**Insert Your Church Name Here**

Date

 **I. CALL TO ORDER Acting Chair**

Welcome. My name is  **Insert your name here**, and I am the acting Chair of the Board during our search for a new pastor. I would like to call the special business meeting of  **insert your church name here** to order. The stated purpose of our meeting today is twofold:

* **To vote on a pastoral candidate** presented by the Search Committee and to conduct business competently and in a spirit of unity.
* **To build faith** as we work together to build God’s Kingdom in our community.

We ask that all members sit in this section so that when it is time to vote, we can quickly and easily pass out the ballots. **(Note which section you want the members to sit in.)**

All of those who are not members may sit in the other sections. **(Note the sections non-members should sit in.)**

 **II. SCRIPTURE READING & PRAYER Acting Chair**

Our first order of business is the reading of Scripture and prayer for God’s blessing and guidance upon our meeting.

*5If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. 6But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. 7That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. 8Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do* (James 1:5-8 NIV)*.*

**Let us pray and seek God’s blessing together.**

 **III. OPENING COMMENTS Acting Chair**

**Chair’s Suggested Guidelines.** I want to state a few guidelines we should follow if we are going to have a good business meeting.

* **Attitude:** To me, our attitude during this meeting is more important than the business we discuss. This is Christ’s church, so our business should be conducted in a Christ-like spirit.

As acting chair, I will respect your opinion, but please remember that it is your opinion. It is no better or no worse than someone else’s. We may not be sure your opinion is right, but we can certainly be sure if your attitude is right. In all our proceedings, we must maintain a spirit of love and cooperation.

* **Call to Meeting:** The meeting’s notification is what determines what topics can be addressed today. This meeting was called for the electing the candidate that the Pastoral Search Team recommended. I want you to feel free to ask any questions specifically related to this election and voice your opinion. No other business can be brought up or conducted.

**[Note: if someone tries to introduce another candidate to vote on, the call to meeting prevents that. The membership can only vote on the presented candidate.]**

 **IV. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY Acting Chair**

***Select either Option #1 or #2***

**Option #1: Use if your bylaws prescribe Robert’s Rules**

* ***Robert’s Rules of Order*:** So that everything will be done decently and in order and in accordance with our bylaws, we will be following parliamentary procedure according to Robert’s Rules of Order. Throughout this meeting, please raise your hand to be recognized by the chair before you speak.

**At this time, I am going to ask for our first roster report.**

***[Now skip to the section labeled: ROSTER REPORT]***

**Option #2:** IF YOUR CHURCH BYLAWS DO NOT PRESCRIBE A SPECIFIC PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY, SUCH AS ROBERTS RULES, THEN SKIP THE BULLET POINT ABOVE LABELED “ROBERT’S RULES OF ORDER” AND ADOPT PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY BY SAYING THE FOLLOWING:

The bylaws of [INSERT YOUR CHURCH NAME HERE] do not subscribe a particular parliamentary authority as they should. Because 95 percent of church bylaws prescribe the newest edition of *Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised*, I recommended that the church accept a motion adopting *Roberts Rules* for the purpose of this meeting until they can amend their bylaws to do so. Would someone like to make this motion? (When someone does, then say…) There has been a motion to adopt the newest edition of *Roberts Rules of Order* as the parliamentary authority for this special meeting. Is there a second?(Wait for a second to the motion and then say…) We have a second. All in favor of using Roberts Rules for this meeting say “Aye.” Those against say “Nay.” (Declare if the motion passed.) The motion carried/failed.Throughout this meeting, please raise your hand to be recognized by the chair before you speak.

**At this time, I am going to ask for our first roster report.**

 **V. ROSTER REPORT Roster Person**

**Give the first roster report to establish that you have met your bylaw requirement for a quorum.**

According to our bylaws:

Insert the text concerning quorum required by your bylaws and the official reference here:  *BYLAWS, Article ?, Section ?.*

**Number of members needed for quorum**

**Voting members present**

**Non-voting visitors (If # is known)**

Is there a motion to receive the first roster report? ((When someone does, then say…) There has been a motion to receive the roster report. Is there a second?(Wait for a second to the motion and then say…) We have a second. All in favor of receiving the roster report say “Aye.” Those against say “Nay.” (Declare if the motion passed…) The motion carried/failed.

***(Before the meeting, the chair should figure out how many votes are needed for quorum)***

**If you have quorum say:** We have quorum, business can be conducted.

**In the unlikely event of not having quorum, it is advised that the roster person reads names of members who are not in attendance, and those members who are present call them and attempt to get them to the meeting immediately to obtain quorum.**

 **VI. SEARCH COMMITTEE REPORT Acting Chair**



The Search Committee followed an extensive process in the selection of a new pastor:

* We completed the 12 steps of our network’s pastoral transition plan to help identify the most qualified, available, and willing candidate to lead our church.
* We followed the 40-day, all church prayer plan.
* We advertised the open position, received résumés, conducted reference and background checks, and clarified conversations between the WMN superintendent and the superintendent in the potential candidate’s current district/network.
* Interviewed promising candidates.
* Recommended out candidate to the board.

