

ASSOCIATION RE-STRUCTURING

The following is offered to the Council not as a proposal to be rejected or accepted but rather as a discussion starter. My purpose is to show that there are other ways to do what we need/want to do. My hope is that looking at this suggestion will stimulate discussion that can lead to a better approach to the work we do together.

FOR DISCUSSION ONLY

It has been obvious to me that our Association really doesn't have any strong cohesive bond among our churches, nor does it have a clearly accepted place and purpose in the lives of our churches. Our geography, regional cultures and church histories have meant that this Association is really composed of several different regional groupings of churches. Some of these groupings have a good level of interaction and some don't. However, it is clear to me that there is very little interaction beyond the geographical groupings—and repeated efforts over the years to change that have really not had much effect.

Taking this into consideration, the Association could become a minimal structure to facilitate activities between congregations in various parts of the association, rather than trying to revive (or create) an association wide unity. Such localized activities could focus on combined worship/music events; outreach events; youth events; fellowship events; acquiring and maintaining resource materials. However, rather than the Association being required to develop and promote such activities, it could become a facilitator for them, by providing resources, publicity and perhaps funding from the CABC rebate.

Recognizing that some events and activities will require more resources or input and will benefit more churches, the Association could still take the initiative to develop events for the wider body of churches; however, we must recognize the difficulty this has presented over the years. Under the present structure, it had often been a necessary practise to offer events twice in different parts of the Association in order to maximize attendance.

Structurally, this suggestion would perhaps require only a 3-5 member coordination/executive committee to receive requests, allocate resources, and initiate planning for larger activities. This committee would replace the present Council. This body would have authorization to set up working groups or temporary committees for various purposes. Members could be appointed by a meeting of delegates of the Association churches or the selection could be done through mail or email balloting. It might be possible to utilize the Website for this as well. When necessary, a meeting of delegates could be called to deal with accountability issues.

Local churches or groupings of churches, pastors, and/or laypeople could form and dissolve for specific purposes, with or without Association input, seeking Association help when necessary. These ad hoc committees would not speak for the Association or represent the Association.

Licensing, Home Mission grants, Examining Council appointments, CABC delegates, Association Website and so on could be handled by the coordination committee, specially formed committees, or ad hoc committees.

The CABC rebate could be administered by the coordination committee using agreed upon regulations and restrictions and unused moneys be returned to the CABC.

The two yearly meetings of the Association and the four yearly Council meetings would not really be necessary under this approach. The coordination committee could, if it so choose, plan an Association wide meeting once a year or once every two years.

This approach would require extensive revision of the Constitution and bylaws and dissolving the present structure of the Association including the Council. It might also be wise to develop guidelines for the disbursement of rebate funds.

Please note that this applies only to the Annapolis-Digby Association only. The WMS is not included in this discussion nor should it be because they are a separate and independent organization.

--Rev. Randy Legassie

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