provisions of the corporation charter and bylaws shall be in conformity with the constitution of the Church.

and

Whereas the NC is not obligated to nominate the presbytery nominees recommended by these five Boards, but it would be helpful for the GA to know who those men are. The letters sent by these Boards to the NC are not confidential. In keeping with the NC Operations Manual, these letters are included in the “Rainbow Book” given to NC members, which includes all the nomination forms submitted by the presbyteries; and

Whereas the NC Operations Manual, Part 1 Section 2.a, stipulates three criteria the NC should consider in making its nominations:

- (a) The qualifications of each candidate recommended by the Presbyteries,
 - (b) The needs of the individual committees, agencies, and commissions,
 - (c) A proportionate representation of all Presbyteries, wherever possible
(BCO 14-1.9)

It is reasonable to understand this as a *priority* sequence, i.e., qualification is paramount, followed by the needs of the committees or agencies, and lastly, proportional presbytery representation. And ordinarily, it is reasonable to assume the Committees and Boards are the best judges of their needs. For example, here is the first paragraph from the College Board's February 1 letter to the NC this year:

1 The Board of Trustees of Covenant College is once again appreciative of the
2 privilege we are afforded as an agency to propose to you a slate of nominees for
3 election as Trustees. The Governance Committee of the Board of Trustees works
4 throughout the year to identify and vet teaching and ruling elders who are well
5 qualified to serve in this role. In addition to screening potential candidates by
6 considering their commitment to the Westminster Standards and to Christian higher
7 education, the Governance Committee also considers the candidates' capacity to
8 govern wisely, the individual gifts and experiences they might bring to College,
9 and the makeup of the Board as a whole. Therefore, the Committee takes into
10 consideration matters such as presbytery representation, geographical representation,
11 teaching and ruling elder mix, board experience, ethnic diversity, and unique gifts
12 and expertise that candidates might bring.

13 and

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15 **Whereas** the PCA Bylaw provisions for these five Boards include some unique features
16 compared to the nine GA Permanent & Special Committees for which NC also
17 presents nominees. For example:

- 18
- 19 – These five Boards are not subject to any requirement for mathematically equal
20 representation of Teaching and Ruling Elders (i.e., not subject to the requirement
21 of *BCO* 14-1.10). The College Board currently has 11 TEs & 17 REs, the Seminary
22 has 7+17, the Foundation has 3+7, RBI has 3+9, and Ridge Haven has 4+6.

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 - 24 – The RBI and Foundation Boards can include PCA deacons.

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 - 26 – The College Board has 28 members and the Seminary Board and can have between
27 12 and 32 members. There is no required formula for dividing the members of a
28 class between teaching and ruling elders. Both Boards can include up to four men
29 from denominations with which the PCA is in ecclesiastical fellowship (one in
30 each class) and can have an additional two members from a NAPARC member
31 denomination.

32

 - 33 – NC members might not be familiar, for example, with PCA deacons recommended
34 by the Boards of RBI and the Foundation, or with any non-PCA teaching and
35 ruling elders recommended by the Boards of the College and Seminary.

36 and

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38 **Whereas** it would be a simple task to add to the annual NC Report the list of presbytery
39 nominees recommended by the five Boards. It might only require an additional half-
40 page; and

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42 **Whereas** it might also help for the NC to identify, on the preliminary results currently used
43 by NC internally, which of the presbytery nominees have also been recommended and
44 endorsed by the five Boards. While the Rainbow Book ordinarily contains the Board

1 letters, this annotation would put this important information in an appropriately
2 prominent place, given the prerogative granted to the agency Boards to make these
3 recommendations.

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5 **Therefore, be it resolved** to amend *RAO* 8-4 by adding the sentence underlined below:

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7 8-4. Nominating Committee: The Assembly's Nominating Committee shall
8 operate under the following guidelines:...

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10 h. The committee shall present its nominations to the Assembly through the
11 *Commissioner Handbook or Supplement*. This presentation shall include
12 a brief statement regarding each nominee. The Report shall also include
13 a list of the presbytery nominees who were recommended by the Boards
14 of Covenant College, Covenant Seminary, PCA Foundation, RBI and
15 Ridge Haven. (See PCA Corporate Bylaws, Article VI.)

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17 Approved by Tennessee Valley Presbytery on April 9, 2022.

18 Attested by /s/ TE Jacob A. Bennett, stated clerk