Supplemental Notes for Minutes Review

Here are some things to note as you work with your Session Minutes. Some of these are things that have CHANGED recently and some are things that I've heard back from some of you are confusing and some are items that were commonly missed, incomplete, or inaccurate. Please NOTE these items and let me know if you have questions. The numbers refer to the item number on the Review Checklist for 2021. I hope to have in person, peer reviews this year, but with COVID-19 that still might not be possible. I'll let you know what process we will use as it gets closer. You should still plan to have the checklist and review completed and to me by June 1, 2021. Thank you!

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CHECK LIST ITEMS:

#3 Be sure to record the names of both those present and absent.

#8 Only the Clerk of Session may take the minutes. If the Clerk is not present, a clerk *pro tem* must be elected by the session or congregation to serve for that meeting. The clerk (or clerk *pro tem*) is the one who attests to the minutes, not the moderator.

#9 Minutes of Special meetings must be included in chronological order with all the other Session (and Congregational meeting) minutes in the official minutes book, with consecutive page numbers. Session should approve Congregational meeting minutes at their next meeting following the Congregational meeting (unless there are Congregational meetings very close together or before the next Session meeting. It is too long to wait until the next Annual meeting for the congregation to approve minutes from the last Annual meeting, for example. So just have Session approve the Congregational meeting minutes.

ALSO, minutes for Special meetings *must state* who called the meeting and the purpose of the meeting (and nothing else may be discussed/voted on). See Book of Order G-3.0203 for who may call special meetings.

#11 Session must authorize all times the Lord's Supper/Communion will be served IN ADVANCE. Most churches do this at their first meeting of the year and authorize it for all the Sundays they know they will celebrate it and any special dates (like Maundy Thursday, for example). AFTER it has been celebrated, report in the minute that it was done.

#12 Report this after it is done, if done. Be sure to include names of those authorized by Session to serve.

#13 is done by the Session (Session can provide others to train, but Session examines)

#14 is done in a worship service, not at a Session meeting but must be reported to Session that it was done. ***PLEASE NOTE***: newly elected officers CANNOT begin their term until they have been ordained and installed, or if already ordained, installed. Officers whose terms have ended must continue to serve until their replacements have been properly installed.

#15 elected by Session. Electing an alternate is a good idea. Name and contact info need to be submitted to Stated Clerk by January 31^{st}.

#16 if you did not send a commissioner or pastor, you can use the synopsis sent out to from the presbytery to give a report after each presbytery meeting. It is Session's job to do this reporting, not the clerks, although you may have to remind them. ☺

#17 the rolls of membership need to be reviewed each year. PLEASE NOTE there are specific requirements for removing someone from the rolls that must be met (Book of Order G-3.0204a).

#18 the report download from OGA must be inserted into the minutes (as an Appendix is fine)

#19 this evidence can be supplied by a report of the Deacons in the minutes; if you do not have Deacons, please write that in the checklist.

#21 Session approves the budget, the congregation only receives it. It must be inserted into the Session minutes (as an Appendix is fine)

#22 A review is required every year and the results and report of who reviewed must be included. See G-3.0113 for details.

#24 Each year, you need to send a copy of your insurance certificate/declarations page, on its renewal date, to the Stated Clerk. Presbytery will confirm it is adequate. The minutes should report it was sent to Presbytery, and Presbytery's report back to you.

#25 the question was asked how to show this evidence. One thing the Clerk should have is an annual report to Session. In that annual report, it can state that the Manual of Operations was reviewed and no changes were recommended (or that changes were made). Manual of Operations would include things like by-laws, personnel policies, financial policies, and sexual misconduct policies. Any guidelines the session/church follows. Session is responsible for reviewing the manual, not the clerk…clerk's report what Session does. Though Session may ask the Clerk to do this for them ☺.

#26 & #27 The denomination requires all councils to have BOTH of these policies and to report annually to the Congregation…that is report that the Session has reviewed them and found them adequate (or not and updated) and where they are available and how someone can report misconduct. Anyone working with children/youth needs to have access to the rules for events.

#29 & #30 Clerk of Session and Treasurer must be elected by the Session and a term specified. If the term is longer than one year, mark NA on the checklist and write in term length.