

Church Council Minutes
August 31, 2021

Present

Alyson Breisch, Children's Ministry
Anne Stoddard, Trustees
Cameron Barr, Senior Pastor
Doug Bruce, Treasurer
Erica Tillman, Assistant Moderator
Jane Landreth, Clerk
Jean Anne Barnes, Fellowship
Larry Kroutil, Board of Justice, Outreach, and Services (BJOS)
Linda Sellars, Adult Education
Mary McMillan, Moderator
Megan Hughes, Youth and Young Adults
Peter Schay, Deacon
Robin Smith, At Large Member
Soren Potthoff, At Large Member
Susan Renwick, Membership, Engagement, and Stewardship (MES)

Absent

Jeremy O'Connor, At Large Member
Nubia Rivero Bello, At Large Member

Interpretation services provided by Murtado Language Solutions.

Call To Order: Mary McMillan, Moderator called the meeting to order.

Invocation: Alyson Breisch offered the invocation.

The Council debriefed the August 24, 2021 meeting. There was a discussion of technological needs and group process.

Approval of the Agenda

The Council approved the August 31, 2021 agenda as prepared.

- **Motion:** Cameron Barr
- **Second:** Peter Schay
- **Motion Carried**

Council Meetings

The Council discussed issues of group process and the conduct during Council meetings. Key issues were approval of an agenda at the start of the meeting, making sure there was adequate time to cover topics on the agenda, and the process for non-Council members to speak, to balance covering the agenda topics and ensuring that people's voices are heard. Council members who would like to invite a guest with particular expertise to speak on a topic were encouraged to make arrangements in advance with the Moderator.

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The Council adopted the Rules of Order as amended. See approved policy on page 4.

- **Motion:** Megan Hughes
- **Second:** Susan Renwick

Peter Schay proposed amending the policy to replace “Robert’s Rules of Order” with “Democratic Rules of Order.” People making the original motion did not support this change. Therefore, Council voted on a formal motion to amend the original motion. See supporting documents on pages 6 and 7.

- **Motion:** Peter Schay
- **Second:** Larry Kroutil
- **Motion Defeated**

With the defeat of the proposed amendment, Council returned to voting on the original motion, which carried.

- **Original Motion Carried** (see above at the top this page)

COVID-19 Policies

Reverend Barr provided an overview of the church’s COVID-19 practices, which are reflected in the COVID-19 policy (see below). The Council discussed the UCCH policy, the Community Clergy Group and the decision-making process. The Council adopted the COVID-19 Policy as amended. See approved policy on page 5.

- **Motion:** Peter Schay
- **Second:** Jane Landreth
- **Motion Carried**

Board Updates

Finance: Doug Bruce (Treasurer) and Anne Stoddard (Chair of Trustees) provided an update on the annual finances and provided a summary of the budget process. The Council adopted the following request from Anne Stoddard.

MOTION: To proceed with the 2022 budget process by affirming the Board of Trustees Plan for narrative budgets and the timetable for the fall Congregational meeting.

- **Motion:** Anne Stoddard
- **Second:** Peter Schay
- **Motion Carried**

BJOS: Larry Kroutil delivered a report for BJOS on proposed spending through the Spreading Justice Initiative. The proposal and background information from BJOS is included on page 8. Discussion of BJOS engagement with this proposal followed.

MOTION: That \$4,000 to \$7,000 from the Spreading Justice Initiative’s pastors’ discretionary fund be allocated to support the Benevolence Farm tiny home construction project, with the final amount to be determined based upon funds available.

- **Motion:** Larry Kroutil
- **Second:** Not required (because an approved motion originated from a board)
- **Motion Carried**

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Technology Task Force: Mary McMillan provided an update on the Technology Task Force stating that the first meeting would be this week.

New Business

The chairs of multiple boards provided a report on their initiatives.

Youth and Young Adult: Megan Hughes discussed fall programming plans. Because of the delta variant of COVID-19, the plan is to hold outdoor events.

Fellowship Board: Jean Anne Barnes reviewed Fellowship Board practices on Sundays. As much as people might like to bring food to share, only coffee and water are available after service.

Finances: Doug Bruce recommended that the wiring of the sanctuary for sound be prioritized.

Adult Education: Linda Sellars discussed future Faith Formation and Adult Education forums. The board plans to continue holding adult education activities online via Zoom.

Children's Ministry: Alyson Breisch reported on the difficulty in determining the start of Sunday School because COVID-19 vaccines were not approved for children under 12 as of the time of this Council meeting.

Fall Schedule: The Church Council reviewed the fall schedule.

Closing Prayer: Given by Cameron Barr.

Meeting Adjourned

Respectfully Submitted by Jane Landreth, Clerk

Church Council Rules of Order

The meeting agenda is prepared by the Moderator, Assistant Moderator, and Senior Pastor in advance of the meeting. Church Council members may place an item onto the Council's agenda by sending it to the Moderator's attention at least one week prior to the meeting. Council leaders will make every effort to provide meeting materials to the Council four days prior to a scheduled meeting.

