

# 2017 Crisis Management Team Proposal

February 2017

## History:

In conjunction with the withdrawal of the Blackhawk Presbytery Restructuring Proposal at the September 2016 Presbytery Meeting, a motion was made, seconded and approved to instruct Rev. John Rickard and Rev. Julie Raffety to appoint a Crisis Management Team to deal with the issues of culture, finance and structure.

MSRB Moderator Laurie Walker made a substitute motion to consider an alternative restructuring proposal; it was seconded and approved to refer to the newly formed Crisis Management Team the Substitute Restructuring Proposal for Blackhawk Presbytery for consideration.

The Crisis Management Team would consist of Teaching Elders Julie Raffety, Eric Heinekamp, and Jim Friedmeyer; and Ruling Elders Laurie Walker, Jack Berghorst, and Lee Ekstrom. Teaching Elder Mike Selburg (2017 Presbytery Assembly Moderator) was added to the Team during the November 2016 Presbytery Meeting.

## Recommendation:

The Crisis Management Team submits the following proposal to address the culture, finance and structure of Blackhawk Presbytery for review and first reading. The first reading includes a group discussion feedback session to be facilitated by Crisis Management Team Members. Following this session, the Crisis Management Team will meet and submit a second reading for review. If changes are minimal, we will vote following the second reading. If changes are major, we will have another review session following the second reading. We appreciate your careful reading, prayer, feedback, and suggestions during this process.

Submitted by Blackhawk Presbytery Crisis Management Team:

Jack Berghorst, Lee Ekstrom, Rev. Jim Friedmeyer, Rev. Eric Heinekamp, Rev. Julie Raffety, Rev. Mike Selburg,

CRE Laurie Walker, GP/Stated Clerk John Rickard (ex-officio member)

## Proposed Culture Plan

Culture is a way of life for a group of people-- the behaviors, beliefs, values, and symbols that they accept, generally without thinking about them, and that are passed along by communication and imitation from one generation to the next. Blackhawk's mission statement proclaims that we are committed to being "disciples of Jesus" who are "... guided by the principles of trust, open communication, [and] genuine relationships." This culture plan seeks to hold us accountable to our mission while simultaneously responding to feedback from our November 2016 Presbytery Assembly meeting. This proposal intentionally seeks to build trust, increase communication, and steward time at Presbytery Assembly meetings for building relationships. Beyond the Presbytery Assembly, it is our hope that positive changes in culture will then translate to committees, commissions, and any other Blackhawk Presbytery gatherings.

### Target Implementation Schedule:

- I. For immediate implementation (presbytery assembly meeting following approval):
  - A. **Discontinue the prior practice of endorsing networks & partnerships & move to a supporting role of networks & partnerships**
    - Rationale: Mission Strategies & Resource Board (MSRB) & other committees have previously had a practice of "endorsing" particular networks &/or partnerships as "Blackhawk Presbytery Networks & Partnerships." This has caused friction as it is impossible for most networks or partnerships to remain theologically neutral. Blackhawk Presbytery's vision is to support networks & partnerships that enable area churches to thrive. Due to the diversity of theological opinions among churches, pastors, staff, & elders of the Presbytery of Blackhawk, the Presbytery Assembly assumes no particular theological position. Thus, networks & partnerships that exist within the Presbytery are welcome to make announcements, display information, & work together as long as networks & partnerships support the mission of Blackhawk Presbytery (see mission statement).
      - **Change language in mission statement from "developing networks and partnerships of Presbyterians" to "supporting networks and partnerships of Presbyterians."**
  - B. **Make docket improvement to include brief Presbytery "training" at the beginning of each meeting (using PowerPoint)**
    - Rationale: Assembly meetings can become tense & hostile. We all need to be reminded that Christ is between us when we communicate. Robert's Rules are intended to give order to a meeting, allow the minority to be heard, and move towards a majority opinion. Each church meeting space is configured differently so a brief orientation would be helpful (so participants know where microphones are to speak, pro-con designation, etc.) & allow us all to be more comfortable & clear during meetings.
      - [See Appendix A \(Assembly Meeting Guidelines.ppt\)](#)
  - C. **The docket will continue to be posted 10 days before a Presbytery Assembly Meeting and all other documentation is to be there a week before. However, we will add a note in "Blackhawk Connections" and on website to remind commissioners to check docket the Friday before to download last minute additions and to point ruling elder commissioners to Blackhawk Presbytery website.**

- Rationale: Some items inevitably come in late & we do not want people to show up without the necessary materials.

