

General

The purpose of this document is to define some general guidelines for use by the Nominating Committee. The guidelines are optional and intended to provide a framework for the Nominating Committee activities. This document also represents some institutional knowledge that may be useful, and it should be updated annually or as needed.

The primary function of the Nominating Committee is to identify, recruit and nominate people to serve in leadership roles at the church. There are two directives from the bylaws in section 7.1(b) that define that function:

- *to nominate candidates for the elected offices to be filled at the annual congregational meeting of the Congregation, including the Board, the Safe Congregation Panel, the Trust, and the Nominating Committee, and;*
- *pursuant to the request of the Board, shall select and propose committee chairs to the Board for its approval*

The work of the Nominating Committee may run through the church year, especially with regard to unscheduled vacancies. However, the bulk of the activity is typically in the winter and spring, leading up to presentation of the two lists of nominations in May. Persons elected or appointed begin in their new role as of July 1. See the timeline for more details.

Privacy and Confidential Information

The content of the Nominating Committee's work must be kept confidential. A covenant should be entered into by all members of the committee, which assures that the names of the individuals discussed in the nomination process are not communicated outside the committee. While e-mail may be used for some internal communications, care should be taken to make sure messages are not sent inappropriately.

The Process

Below is a high-level overview of how the annual recruiting process works. See the timeline for a mapping of the key tasks to recommended months of the year.

1. Identify all open positions – List the incumbent, upcoming term (number of years) and eligibility for re-nomination. There are two types of positions:
 - a. Elected positions – Board, Trust, SCP and NomCom
 - b. Committee chair/co-chairs – Send previous year's list to the Board president to confirm the committees to be included
2. Solicit input from key constituents concerning the effectiveness of incumbents who are eligible for re-nomination ("re-ups"), and get their input on other potential leaders. Meet with:
 - a. Ministers
 - b. Board president
 - c. Chair of Trust
 - d. Chair of SCP
 - e. Other

3. Decide which incumbents should be asked to re-up, and ask them. Because not all eligible incumbents may be asked to re-up, stress to these people the need to keep the request confidential.
4. Solicit input from the congregation. Communicate the open positions and the nomination process. Make hard-copy and online versions of a nomination form available for people to send in recommendations. Share the responses with the committee. While there may not be very many, it is an important part of the process.
 - a. Place hard-copy nomination forms in the church
 - b. Website blog – make sure the online nomination form is operational
 - c. Write newsletter article with directions to hard-copy and online forms
 - d. Put notice in the order of service
5. Gather input from the Leadership Development Committee concerning participants in their annual leadership program.
6. Identify and ask individuals for each open position.
7. Submit lists to the Board in April/May.
8. Facilitate the vote at the annual congregational meeting in June.
 - a. Publish elected position bios in newsletter and on the website.
 - b. Have copies of bios available at the meeting
 - c. Make motion to approve the slate of elected position candidates
9. Update documents
 - a. Update the history of elected officials spreadsheet that is posted on the web
 - b. Review and update guidelines and timeline
 - c. Update Yahoo email group, removing committee members who are leaving and adding new ones.

How to Ask

When the Nominating Committee has made a decision to ask someone to fill a particular position, a member of the committee should be assigned to recruit that individual. That committee member is responsible for contacting the candidate and recruiting them for the position. Some tips/suggestions:

- Before talking to the candidate, be sure you know as much as you can about the responsibilities of the position. You should also know the number of years in the term and who the incumbent is.
- Meeting face-to-face is generally the most effective way to recruit a new leader. Phone call conversations can also be good. One approach is to call the person, explain a bit about the position and try to set up a face-to-face meeting – perhaps including the incumbent or someone else familiar with the role/responsibilities.
- Be sure to communicate that the Nominating Committee believes the candidate would be an excellent person for the role, and emphasize the importance of leadership.
- Also, be realistic about the commitment involved. The candidate shouldn't feel pressured to say 'yes', or guilty about saying 'no'.

Terms

Position	Term (*)	Term Limits (**)
Board Officers (President, Council Chair, Finance Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and Personnel Chair)	2 years	Up to 2 consecutive full terms. No person shall serve on the Board in any capacity for more than 6 consecutive years
Board Member, At Large	3 years	
Trust	3 years	Up to 2 consecutive full terms
Safe Congregational Panel	2 years	
Nominating Committee	2 years	
Committee Chair/Co-Chair	2 years	Up to 3 consecutive full terms (not enforced in the bylaws)

(*) The terms for elected positions are set in the bylaws. The 2-year term for committee chairs is a guideline, which is intended to guard against burn-out.

(**) A person may run again for an elected position after 2 years of ineligibility.

Who Is Eligible?

Are Church Friends (non-members) eligible?

According to the bylaws, Board members must be at least 18 years of age, have been a voting member for two years by the beginning of the term of office, and have served on a committee of the Church.

Trust members must be members of the church, and cannot also be on the Board. The bylaws do not specify member requirements for Nominating Committee, Safe Congregational Panel or committee chairs. However, candidates should have the appropriate level of commitment and experience for the position.

Is paid staff eligible?

No, staff members should not be considered for elected or committee chair positions.

When is it okay to have family members on the same body?

It is generally not a good idea to have more than one person from the same family in any of the elected position bodies (Board, Trust, etc.). It may be okay to have a couple serve as co-chairs for a committee, if it is determined that it will not be an issue in terms of operational or financial controls.

Are Nominating Committee member spouses or significant others eligible for nomination?

Typically, family members of people on the committee are not eligible for nomination to the elected positions. This is mostly a courtesy, however.

Are Nominating Committee members eligible?

Typically, members of the committee are not nominated for elected positions, unless they are planning to roll off the Nominating Committee. Under that scenario, the committee member should excuse him/herself from discussions about their candidacy.

Timeline

August

- Conduct retreat or kick-off meeting to orient new members and elect chair

November

- Confirm list of committees to be included with Board president
- Recommend names to Leadership Development committee for the annual leadership program
- Begin solicitation of input from key individuals (Process item #2)

December

- Begin discussions with incumbents eligible for re-nomination (Process item #3)

January

- Solicit input from congregation (Process item #4)

February

- Get input from Leadership Development committee (Process item #5)
- Begin recruiting process (Process item #6)

March

- Submit Leadership Development budget to Finance

April

- Submit slate to the Board by April meeting, if possible (Process item #7)
- Solicit bios from candidates

May

- Submit slate to the Board, no later than their May meeting (Process item #7)
- Submit bios to newsletter to be published no later than 2 weeks prior to congregational meeting

June

- Facilitate congregational vote (Process item #8)
- Update documents (Process item #9)