Nominating Committee

**This document was the result of a study to understand conflicting information from various sources about the makup of the nominating committee and the role of the pastor. It serves to answer that question by revealing some changes that occured through the years regarding the organization of the Nominating Committee as documented in the Church Manual from 1932 to 2022. **

PREFACE

We will begin with an early snapshot of the proccess as recorded by J.N. Loughborough in The Church: Its Organization, Order and Discipline which was introduced by James White in the Review. Oct 15, 1861. The rendition below has further modifications and is taken from the Nov. 29, 1877 Review. (Not all of the print is readable and missing words are replaced with an underline)

“Where bodies of believers are brought out on the truth in new places, we would not recommend the immediate formation of a church. In such cases let a leader be appointed (this can perhaps best be done by the evangelist when he raises up the church), and let social meetings be continued till such time as the individuals become thoroughly acquainted with each other, and ascertain with whom they can have fellowship, and who are qualified for the important duties of officers of the church. As to the particular manner of organizing a church, when the proper time comes, we shall be allowed to avail ourselves of the experience of several ministers who have already adopted the following plan, and testify that it works well:-

Let the minister request all those who propose to enter into church organization, to stand upon their feet till it is ascertained whether perfect fellowship exists among them. If it does not, let those between whom the difficulty lies immediately retire and confer together in order to an understanding. If this cannot be arrived at, we know of no other way, than that the accused should remain outside until the church is prepared.to take action in his or her case. It having been ascertained who are prepared to enter into church fellowship, let their names be attached to the following [Church Covenant]

…

When the names of the members are enrolled as specified in the former part of this article, let the minister read to them the scriptures setting forth the qualifications requisite to the offices of elder and deacon (these are described in I Tim. 3:1-10; Titus 1:6-9); and then let the minister select _ brethren of good judgement who with _ shall act as a nominating committee _ nominate candidates for elder and deacon.

Then the church may be called upon to state by uplifted hand whether they will _ tion said nomination or not. If said nomination is ratified by a three-fourths vote of those enrolled, they shall be ordained to such office, provided those not _ ng present no valid objection against _ filling such offices. Then let the minister ordain them as in Acts 6:6; Titus 1:5.

We need hardly suggest the necessity of every church keeping a record of all its proceedings. To this end a clerk will be necessary, who may be elected in the same manner. The elder of a church should act as a chairman in all its business meetings.

It should be noted that the church in General Conference voted several times against adopting any such official manual, and it wasn't until after the death of E.G.W. and others, and after much backsliding that the church manual was first officially adopted.

All Church Manuals

Introduction

(Taken from 20th Edition, Revised 2022)

The opening sentence of the preface of that first edition [1932] observed that “it has become increasingly evident that a manual on church government is needed to set forth and preserve our denominational practices and polity.” Note the word ***preserve*** . This was no attempt to suddenly create and impose upon the Church a whole pattern of church governance. Rather it was an endeavor first to *preserve* all the good actions taken through the years and then to add rules required by the Church’s increasing growth and complexity.

1932

Who Should Be Members of the Nominating Committee. Only members of the church who are in good standing should be chosen as members of this committee. They should be persons of good judgment, and above all have the welfare and prosperity of the church at heart. There are no ex-officio members of a nominating committee. The minister in charge of the church may be chosen as a member of this committee, as his appointment to the church does not rest upon any action by the nominating committee. If not elected as a member, his counsel should be sought by the committee.

Work of the Nominating Committee. Immediately following its election, the nominating committee should be called together by the one chosen to act as chairman. With earnest prayer for guidance the committee should begin its work of preparing a list of names to submit to the church for officers and assistants. In making their selections, the committee should counsel with others who are well informed, particularly in the case of officers in auxiliary organizations, such as the Missionary Volunteer Society, the Mothers' Society, the Dorcas Society, etc. This committee does not nominate pastor or assistant pastor. These appointments are made by the executive committee of the conference. They do nominate the following:

1951

p.171

Who Should Be Members of the Nominating Cornmittee. Only members who are in good standing should be chosen as members of the nominating committee. They should be persons of good judgment and, above all, have the welfare and prosperity of the church at heart. There are no ex-officio members of a nominating committee. The pastor of the church Or the district leader may properly be chosen as a member of this committee, as his appointment to the church does not rest upon any action by the nominating committee. If not elected as a member, he should be invited to sit with the committee.

This manual does not determine the size of the nominating committee. It will range from five members in a small church to a much larger number in a large church. The exact number to be chosen must be left to the discretion of each church.

1967

p.181

Who Should Be Members of the Nominating Committee. Only members who are in good standing should be chosen to serve on the nominating committee. They should be persons of good judgment and, above all, have the welfare and prosperity of the church at heart. There are no ex-officio members of the nominating committee; however, in view of the general responsibility carried by the pastor or district leader in the church program, and inasmuch as his appointment to the church does not rest upon any action of the nominating committee, the general practice is that the pastor or district leader be chosen to serve as a member of the committee. In any event, he should **be invited** to sit with the nominating committee as counselor.