II. For implementation by April Presbytery Assembly Meeting 2017

A. **Plan for focused discussion groups during the Presbytery Assembly Meeting** (working with Learning Opportunities Team/Presbytery Assembly Planning Committee)

1. Rationale: One of the purposes of the Presbytery is to be a space for us to collaborate in ministry together. We need to create space & time for Pastors & Elders to swap ideas, share successes & failures, & support one another.
2. Ideas include: rural, suburban, & city churches, ministry area groups, demographic groups, specific mission groups

B. **Annual Training on Meeting Protocol including Robert's Rules**

- Rationale: Those who are new to the Presbytery or Robert's Rules may benefit from a more complete training and refreshers are always helpful! The Parliamentarian will lead this training. The Learning Opportunities Team/Presbytery Assembly Planning Committee will be asked to help with this.

III. For implementation by June Presbytery Assembly Meeting 2017

**Oblige church hosting Presbytery to plan a social gathering time before or after the meeting (Learning Opportunities Team/Presbytery Assembly Planning Committee to assist)**

1. Rationale: We need to intentionally leave space to build community. Of course not everyone will be able to enjoy every opportunity, but we need to create space for connections to happen!
2. Ideas include: dinner or social gathering at a local restaurant/venue, backyard BBQ, golf, museum tour or unique area site-seeing

IV. For implementation by November Presbytery Assembly Meeting 2017

**Prepare a "get to know you" sheet with short bios (3 sentences) & photos of those nominated; when someone is nominated from the floor, ask them to give a brief bio in one minute** (Nominating Committee & Board of Moderators or group responsible for nominating new officers for 2018 would do this)

- Rationale: Our Presbytery seems small, but we DO NOT KNOW everyone. It is quite difficult to participate in nominations & elections in good conscience if we do not know who is being nominated & what their gifts & experience are. We need to get the people with the correct gifts in place so we can succeed together.

## Proposed Structure Plan

Structure is used to best utilize the strengths and compensate for the weaknesses of an organization. The structure changes over time because the organization – its strengths and its weaknesses – change over time. The Vision statement of Blackhawk Presbytery stresses that we are disciples of Jesus Christ challenging ourselves to support congregations to be thriving faith communities. This proposal seeks to tweak the structure of Blackhawk Presbytery to better face the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century while being faithful to our historic principles and responsive to the culture surrounding us.

### Target Implementation Schedule:

#### I. For immediate implementation (presbytery assembly meeting following approval)

##### **A. Adopt the Revised By-Laws of the Presbytery of Blackhawk**

1. Rationale: The separation would put us in compliance with the non-profit laws of the State of Illinois. This would differentiate between the work of the Corporation and the work of the Ecclesiastical body. The board of the corporation would be the trustees. The membership of the trustees would be the members of the Presbytery Council.
2. For a visual representation of the Presbytery of Blackhawk Corporate Structure, see [Appendix B \(Presbytery of Blackhawk Corporate Structure.doc\)](#).
3. See [Appendix C \(Presbytery of Blackhawk Corporation Bylaws.doc\)](#)

##### **B. Adopt the new Ecclesiastical Administrative Manual for Blackhawk Presbytery.**

1. Rationale: The new Administrative Manual would replace the ecclesiastical portion of the former by-laws and the former Administration Manual and update the changes to structure proposed below in II and III.
2. For a visual representation of the Presbytery of Blackhawk Ecclesiastical Structure, see [Appendix D \(Presbytery Org Structure with Council.doc\)](#).
3. See [Appendix E \(Presbytery of Blackhawk Ecclesiastical Administrative Manual.doc\)](#)

#### II. For implementation by September Presbytery Assembly Meeting 2017:

##### **A. Establish a Presbytery Council to function as a communication and visioning body for Blackhawk Presbytery.**

1. Rationale: In order to facilitate better communication, strategic planning, and visioning, a central body, named the Blackhawk Presbytery Council is recommended.
2. Details: The council would consist of six at-large members elected by the presbytery, the current moderator, vice-moderator and past moderator of presbytery, and the moderators of the Mission Committee, the Commission on Ministry, the Business Affairs Committee and the Stronghold Committee. There would no longer be a separate Board of Moderators. The moderators of other committees would be invited to attend when they have information to share. The council would work to coordinate work of the committees and commissions and to prepare long range plans and strategies for Blackhawk Presbytery.
3. Timing: Nominating Committee needs to have time to pray, discuss, and call six at-large members for this Council. When this has been prayerfully done, the Council can begin meeting.

