

### **3-3: Electronic Meetings and Decisions of the Board**

#### **1. Responsibility Centre: Church Board**

#### **2. Rationale or Purpose**

Under some circumstances and at certain times of the year, it may be necessary to hold a Board meeting or make a decision when it is very difficult, or not possible, to arrange for a face-to-face meeting of a sufficient number of members. Given the widespread use and availability of e-mail service, the purpose of this policy is to define the conditions under which e-mail may be used to facilitate decision-making at BCUC.

#### **3. Policy Statement**

Section 7 (d) Procedure on Voting, page 213, of *The United Church Manual*, 2013, states: "In the conduct of United Church business, voting by proxy or by mail-in ballot is not permitted. Voting by telephone or by e-mail is permitted only when it occurs during a meeting that is held in a manner that allows all of the persons participating to communicate with one another simultaneously and instantaneously."

In light of the above, Board meetings, decision-making and voting cannot be conducted by e-mail. This does not preclude the use of e-mail to distribute documentation and to solicit opinions from Board members and other interested parties. But decisions are taken only at a meeting of the Board or, in situations where a pressing matter requires immediate attention and simultaneous communication among Board members cannot be arranged before the next Board meeting, by authority of the Executive Committee.

#### **4. Scope**

This policy applies to the use of e-mail in decision-making by the Board and other responsibility centres at BCUC.

#### **5. Procedures**

- i) The requirement for a decision on an urgent matter, together with full background and details, are provided by the "Requester" to the Chair of the Board
- ii) The Chair or the Executive Committee believes that wider consultation is warranted.
- iii) The Secretary e-mails the following to the Board and other interested parties:
  - the documentation (background, financial implications, etc.) provided by the "Requester"
  - the decision/action and time-frames requested of the Board
  - the date by which responses are to be returned
  - a reminder that respondents are to "Reply to All" when submitting their questions or comments.
- iv) An electronic communication, which permits simultaneous and instantaneous communication among the Board members is established, if deemed appropriate.
- v) The Executive Committee reviews the comments received, then makes a decision on behalf of the Board.
- vi) The Secretary conveys the decision to the Requestor, "cc'ing" any other parties involved.
- vii) The decision is included in the Executive Committee's regular report at the next Board meeting.

#### **6. Roles/Responsibilities** - See 5 above.

#### **7. Definitions**

#### **8. References**

- a) *The United Church Manual*, 2013

#### **9. Approval authority: Church Board**

#### **10. Revised: Church Board: July 4, 2015**

**Approved:** Church Board: September 9, 2015

**Replaces:** January 16, 2008