

MHC Board of Elders Governance/Oversight Policies - 09202016

Prologue

The Mission Hills Church Board of Elders is composed of Lay Elders elected by the church membership, Senior Pastor, and other board-appointed Elders (pastoral elders and filling vacancies as set forth in the Constitution) who are church members and who meet the biblical qualifications outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-3. The Board is charged with discerning God's will for the Church and guiding and watching over it accordingly.

Job Description

The job of the Elder Board is to willingly perform the biblical functions of eldership and to act for the membership and attenders in determining and ensuring appropriate organizational performance. Elders (overseers) are both biblical/spiritual leaders and organizational leaders functioning as a corporate board of directors. The former perform as shepherds, overseers, and leaders, and provide pastoral care for the local body of believers. The latter perform the duties required by applicable government provisions. Both functions are necessary. In essence, Elders lead, feed, and protect the flock.

Purposes and duties

The purposes and duties of the Board of Elders include the following Scriptural responsibilities: 1) To guard the truth of the Scriptures and apply them to life situations (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9). 2) To care for the spiritual welfare of the Members of the Church (Hebrews 13:17). 3) To provide leadership and exercise authority over the Church. (1 Timothy 3:4-5; 5:17). 4) To shepherd the Members of the Church. To pray for the sick and to minister the Word of God (Acts 20:28; James 5:14-15). 5) To serve willingly (1 Peter 5:2). 6) To oversee church discipline. (MHC Constitution, Article VII, Section 2E)

1. Guard the truth of the Scriptures - ensure that the church's teaching, literature, programs and all operations are consistent with scriptural truth (especially as declared in our Constitution and Bylaws), ethical, safe, moral (according to biblical standards), legal, financially prudent, and consistent with the church policies and positions.
2. Care for spiritual welfare – Encourage and facilitate members' and attenders' spiritual growth through sound doctrine, spiritual counseling and pastoral care, ensure that the church is a safe place, physically and emotionally, and provide relief and protection for those in need, vulnerable, or marginalized.
3. Provide leadership and exercise authority over the Church - Lead the church through policy, encouragement, example, and exhortation, communicating vision, direction, and goals, encouraging church unity of purpose and spirit, and encouraging the church to be outward-looking – reaching unbelievers for Christ – as well as focusing inward by caring for and supporting each other as members of the church family. Encourage, respect, and support the pastors and other church leaders. Oversee the orderly working of the church, make decisions for the Church, and watch over the Church according to the following:
 - a. Board-Senior Pastor Relationship: The Senior Pastor serves as the church's spiritual leader, President, and executive officer to implement policies as established by the Board of Elders. He has the general oversight of all Church ministries, and provides the leadership necessary to assure effective management and administration of the total Church program. The Board regularly monitors and, at least annually, formally evaluates Senior Pastor performance in terms of Ends and Limitations. (MHC Constitution, Article VII, Section 2C)
 - b. Ends: The Board develops policies and measurable goals instructing the Senior Pastor to

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- achieve certain results, for certain recipients, at a specific cost.
- c. Limitations: The Board develops policies that limit the choices of means by which the Senior Pastor may organize and lead the church to ensure that all operations and conditions are within biblical, ethical, and legal bounds.
 - d. Board Practices: The Board establishes policies governing its own behavior and performance, both as individuals and as a Board; it regularly monitors and, at least annually formally evaluates itself in terms of these policies.
4. Shepherd the Church, pray for the sick, and to minister the Word of God – Provide members and attenders a readily available means to communicate concerns, grievances, needs, suggestions, and prayer requests guided by James 5:16.
 5. To serve willingly – Guided by Matthew 6:24, Luke 1:74, 4:8, 16:13, and John 12:26, Elders are to be discerning God’s will through prayer and the Word, including robust but orderly discussion as guided by 1 Corinthians 14:40.
 6. Oversee discipline and restoration - The goal of discipline and conflict resolution is reconciliation and restoration where needed and possible. (Titus 1:13).