**B. Establish a member of presbytery to serve as the parliamentarian.**

1. Rationale: Many presbyteries use the Stated Clerk or another appointed person to serve as the parliamentarian for meetings. Having the same person serving as General Presbyter and Stated Clerk requires wearing various “hats” during a meeting and may distract the wearer from being fully alert on parliamentary matters. Having a separate parliamentarian will help to avoid distraction and any appearance of conflict of interest.
2. Timing: Nominating Committee needs to have time to pray, discuss, and recommend a parliamentarian to be elected by the Presbytery Assembly.

**C. Adjustment to size of Committees and Commissions.**

1. Rationale: With a shrinking membership of presbytery, and the number of vacant/unfilled positions on some of the committees and commissions, it seems appropriate to seek a better balance of membership. Attempts were made to consult with each body regarding the appropriate numbers for that body. A membership of a few bodies was reduced and many remained the same.
2. Timing: Committees and Commissions should reflect the guidelines of the Presbytery of Blackhawk Ecclesiastical Administrative Manual following implementation.
3. See Appendix E (Presbytery of Blackhawk Ecclesiastical Administrative Manual.doc) for adjustments to Committees and Commissions sizes.

## Proposed Finance Plan

One of the core concerns assigned to the Crisis Management Team was getting a better handle on the current and anticipated financial position of Blackhawk Presbytery. We have carefully reviewed the data and have worked with Treasurer Lou Ann Breckenridge and have developed the following observations:

### What We Observed (Presbytery finances only)

#### I. Income

- A. Current profit and loss statements are an accurate reflection of the income of the presbytery.
- B. Five year projections show a gradual decrease in per capita income from about \$240,000 in 2016 to \$191,000 in 2021. This is due, in large part, to a projected decrease in the number of congregations and members in the presbytery.
  - See Appendix F (Blackhawk Presbytery Income and Expense.xls)
  - See Appendix G (Blackhawk Presbytery Churches and Members.xls)

#### II. Expenses

- A. Current profit and loss statements are an accurate reflection of expenses for the presbytery and accurately represent the planned split between the presbytery and Stronghold.
- B. Five year projections show a gradual decline in expenses from about \$570,000 in 2016 to \$327,000 in 2021.

#### III. Balance Sheet

- A. The current balance sheet has been reformatted to reflect assets held by the presbytery and those owned by Stronghold.
- B. Five year projections show a gradual increase in presbytery assets from about \$2.0 million in 2016 to \$2.3 million in 2021.
  - See Appendix H (Blackhawk Presbytery Balance Sheet (Presbytery Only).xls)

### Target Implementation Schedule:

### For immediate implementation (presbytery assembly meeting following approval):

#### I. Income, Expense, and Balance Sheet Reporting

- A. Recommend combining the per capita and mission budget into a single operating budget.**

- Rationale: This will provide more comprehensive and easy to read financial reports. For example, we will no longer need to artificially divide the General Presbyter salary and benefits between two budgets. This will also allow us to quickly see a holistic picture of the finances.
- B. Recommend that we present separate financial reports for the presbytery and Stronghold as soon as possible even though the organizations have not yet legally separated**
- Rationale: This will allow for clearer representation of income, expenses, and balance sheets for both the presbytery and Stronghold. Transfers between the two organizations will be easier to identify and account balances for each will be separated.
- C. Ask the Treasurer to work with the Council to develop and produce simple, standard reports that meet the specific objectives of the Council and provide reports to Council prior to each assembly meeting**
- Rationale: This will allow Council to review and make any observations on financial reports prior to each assembly meeting.
- D. Ensure that all financial reports are available 10 days prior to each assembly meeting.**
- Rationale: This is currently done and we must follow this practice to allow those attending assembly time to review prior to the meeting.
- E. Recommend that the Council devise a plan to address the projected budget shortfall forecasted in 2020.**
- Rationale: The Council is tasked with long-range plans and visioning. The presented financial projections assume a financially conservative position. While it is possible that a shortfall will not occur in 2020, the Council needs to plan for the future and steward the Presbytery's financial resources wisely. Thus, the Council should begin planning for the future.