This manual does not determine the size of the nominating committee. It will range from five members in a small church to a larger number in a large church. The exact number to be chosen must be left to the discretion of each church.

1995

p. 128

Nominating Committee

In the Seventh-day Adventist Church, officers are elected every one or two years (see p. 45) through an appointed nominating committee. This committee brings its report to the church, which then acts on the names presented. This procedure enables the church to give careful study to each name prior to election, and avoids the public competitive element that may arise when nominations are made from the floor.

The nominating committee shall study the needs of the church and make careful inquiry into the fitness of members to serve in the different offices. For this reason officers shall not be nominated from the floor or by general ballot.

The Church Manual does not determine the size of the nominating committee. It will range from five members in a small church to a larger number in a large church. The exact number to be chosen is left to the discretion of each church. This matter should be studied by the church board prior to presentation to the church. A suitable recommendation may then be brought to the church, using a minimum of time in the Sabbath worship hour.

When the Nominating Committee Is Appointed The nominating committee should be appointed early in the closing quarter of the church year and report at least three weeks before the final Sabbath of the church year.

How the Nominating Committee Is Appointed The minister or, in the absence of a minister, the church elder should bring the matter to the attention of the church. The church shall then appoint a special committee that will be responsible to nominate the nominating committee. This special committee may be chosen in one of two ways:

1. By nominations, verbal or written, from the floor. If verbal nominations are made from the floor, it must be understood that no member may nominate more than one person. The effort of one individual or a small group to dictate to the entire membership of the church is disapproved. Everything of a political nature should be avoided.

2. By the church's authorizing the church board, together with five to seven additional persons chosen by the church, in accordance with paragraph 1 above, to function as the special committee.

The sequential steps are as follows:

1. a. The church appoints by vote a special committee by either of the two methods listed above.
2. b. The special committee recommends to the church names for the nominating committee, with suggestions for chairperson and secretary.
3. c. The church appoints by vote the nominating committee, naming the chairperson and secretary.
4. d. The nominating committee meets to prepare the list of church officers, which will be presented to the church for approval.
5. e. The church appoints by vote the various church officers for the ensuing year.

Who Should Be Members of the Nominating Committee Only members who are in good standing should be chosen to serve on the nominating committee. They should be persons of good judgment and, above all, have the welfare and prosperity of the church at heart. There are no ex officio members of the nominating committee; however, in view of the general responsibility carried by the pastor or district leader in the church program, and inasmuch as his appointment to the church does not rest upon any action of the nominating committee, the general practice is that the pastor or district leader be chosen to serve as a member of the committee. In any event, he should sit with the nominating committee as counselor.

Work of the Nominating Committee As soon as possible after its election, the nominating committee should be called together by the one chosen to act as chairperson. With earnest prayer for guidance the committee should begin its work of preparing a list of names to submit to the church for officers and assistants comprised of members in regular standing on the roll of the church making the appointments. These will be placed in nomination for office and presented to the church at a Sabbath service or at a specially called business meeting of the church. In making their selections, the committee may counsel with others who are well informed. This committee does not nominate either the pastor or the assistant pastor(s). These appointments are made by the executive committee of the conference/mission.

2000

p. 144

The sequential steps are as follows:

1. a. The church appoints by vote a special committee by either of the two methods listed above.
2. b. The special committee recommends to the church names for the nominating committee, with suggestions for chairperson and secretary.
3. c. The church appoints by vote the nominating committee, naming the chairperson and secretary.
4. d. The nominating committee meets to prepare the list of church officers, which will be presented to the church for approval.
5. e. The church appoints by vote the various church officers for the ensuing year.

** Who Should be Members of the Nominating Committee** Only members who are in regular standing should be chosen to serve on the nominating committee. They should be persons of good judgment and, above all, have the welfare and prosperity of the church at heart. There are no ex officio members of the nominating committee, **except the pastor or district leader who serves as the chair of the committee**. Should the pastor or district leader choose not to chair the committee, or in case the conference/mission/field has not yet appointed a pastor or district leader to the church, the special committee appointed by the church to nominate the nominating committee

should recommend to the church the name of a local member to serve as chair of the nominating committee.

NOTES:

57th GC Transcript

Fifteenth Business Meeting 57th General Conference Session, July 7, 2000, 1:35 p.m.

LOWELL C. COOPER: I think there is a text somewhere about those who endure until the end. I believe that we are at item 465 on page 196 of the agenda book. We would like to take it together with item 466 on page 197. These are strictly editorial changes of the type we have already approved. [Moved, seconded, and voted.] Item 467 on page 198 has a change of concept here, and I think we should have it read.