BP #1 – Code of Conduct

1. The Mission Hills Church Elder Board commits itself and its members to behavior in keeping with the biblical standards of behavior for eldership. Lay Elders serve voluntarily and without pay. Should one desire to apply for church employment, he must first resign from the Board.
2. Each Elder (Lay or Pastoral) commits himself to:
 - a. moral, ethical, businesslike, biblical, and lawful conduct, including proper use of authority and appropriate self-discipline
 - b. un-conflicted loyalty to the interests of the MHC membership
 - c. strive toward “full devotion to Christ” in a lifestyle that bears witness to a mature spiritual walk
 - d. actively participate in ministry in MHC and faithfully adhering to the MHC Membership Covenant.
 - e. respect confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature
3. MHC elders oversee the church as a plurality and will deliberate in many voices, but govern in one with no individual authority over Mission Hills Church except as explicitly set forth in Church Oversight Policies. Individual members do not speak for the Board to the public, press, or other entities except as specifically authorized by the Board to repeat explicitly stated Board decisions.
4. If an elder’s actions violate the elder standards described in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 to the extent they are damaging to the church, and such action are verified by at least 2 or 3 witnesses, that elder, whether, Lay or Pastoral, covenants to voluntarily and gracefully resign from the office of MHC elder upon recommendation approved by at least 2/3 of the current elders.

BP #2 – Governing Style

1. The Mission Hills Church Elder Board governs as both biblical/spiritual leaders and organizational leaders following Robert’s Rules of Order and routinely advises, monitors and evaluates the performance of the Senior pastor as spiritual leader and executive officer leading and managing church ministries and operations.

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2. The Board is comprised of at least six Lay Elders and the Pastoral Elders. Lay Elders elect from their number a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Alternate Secretary.
3. The Board may use a variety of committees to aid the Board by preparing policy alternatives and implications for Board deliberation in governing MHC. These committees include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Compensation Committee to annually review the Senior Pastor's compensation package and make recommendations for modifications as appropriate, for approval by the lay elders.
 - b. Nominating Committee, including three elected non-elders to vet potential Lay Elders and Nominating Committee members from the congregation
 - c. Other ad hoc committees as may be temporarily needed
4. The Board will direct, control, and inspire Mission Hills Church through the careful establishment of broad written policies reflecting biblical principles and the Board's values and perspectives about ends to be achieved and means to be avoided. The Board's major policy focus will be on the intended long-term effects of MHC ministries, not on the administrative or programmatic means of attaining the effects.

BP #3 – Meeting Norms

1. Meetings are generally led by the chairman with all the commonly accepted authority of that position. He may represent the Board to outside parties in announcing Board-stated positions.
2. The Board establishes a 12-month calendar as a high-level agenda guiding its planning and oversight functions allowing adequate time to assess the Board, the Senior Pastor, and the level of achievement of goals established annually.

BP #4 – Board-Senior Pastor Relationship and Oversight

1. The Board's sole official connection to the operational organization, its achievements and conduct will be through the Senior Pastor.
2. Only decisions of the Board acting as a body are binding on the Senior Pastor.
3. The Senior Pastor is the Board's primary link to operational achievement and conduct, so the authority and accountability of staff is considered the authority and accountability of the Senior Pastor.
4. The Board will use systematic, rigorous monitoring of Senior Pastor and organizational performance, to assess organizational accomplishment of Board-stated Ends and adherence to Board-defined limitations and biblical standards for shepherd leaders and teachers.
5. All policies that instruct the Senior Pastor will be monitored at a frequency and by a method chosen by the Board. The Board can monitor compliance with any policy at any time by any method, but will ordinarily depend on a routine schedule. Evaluation may use any reasonable method and criteria, including, but not limited to: (a) internal report, in which the Senior Pastor complies with Board requests or self-assessments, (b) external reports and input from the congregation and other third parties, and (c) direct Board inspection, in which a designated member, or members of the Board assess the achievement of goals, expectations, and performance.

