

Standing Committee of Synod/BCO Editorial Committee

The Synod of 2015 mandated the establishment of a Synod standing committee to handle ongoing proposals for amendment and updating of the Book of Church Order. So far this committee has functioned as part of the Synod Special Working Group on Denominational Structure. As that group's work comes to a conclusion there is a need to identify an ongoing process for the BCO Editorial Committee functions to be fulfilled.

Additionally the desire to build further links between our Presbyteries in line with the Special Committee Report (Appendix 2) leads to the proposal to form a Standing Committee of Synod.

It is proposed that the following **standing orders*** be adopted by Synod in this regard:

1. The Standing Committee of Synod (SCS) shall function as the BCO Editorial Committee of Synod.
2. The SCS should include two representatives from each Presbytery per year, appointed by Synod. The Synod moderator and clerk shall be *ex officio* members of the committee.
3. The SCS shall, through its clerk be the appropriate place to lodge any and all proposed amendments to the BCO by individual elders or their Presbyteries.
4. When a proposed BCO amendment is brought, it should clearly state the following:
 - a. The reason for the amendment and its intended effect
 - b. The proposed wording of the amendment and the section(s) of the BCO that are proposed for amendment.
 - c. Who is bringing the proposal.
5. The SCS shall consider all amendments so received and will act on the proposal in one of the following ways:
 - a. It may bring the proposal to Synod with a recommendation to adopt it
 - b. It may bring the proposal to Synod with an opinion and/or suggested changes to the amendment with a request to debate the issue(s) at Synod
 - c. It may bring the proposal with a majority/minority report of the committee, with a request to debate the issue(s) at Synod.
 - d. It may reject the proposal, giving reasons to whomever submitted it (for instance if it is not compatible with the overriding objective). In this situation the individual could seek their Presbytery's sponsorship for the issue to be brought before Synod.
 - e. Where the proposed amendment comes from a Presbytery, the outcome will be (a), (b) or (c).
6. The SCS shall consider matters of a denominational nature arising between Synods, referring other matters to the relevant Presbyteries.

*'Standing orders', if adopted, do not form part of the BCO but describe accepted practices.