And now on behalf of the Board and Search Committee, I would like to make a formal recommendation to the membership for our new lead pastor and board chair.

* Present the recommended candidate: **Insert full name of candidate here.**

 **VII. ROSTER REPORT (before elections) Roster Chair**

**Give the second roster report prior to casting the ballot—even if it is the same as before.**

According to our bylaws:

Insert the text concerning quorum required by your bylaws and the official reference here:  *BYLAWS, Article ?, Section ?.*

**Number of members needed for quorum**

**Voting members present**

**Non-voting visitors (If # is known)**

Is there a motion to receive the roster report? ((When someone does, then say…) There has been a motion to receive the roster report. Is there a second?(Wait for a second to the motion and then say…) We have a second. All in favor of receiving the roster report say “Aye.” Those against say “Nay.” (Declare if the motion passed…) The motion carried/failed.

**If you have quorum say:** We will proceed with voting.

**If you still do not have quorum, you need to wait or adjourn and call another meeting in accordance with advance notification listed in your bylaws.**

**VIII. ELECTIONS Acting Chair**

1. Reading of qualifications from bylaws. Read the portion of your bylaws that give the qualifications and duties of the lead pastor and quote the article and section associated with them.
* Vote needed: Read the kind of vote (majority or 2/3) required to elect a pastor and the bylaw article and section they are from.
* Term elected: Note whether the pastor is elected to a specific or indefinite term and the bylaw article and section the information is from.

**(If the candidate is present, they and their family leave the room and will return later if elected. Say this…)** As we prepare to vote, our candidate and their family are going to leave the room.

Divide the House. Also, we want to confirm at this time that the voting members are seated in this section to make ballot distribution quick and easy. **(Note which section members are to sit in.)** If you are a voting member and not in this section, please move to this section. If you are not a voting member and seated here, please move to another section.

1. Voting instructions.
* Secret ballot
* “Yes” is a vote to elect the candidate.
* “No” is a vote to decline the candidate.
* Bylaws require  **insert again.**
* A blank piece of paper will be considered as scrap paper according to *Robert’s Rules of Order* and not be counted as a vote
* Are there any questions on how to vote?
* Are you ready to vote on  **insert candidate’s full name** as senior pastor?
1. Prayer.
2. Distribution of ballots.
3. Vote. Collect the ballots (After all ballots have been collected, ask)—Do we have all the ballots?
4. Close polls. Once you declare the polls closed, no other ballots may be received.

 **IX. TESTIMONIES OF GOD’S GOODNESS Acting Chair**

While we are waiting for the tellers to count ballots and bring reports, I thought it would be wonderful if we encouraged each other with testimonies of God’s goodness over the past few months in our lives and church. Who would like to start by sharing an encouraging testimony?

***(The board may want to have a couple of people prepared beforehand to lead with a good testimony to set the tone and also give time people to think about what they would like to share.)***

 **X. TELLER REPORT Teller Chair**

***(Before reading this report, the acting Board Chair should confirm with the Teller Chair that a board member has spoken with the candidate and accepted the position if they were elected. This should be noted on the bottom of the Teller Report. Before this business meeting, the acting board chair should go over the yellow highlighted section below, “Instructions if candidate is elected”, with both the board and the teller committee.)***

 Number of votes cast **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

 \*Necessary for election **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

 Number of “Yes” votes **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

 Number of “No” votes **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

 Number of illegal votes **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Result: **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Instructions if Candidate is Elected: If the candidate is elected, no results should be announced until one board member has taken the results to the candidate and asks them if they accept. If they do, the whole board (except the chair who is in the meeting) can come in and quickly congratulate them.**

* **The candidate and their family should then be taken to the outside of the sanctuary/meeting room and the results are taken into the room and read to the body by the chairman.**
* **The pastor and their family then enter the sanctuary to accept the pastorate.**
* ***Note: in some cases only the candidate or candidate and their spouse may come in while their children remain in the guest room. For older children whose whole world is being turned upside down, they may want to grieve in private.***

 **COMMENTS ON ELECTION Acting Chair**

**IF ELECTED**: If elected and present, the candidate, spouse, and the candidate’s family (optional) should come up, accept the church, greet their new congregation, and admonish them. Say:

 *“Having received the necessary votes to execute an election, I declare that* ***insert candidate’s full name*** *is, as of this moment, the lead pastor and chair of the board of* ***insert your church’s name here****. Would you welcome them as they come.” (The candidate and family are then brought into the room.)*

**IF CANDIDATE NEEDS TIME TO PROCESS MARGINAL VOTE**: There are times when the candidate receives barely enough votes to be elected. In these cases, the candidate may request additional time to pray about the matter before getting back to the search committee with an answer. If so, the acting chair should say,

