

ASSOCIATION RESTRUCTURING PROPOSAL

Introduction:

At the meeting of the Association Council on Saturday, March 1, members of the council identified several key areas that they felt the Association could best focus on. These areas are:

- Workshops on topics of interest to local churches
- Acquiring and distributing resources
- Fellowship
- Relate with CABC and other Associations:
 - Atlantic Baptist Mission Board grant process
 - Granting of Licences
 - Examining Council Representatives
 - Membership in CABC for churches
 - CABC Nominating Committee
 - Regional Committee
 - Inductions, Ordinations
 - Joint ministries, ex. Kingswood Camp
- Help member churches in transition
- Discover the views and needs of local congregations
- Provide a forum for leaders to discuss ideas and needs

As well, continuing discussion of the needs and activities of the Association indicated a need for most relevant discussion time, less time spent on unnecessary and repetitive business activity, and more focused activity. Both those present at Council on a regular basis and those who don't attend Council have indicated that there is simply too much time spent on things that really don't make much difference to the ministry of the churches. Both Council and Association have been coming very close to being irrelevant to the needs and activities of the member churches.

II. Recommendations

The committee set up at the March 1/08 meeting makes the following recommendations to address these issues.

1. A major re-structuring and re-focusing of all levels of the organization.

The Council would become a discussion forum for leadership. Rather than focus on somewhat pointless business, each session of Council would focus on a specific topic, chosen in advance, that affects the ability of the member churches to do ministry.

Council membership would be changed as well. Every pastor serving a church in the Association would automatically become a member and each congregation would be invite to send one delegate to the Council. (Pastors who are not accredited by CABC or in the accreditation process would be members without vote.)

Council would be required to meet twice a year, although other meetings could be arranged as necessary. As a suggestion, a typical meeting would begin with a short devotional time, followed by a short session to deal with any business items. These

should be completed within 30 minutes. The bulk of the meeting would be a focused discussion on the topic of the day, a discussion facilitated by an individual with proven skills at leading discussion. (The Association may need to look putting on a training event to prepare such leaders.) The meeting would close with a short summary time.

As discussions progress, Council may feel a need for specific actions and activities coming out of the discussion. At this point, Council could appoint a working group to further process the ideas. Regulations for working groups are included in the revised constitution. It is important to note that working groups would be limited to a specific task and specific time frame.

The executive of Council would be drawn from the membership of Council and would have shorter terms than the current terms. It is anticipated that the shorter terms and lighter work load would make it possible for more people to consider the offices.

2. Changing the number and nature of Association meetings.

There would be one annual meeting of the whole Association, which would focus on fellowship, worship, and/or training activities. To allow for as much time as possible for such meetings, most of the business of the Association would be done by mail or electronic means.

Replacing the second Association meeting would be meetings of local church clusters which would meet at times and places agreeable to them and focus on activities and topics of concern to that particular cluster. While Council will want to discuss and perhaps make suggestions as to the formation of cluster groups, many clusters already exist and simply need to be recognized by the Association.

Conclusion:

These changes are suggested to make the Association a more functional organization, with much more focus on actual facilitation of ministry and less on repetitive and unnecessary business activity.

The proposed Constitution incorporates the suggested changes. (The present Constitution may be seen on the Association Website.)

This proposal will be discussed at the regular Council meeting on Saturday, June 7 beginning at 9:00am at the Annapolis Royal United Baptist Church.

Submitted by: Rev. Bill Patterson, Rev. Renee Clark, Rev. Fred Bigelow, Rev. Randy Legassie.