MAURICE T. BATTLE: “Who Should Be Members of the Nominating Committtee - Only members who are in regular standing should be chosen to serve on the nominating committee. They should be persons of good judgment and, above all, have the welfare and prosperity of the church at heart. There are no exofficio members of the nominating committee, except the pastor or district leader who serves as the chair of the committee. Should the pastor or district leader choose not to chair the committee, or in case the conference/mission/field has not yet appointed a pastor or district leader to the church, the special committee appointed by the church to nominate the nominating committee should recommend to the church the name of a local member to serve as chair of the nominating committee.” I move it. [Seconded and voted.]

2005

p. 154

The sequential steps are as follows:

1. a. The church appoints by vote a special committee by either of the two methods listed above.
2. b. The special committee recommends to the church names for the nominating committee, with suggestions for a secretary. Every effort should be made to ensure fair representation in the composition of the nominating committee.
3. c. The church appoints by vote the nominating committee, naming the secretary.
4. d. The pastor or district leader is an ex officio member and serves as chairperson of the nominating committee. Should the pastor or district leader choose not to serve as chairperson, or if a pastor or district leader has not been appointed to the church, the special committee shall recommend the name of a local member to serve as chair of the nominating committee.
5. e. The nominating committee meets to prepare the list of church officers, which will be presented to the church for approval.
6. f. The church appoints by vote the various church officers for the ensuing year.

Who Should Be Members of the Nominating Committee Only members who are in regular standing should be chosen to serve on the nominating committee. They should be persons of good judgment and, above all, have the welfare and prosperity of the church at heart.

Work of the Nominating Committee As soon as possible after its election, the nominating committee should be called together by the chairperson.

NOTES:

https://www.adventistreview.org/archives/2005bulletin/bulletin-actions-menu.html

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The GC meeting transcripts show no voted changes to the manual in this section,
however the change was made.
This must have been determined at annual council?
"The General Conference  Executive Committee may approve changes to the Notes at any
Annual Council. The Church
Manual Committee reports proposed non-substantive editorial changes to the main
content of the Church Manual to
an Annual Council   ( page 20 )   of the General Conference Executive Committee, which
may give final approval.
However, in the event the Annual Council determines by one-third vote that an
editorial change substantively
alters the meaning of a passage, the proposed  change must go to the General
Conference Session."
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Thirteenth Business Meeting Actions 58th GC Session July 7, 2005, 2:00 p.m.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE–CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT VOTED, To amend the Church Manual, Chapter 11, The Church Election, pages 143 to 146, Nominating Committee, to read as follows:

- Nominating Committee–No change
- When the Nominating Committee Is Appointed–No change
- How the Nominating Committee Is Appointed–No change
- Who Should Be Members of the Nominating Committee–No change

Work of the Nominating Committee–As soon as possible after its election, the nominating committee should be called together by the one chosen to act as chairperson. With earnest prayer for guidance the committee should begin its work of preparing a list of names to submit to the church for officers and assistants comprised of members in regular standing on the roll of the church making the appointments. These will be placed in nomination for office and presented to the church at a Sabbath service or at a specially called business meeting of the church. In making their selections, the committee may counsel with others who are well informed. This committee does not nominate either the pastor or the assistant pastor(s). These appointments are made by the executive committee of the conference/mission/field.

The church nominating committee deals with the following:

2022

p. 117

How the Process Works

The steps of the nominating process are:

1. 1. The church appoints by vote an organizing committee by one of the two methods listed above.
2. 2. The organizing committee recommends names to the church for the nominating committee, with a recommendation for secretary. Every effort should be made to ensure fair representation in the composition of the nominating committee representing a range of age groups and both genders and limiting representation to no more than two members from the same immediate family.
3. 3. By vote, the church appoints the nominating committee and the secretary.

4. 4. The pastor or district leader is an ex officio member and serves as chairperson of the nominating committee. Should the pastor or district leader choose not to serve as chairperson, or if a pastor or district leader has not been appointed to the church, the organizing committee shall recommend the name from the proposed nominating committee to serve as chairperson.
5. 5. The nominating committee meets to prepare the list of officers that it will present to the church for approval.
6. 6. By vote, the church appoints its officers for the ensuing year(s) who continue to serve until their resignation, replacement, or the beginning of the new election term.

Who Should Be Members of the Nominating Committee Only members in regular standing should be chosen to serve on the nominating committee. They should be persons of good judgment who have the welfare and prosperity of the church at heart.

Work of the Nominating Committee The chairperson should call a meeting of the committee as soon as possible after its election. With earnest prayer the committee should begin preparing a list of nominees for all offices. Nominees must be members in regular standing of the church making the appointments. The list of nominees will be presented to the church at a Sabbath service or at a specially called business meeting. In making their selections, the committee may counsel with others who are well informed. This committee does not nominate either the pastor or the assistant pastor(s), who are appointed by the conference.

The list of officers to be considered by the nominating committee may vary with size of membership. A larger church may determine it needs more officers. A smaller church may have fewer. The committee deals with all leadership positions except Sabbath School teachers, who are recommended by the Sabbath School council and approved by the board. See Notes, #1, pp. 184-185, for a list of possible officers.

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