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6. Areas to be evaluated, include, but are not limited to:

<u>Area</u>	<u>Method(s)</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
Treatment of members and attenders	Internal & External	Annually
Treatment of Staff	Internal	Annually
Financial Planning and Budgeting	Internal	Quarterly
Financial Condition and Activities	Internal & External	Quarterly
Emergency Senior Pastor Succession	Internal	Annually
Compensation and Benefits	Internal & External	Annually
Communication and Support	Internal & External	Annually

BP #5 – Executive Limitations

1. The Senior Pastor shall not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision, or organizational circumstance that is unbiblical, unlawful, imprudent, or in violation of commonly accepted business, professional, and biblical ethics. As long as the Senior Pastor uses any reasonable interpretation of *Board Policies*, the Senior Pastor is authorized to establish all further policies, make all decisions, take all actions, establish all practices, and develop all activities in the leadership and management of the church.
2. Treatment of MHC Members and Attenders - The Senior Pastor shall provide conditions, procedures, and decisions that are biblically-based, safe, legal, equitable, and dignified, and that provide appropriate confidentiality and privacy.
3. Treatment of Staff - Senior Pastor shall provide paid and volunteer staff a working environment which is biblically-based, safe, legal, equitable, dignified, and provide appropriate confidentiality and privacy.
 - a. Internal grievance procedures include such biblical injunctions as found in Mat 18 and 1 Tim 5:19.
4. Financial Planning and Budgeting - Senior Pastor shall ensure financial planning for any fiscal year or the remaining part of any fiscal year not deviate materially from the Board's Ends priorities, risk fiscal jeopardy, or fail to be derived from a multiyear plan. The Senior Pastor shall ensure that:
 - a. Budgeting contains sufficient information to enable credible projection of revenues and expenses, allowance for capital and operational items, cash flow, and planning assumptions.
 - b. Liquid assets in the Contingency Reserve meet or exceed two months operating expenses. These Reserves will be structured to maintain at least two thirds of the funds readily available in cash or cash equivalents. The remainder of the Reserves may be illiquid so long as there is an equivalent pre-approved line of credit available.

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5. Financial Condition and Activities - The Senior Pastor shall guard the church from fiscal jeopardy or a material deviation of actual expenditures from Board priorities and the budget. Accordingly, he will ensure:
 - a. Unbudgeted debts are satisfied within sixty days.
 - b. Contingency Reserve funds and “designated funds” are used only with Board approval.
 - c. Payroll and debts are settled in a timely manner.
 - d. Government-ordered payments or filings are settled in a timely manner.
 - e. Acquisition, encumbrance, or disposal of real property occur only with Board approval.
6. Asset Protection - The Senior Pastor shall ensure Mission Hills Church’s intellectual, financial, and physical assets are adequately insured and maintained, and reasonably protected from loss or liability.
7. Emergency Senior Pastor Succession - The Senior Pastor shall ensure adequate planning and preparation for continuity in the Senior Pastor role in the case of sudden absence or disability of the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor shall have designated at least one qualified individual familiar with Board and Senior Pastor responsibilities and processes to temporarily provide continuity in the Senior Pastor role.
8. Compensation and Benefits - The Senior Pastor shall ensure employment compensation, benefits, expense reimbursement, and other payment obligations to employees, consultants, contract workers, and volunteers are prudent and reasonable within accepted biblical principles to guard the fiscal integrity and public image of MHC. Compensation for the Senior Pastor is the sole responsibility and under the direct authority of the Board. Unless voted by the membership as noted in the Constitution, all employees are “at will” employees without permanent or guaranteed employment.
9. Communication and Support to the Board - The Senior Pastor shall ensure the Board is informed and supported in its work. The Senior Pastor shall:
 - a. Communicate monitoring data required by the Board in a timely, accurate, and understandable fashion, directly addressing management of MHC and its ministries.
 - b. Inform the Board of relevant trends, anticipated media coverage, material external and internal changes of Board policies and directive.
 - c. Advise the Board if, in the Senior Pastor’s opinion, the Board is not in compliance with its own policies or biblical expectations.
 - d. Share unprejudiced staff and external points of view, issues, and options as needed to fully inform the Board in its work.
 - e. Supply items delegated to the Senior Pastor for the consent agenda as required by law or direction of the Board.

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2016-17 ENDS

Key areas of evaluation in the coming year identified during the Annual Business Meeting:

1. Rebuilding children's ministry
2. Rebuilding students' ministry
3. Rebuilding our small groups
4. Conducting a 9-month "The Way of Jesus" sermon series
5. Rebuilding church membership
6. Updating the MHC Constitution.