The Moderator presides at meetings of the Church Council. It is his/her/their responsibility to advance the Council through the prepared agenda. The Moderator will invite discussion on agenda items at the appropriate time with attention to our rules of order.

A parliamentary process will be used to advance items of business through the council's agenda. From our racial equity training, we recognize that strict adherence to a parliamentary process such as Robert's Rules of Order can discourage participation and disempower individuals who represent cultures and communities where such rules of order are not in common practice. However, we have found that a lack of structure and order in our meetings is also an inhibitor to participatory leadership. Our aim is to empower council members to participate in our meetings and use their voices. So our intent is to use the basic elements of Robert's Rules mindfully, with humility and respect, and to provide enough parliamentary structure to facilitate our business from a posture of hospitality and inclusion.

Nonmembers of the church council are welcome to attend Church Council meetings as observers. They may be granted voice in a meeting by vote of the Church Council at the beginning of the meeting. Their voice is acknowledged by the Moderator at the appropriate time in the agenda.

The meeting is called to order by the Moderator of the Church Council. The Senior Pastor or another designated person opens the meeting with a prayer.

The Church Council will vote to accept the agenda for its meeting.

Minutes of previous meetings will be circulated in the Church Council packet that is delivered in advance of the meeting. The Church Council will vote to accept the minutes.

Adopted August 31, 2021

COVID-19 Policy

The Church Council authorizes the Senior Pastor to develop a covenant of community health guidelines. The Church Council further requires that the Sr. Pastor maintains a plan for digital ministry so that worship is accessible to all members of the congregation and visitors. The Council expects that indoor worship plans will cohere with community health practices among congregations in the Chapel Hill Clergy Association. The Senior Pastor is directed to advise the Council on changing conditions reviewed weekly in the Public Health Briefing for the CH Clergy Association. The Senior Pastor will deliver a report on COVID 19 practices for worship at each Council meeting or more often if warranted. The Church Council will remain in active discussion and review of our worship policy and changes will be made at the Council's discretion. The goal of the Church Council is to make indoor worship possible if that can be done safely according to public health standards.

Adopted August 31, 2021

Democratic Rules of Order

Motion to adopt was defeated



Democratic Rules of Order

Summary of the Rules

Fairness (equal rights of members) and good order are the underlying principles (page 8).

The final authority is the majority of voting members, provided a quorum is present, subject always to any applicable higher law (a law of the land, a constitution, a bylaw, or an existing standing rule) (page 15).

In **formal meetings**, the chair guides impartially without taking part in discussion. In informal meetings, the chair participates as an equal member (page 16).

A **motion** should be worded affirmatively and must not conflict with any higher law. Each motion requires a seconder (page 18).

The mover's privilege allows the mover to reword or withdraw the motion provided there is a seconder and not more than one member objects (page 19).

Amendments can delete, substitute, or add words to a motion on the floor but must not negate it or change its topic. An amendment cannot be amended (page 20).

Postpone, refer: A motion can be postponed to an indefinite or a specific future occasion or referred to a committee for further study (page 21).

Voting: Common voting methods include voting by ballot, standing, show of hands, show of voting cards, and voice. For a motion to pass, a quorum must be present and more than half the votes cast must be affirmative (pages 21-24).

Informal discussion: A motion to informally discuss some topic, if passed, allows members to consider an idea without the formality of a motion (page 24).

Rescind, reconsider: A previous decision can be rescinded or reconsidered by the members at any appropriate time (pages 24 and 25).

Ratify a previous decision: A decision exceeding the authority of a member, committee or meeting can be ratified at a later meeting (page 27).

Good order: Members should discuss only one motion at a time. A member must not take more than a fair share of floor time nor interrupt another member except as allowed with a point of order (pages 28-30).

Point of order: A member who believes that a law or the meeting's good order is being breached may rise immediately and say "point of order." The chair should allow the member to explain and, if necessary, should call for a vote for a decision (page 29).



