

PRESBYTERY OF BLACKHAWK
SPECIAL CALLED ASSEMBLY MEETING MINUTES
VIA ZOOM
August 22, 2023 9:30 am

The Presbytery of Blackhawk convened on Tuesday, August 22, 2023, at 9:30 a.m. in a Special Called Meeting held via Zoom. This was a joint meeting of the Ecclesial body, the Presbytery of Blackhawk, and the Corporate body, the Presbytery of Blackhawk, Inc. The purpose of the meeting was to appoint two Administrative Commissions to act on behalf of the Presbytery in the process of dissolving Apple River First Presbyterian and Wenona Presbyterian churches.

Moderator Pastor Laurie Walker called the meeting to order and opened with prayer at 9:32 am. A quorum, consisting of at least three minister members and three elder commissioners (from different churches) was declared and attendees are listed on the meeting roll call, below. The proposed agenda for the meeting was presented.

Agenda

Opening Prayer

Declaration of Quorum

Action item 1: Creation of Administrative Commission for Apple River

- See attached motion

Action item: Creation of Administrative Commission for Wenona

- See attached motion

Closing Prayer and Adjournment

The Moderator read the first action item, presented as a motion from the Presbytery Council:

Motion for Apple River:

The Presbytery Council, serving as Trustees of our corporation, move that Presbytery Assembly authorize an Administrative Commission empowered to take all actions required to dissolve the congregation of the First Presbyterian Church of Apple River. The Commission shall:

1. Consist of no fewer than 5 people, consisting of Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and Ruling Elders, with members to be appointed by the Moderator of the Presbytery Assembly,
2. Take possession of all records and minutes,
3. Ensure active members are held by Blackhawk Presbytery to assist in their transfer to another Christian congregation for a period up to one year,
4. Account for all assets, ensuring the financial matters of the congregation are closed in order (final W-2s, donor statements, closing bank and financial accounts),
5. Assist the session in dispensing assets to entities desired by the congregation and transferring any remaining assets to the Presbytery,
6. Following guidelines established by the Presbytery's *Policy for the Distribution of Proceeds from Dissolved Congregations*,
7. Approve, on behalf of the Presbytery of Blackhawk, Inc., any property sale, and assisting the officers of the corporation known as the 1st Presbyterian Church of Apple River to sell any real property or transfer the assets to the Presbytery of Blackhawk,
8. Adopt new corporate and ecclesiastical bylaws, if needed,
9. Dissolve the corporation of the congregation once all matters are settled,

10. Report all actions to the Presbytery Assembly in a timely manner and, when complete, request to be dissolved as a commission.

Rev. Eric Heinekamp, Transformational General Presbyter and Stated Clerk presented some background information:

First Presbyterian Church of Apple River was established in 1865. The church has supported its community well and been through many changes. The congregation currently has 15 active members and is served by part-time Commission Pastor Kathy Linn. The church leaders believe the congregation has come to the end of its life and has voted to close. Their final worship service was August 13.

The Moderator called for questions and comments, followed by a vote. The assembly **voted unanimously to approve** formation of the Administrative Commission with responsibilities as outlined above.

The Moderator read the second action item, presented as a motion from the Presbytery Council:

Motion for Wenona:

The Presbytery Council, serving as Trustees of our corporation, move that Presbytery Assembly authorize an Administrative Commission empowered to take all actions required to dissolve the congregation of the Wenona Presbyterian Church. The Commission shall:

1. Consist of no fewer than 5 people, consisting of Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and Ruling Elders, with members to be appointed by the Moderator of the Presbytery Assembly,
2. Assume original jurisdiction of the session,
3. Take possession of all records and minutes,
4. Move active members to be held by Blackhawk Presbytery to assist in their transfer to another Christian congregation for a period up to one year,
5. Account for all assets, ensuring the financial matters of the congregation are closed in order (final W-2s, donor statements, closing bank and financial accounts),
6. Assist the session in dispensing assets to entities desired by the congregation and transferring any remaining assets to the Presbytery,
7. Follow guidelines established by the Presbytery's *Policy for the Distribution of Proceeds from Dissolved Congregations*,
8. Approve, on behalf of the Presbytery of Blackhawk, Inc., any property sale, and assisting the officers of the corporation known Wenona Presbyterian Church to sell any real property or transfer the assets to the Presbytery of Blackhawk,
9. Adopt new corporate and ecclesiastical bylaws, if needed,
10. Dissolve the corporation of the congregation once all matters are settled,
11. Report all actions to the Presbytery Assembly in a timely manner and, when complete, request to be dissolved as a commission.

Rev. Eric Heinekamp, presented some background information:

Wenona Presbyterian Church was established in 1857. The congregation that was once flourishing has been reduced to only 3 active members. The congregation has not had a pastor in years and has not met recently. The building, unused for a few years, has fallen into disrepair and the congregation is no longer active or in communication with the Presbytery. The Presbytery has been contacted by the City of Wenona requesting that we do something with the building.

The Moderator called for questions and comments, followed by a vote. The assembly **voted unanimously to approve** formation of the Administrative Commission with responsibilities as outlined above.

Concerns regarding the need to be proactive with other churches who may be similarly out of touch were raised, noted and referred to the Presbytery Council and/or Commission on Ministry for consideration.

The members of both commissions are not yet finalized and will be appointed by the Presbytery Moderator and reported at the September 12 stated assembly meeting.

With the business for the day completed, Moderator Walker declared the meeting adjourned and closed with prayer at 9:51 am.

ROLL CALL

Ministers of Word and Sacrament

Gary Panetta, Savanna First
Rothea Kornelius, Elgin First
Molly Morris, DeKalb Westminster
Richard Shaffer, Oswego
Catherine Martin, Fulton
Murray Hanson, Honorably Retired
Jim McCrea, Galena First
Art Blegen, Kewanee First & Elmira United
Doug Forsberg, Rochelle First
Rebecca White Newgren, Member at large
Eric Corbin, Woodstock First
Jenny Hubbard, Yorkville Au Sable Grove
Christina Berry, Sterling First
Lisa Lopez-Meyer, Winnebago First
Mike Selburg, Morrison First

Commissioned Pastors

Laurie Walker, Mendota First
Philip Thompson, Winnebago Middle Creek
Gretchen Hammeke, Rockford Westminster
Dottie Morizzo, Elizabeth Schapville Zion
Ray Lantz, Piper City First
Mike Engle, Elwood Community

Ruling Elder Commissioners

Andrew Downey, Streator Park
Linda Caine, Geneva Fox Valley
Terry Mohaupt, Rockford Second First
Scott Vandermyde, Morrison First
Jill Sunday, Winnebago First

Staff

Eric Heinekamp, Transformational General Presbyter/ Stated Clerk
Loreen Stravers, Blackhawk Office Administrator

Others Attending

Lee Ekstrom, Ridgefield Crystal Lake
Merry Issichopoulos, Rochelle First
Bill Newkirk, Winnebago First

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Eric Heinekamp
Stated Clerk

Loreen Stravers
Recording Clerk