*“The candidate has requested a few days (be specific) to pray about the matter and the members will be notified of the decision in church the next Sunday.*

*The scriptures speak to us in situations like this saying, ‘Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.” (Proverbs 3:5-6, NIV).”*

**IF NOT ELECTED**, the chair should thank the candidate for taking this journey with them and exploring God’s will and then explain to the church that the search committee will go back to work. This statement may be used,

*“Unfortunately, our pastoral candidate has not received the votes required for an election. I would imagine we all feel a sense of vulnerability and disappointment. Although we may not understand how this reality fits into God’s will, we must trust that God is too wise to make a mistake; and the committee will return to the selection process. However, we would like to thank Pastor insert name for his/her consideration in this process and for helping us identify God’s will. The scriptures speak to us in situations like this saying, ‘Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.” (Proverbs 3:5-6, NIV).”*

**IF CANDIDATE WITHDRAWS AFTER RECEIVING ENOUGH VOTES**:

*“Unfortunately, after prayer and reflection, (insert candidate’s name) has decided to withdraw (his/her) name from consideration and declined the invitation to be our lead pastor. I would imagine we all feel a sense of vulnerability and disappointment. Although we may not understand how this disappointing reality fits into God’s will, we must trust that God is too wise to make a mistake and return to the selection process. The scriptures speak to us in situations like this saying, ‘Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.” (Proverbs 3:5-6, NIV).”*

 **XI. THANKS, PRAYER Acting Chair**

1. **Appreciation.**

I would like to acknowledge a few people whose faithfulness has been used by God to serve this church with excellence during this transition. Would you please stand as I call your name: Call the name of each member of the board and/or Search Committee.

1. **Prayer of thankfulness to God and blessing on new pastor.**

I would like our new pastor and spouse/family (whichever is appropriate) to join me down front. Then if our board and our members would gather around them. We want to pray for God’s richest blessing and favor upon them as they make the transition here and lead the church. (Lead in prayer/select someone to pray)

 **ADJOURNMENT Acting Chair**

Having concluded our business today, a motion would be in order to adjourn. Is someone willing to make that motion?

**COMMON PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRIES**

1. **PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY: Why are we governed by *Robert’s Rules of Order*?**

Our Bylaws have prescribed *Robert’s Rules of Order* as our parliamentary handbook.

*Section 1. Parliamentary Authority. In order to expedite the work of the Ministry Network and to avoid confusion in its deliberations, the meetings shall be governed by* Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised*. All rules of government shall be in keeping with the spirit of Christian love and fellowship* (RMMN Bylaws, Article XII, Section 1).

*﻿When a society or an assembly has adopted a particular parliamentary manual—such as this book—as its authority, the rules contained in that manual are binding upon it in all cases where they are not inconsistent with the bylaws (or constitution) of the body, any of its special rules of order, or any provisions of local, state, or national law applying to the particular type of organization* (Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised, *12 Edition 2:18, p. 15*).

**2. ABSENTEE BALLOTS: Why can’t we vote with an absentee ballot?**

Procedures for absentee ballots must be outlined in an organization’s bylaws to use them.

*﻿Absentee Voting. It is a fundamental principle of parliamentary law that the right to vote is limited to the members of an organization who are actually present at the time the vote is taken in a regular or properly called meeting, although it should be noted that a member need not be present when the question is put. Exceptions to this rule must be expressly stated in the bylaws (*Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised*, 12th Edition 45:56, p. 401).*

1. **SUSPEND BYLAWS:** Can we override (suspend) our constitution and bylaws with a vote of the membership in our business meeting?

The bylaws cannot be suspended without the right to do so being prescribed in the bylaws.

The bylaws *cannot be suspended (with the exception of clauses that provide for their own suspension under specified conditions* *(*Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised*, 12th edition 2:8, p. 11).*

*﻿Rules That Cannot Be Suspended. Rules contained in the bylaws (or constitution) cannot be suspended—no matter how large the vote in favor of doing so or how inconvenient the rule in question may be—unless the particular rule specifically provides for its own suspension (*Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised*, 12th Edition 25:7, p. 248).*

1. **DEFAULT VOTE:** What is the default vote needed if the bylaws do not prescribe?

Our parliamentary authority would require us to default to a “majority vote.”

*﻿As stated in 1:6, the basic requirement for approval of an action or choice by a deliberative assembly, except where a rule provides otherwise, is a majority vote. The word majority means “more than half”; and when the term majority vote is used without qualification—as in the case of the basic requirement—it means more than half of the votes cast by persons entitled to vote, excluding blanks or abstentions, at a regular or properly called meeting (*Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised*, 12th Edition 44:1, p. 379).*

1. **BLANK BALLOTS:** How should blank ballots be tabulated when recording the results of a vote?

Blank ballots should be considered as scrap paper.

*﻿Tellers ignore blank ballots and other ballots that indicate no preference, treating them as abstentions*

Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised*, 12th Edition 45:31, p. 394).*