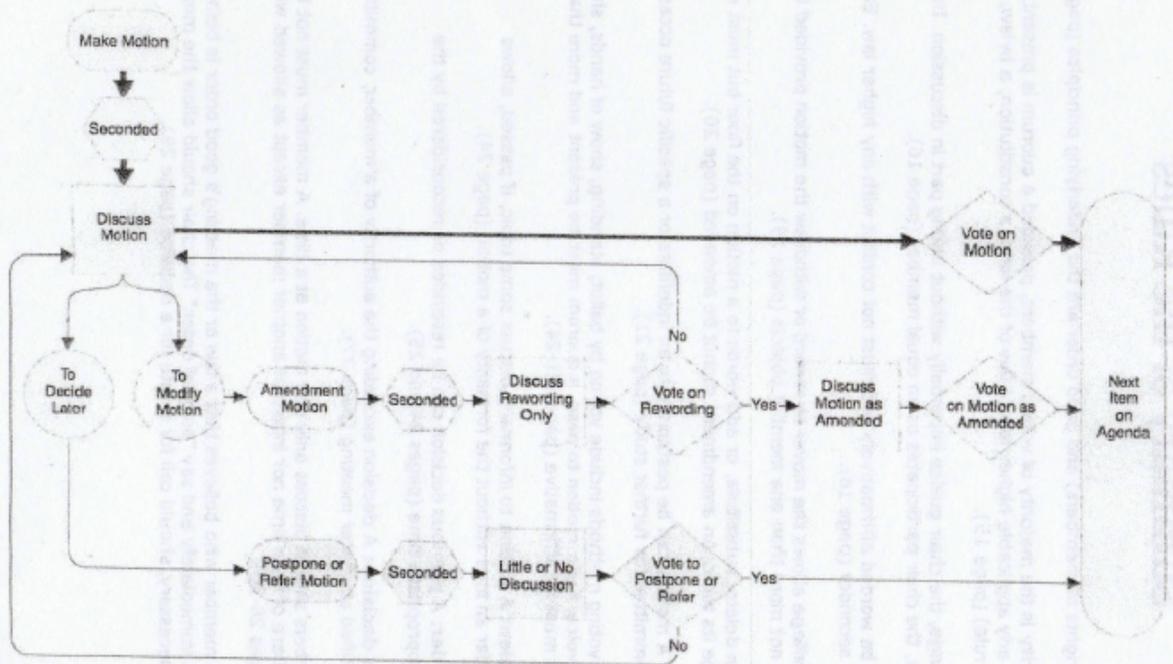
Democratic Rules of Order - Summary of the Rules by Fred and Peg Francis is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Unported License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/).

Democratic Rules of Order
Motion to adopt was defeated



Democratic Rules of Order

Flow Chart Using *Democratic Rules of Order*



GOOD ORDER

- Stay on topic
- One speaker at a time, acknowledged by chair
- No interrupting

POINT OF ORDER

- Member explains how a law or good order is being breached
- Chair rules on point of order
- Vote if necessary



Democratic Rules of Order – Flow Chart by Fred and Peg Francis is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Unported License. Based on a work at Democratic Rules of Order.

Opportunity to Use Spreading Justice funds to support Benevolence Farm

Council decision regarding use of Spreading Justice funds (Cameron's proposal): Larry Kroutil and Ingrid Schmidt have spoken with Cameron and Ian about the balance in the Spreading Justice Initiative pastors' discretionary fund. Given the current housing crisis, there appear to be enough funds for requests made by people facing eviction or other emergency financial need with enough left over to offer a pledge of support to the Benevolence Farm tiny home fundraiser. Benevolence Farm had approached local UCC congregations about supporting this project in the amount of \$50K. Jay Kennett, pastor of Hillsborough United Church of Christ, contacted Ian about the request. Thus, **support for building a tiny home for Benevolence Farm would be a cooperative effort among local UCC congregations** rather than an effort assumed solely by United Church.

Information about the tiny homes project is available at the link below. Search for "tiny home community."
(<https://benevolencefarm.org/programs/housing/>)

Larry had invited Kristen Powers, Executive Director of Benevolence Farm, to speak at the August 16 BJOS meeting about its mission and programs (<https://benevolencefarm.org/>). Located in southern Alamance County on 13 acres, Benevolence Farm maintains a housing facility that provides women leaving incarceration with a place to live, work, and reestablish themselves. Most residents live on the farm for six months to two years, following release from a North Carolina prison. While there, the women grow and sell fresh produce, flowers and herbs, and manufacture body care products which can be purchased online, at their farm store or in several locations in Alamance County (<https://benevolence-farm-body-care.myshopify.com/>). There is a waiting list to live there.

When residents expressed that living communally at the facility could make the transition to independence more challenging, Benevolence Farm launched a fundraising effort to create a community of 6 tiny homes on site. (The communal living environment is not reflective of the "real world" that these women will eventually need to face.)

Each house costs about \$50K to build, with another \$50K needed to prepare the land, for permitting, etc. They hope to have one built next year as a pilot, with a goal of \$500K for all six houses. They have raised \$30K so far (\$25K from one donor) and the Mud Dauber School of Natural Building (<https://www.muddauberbuilding.com/>) can help with construction. When asked by Ingrid if the UCCH Habitat for Humanity group could contribute, Kristen noted that perhaps so, farther out in the process (e.g. painting). Gates Vrooman asked what else the congregation could do besides spreading the word and Kristen mentioned that we could organize a group for a Benevolence Farm tour which are offered on Wednesdays mid-day by request.

Council has agreed to wait for further recommendations from BJOS regarding funding for Benevolence Farm. The board approved the following motion for Larry to present at the next Council meeting:

Motion: That \$4,000-\$7,000 from the Spreading Justice Initiative's pastors' discretionary fund be allocated to support the Benevolence Farm tiny home construction project, with the final amount to be determined.

BJOS did not settle on a specific recommended amount, in case church members might have future needs that would be covered out of the Spreading Justice Initiative. BJOS also thought the church should not completely spend down the balance at this time.