

Pasco Baptist Association Constitution and Bylaws

Approved: October 13, 2022

CONSTITUTION

Preamble

We, the churches of the Pasco Baptist Association, committed to Christ and to one another, covenant together to build our fellowship on the foundation of the following shared values and commitments:

We commit ourselves to demonstrate allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ and to the Word of God in our faith and practice.

We devote ourselves to mutual love, care, and support as a family of faith.

We embrace our richness of diversity in race, gender, cultural tradition, location, and style of worship.

We determine to work together collectively preaching the gospel, calling souls to a saving relationship with God, and developing believers into faithful followers of Christ.

We are united theologically under the statement of faith found in the "Baptist Faith & Message".

We will use our collective voice and resources to promote God's Kingdom work within this greater geographic community.

Therefore, we promise to uphold and strengthen these values and commitments together through the Pasco Baptist Association Constitution and Bylaws.

Article I: Name

This association shall be known as Pasco Baptist Association, Inc.

Article II: Mission Statement

The missionary purpose of the Pasco Baptist Association is to glorify God by helping member congregations give collective expression to their common commitment to obey the Great Commandment and to fulfill the Great Commission.

Article III: Membership and Affiliation

Section 1. Nature of inter-relationship.

The Pasco Baptist Association is a fellowship of churches voluntarily joined in a covenant relationship with one another under the Lordship of Christ. Member churches shall be characterized by:

- Adherence to this constitution and these bylaws,
- Active participation in the association by financial support, regular reporting, and attendance in meetings,
- A common commitment to affirm doctrinal beliefs based on the Word of God.
- A common commitment to maintain a biblical standard of morality,
- An expressed desire to work together and an openness to partner in joint ministry.

Section 2. Limits of association authority.

The association has the authority to extend fellowship to nonmember churches following a Watch-Care relationship that shall continue for a period of at least one year. The goal of this partnership between the church and the association is mutual nurturing and growth.

This Watch-Care process may be shortened or eliminated with a majority vote of the Leadership Team and majority vote of the PBA Executive Board.

By request of the church or action of the association either party may choose to discontinue fellowship. The process for each church desiring membership shall be guided by a Membership Committee appointed by the moderator.

Article IV: Organization

Section 1. The Association.

The decision-making authority shall rest with the general body meeting in annual or called sessions. This body shall consist of messengers elected by the churches. Each church shall be entitled to two messengers for the first thirty (30) members plus one messenger for each additional thirty (30) members or fraction thereof, up to a maximum of twenty-five (25).

Section 2. The Executive Board.

The association's Executive Board shall constitute the decision-making authority between annual or called sessions of the association.

This board shall consist of the senior pastor and two other members from each cooperating church or mission and the executive officers.

The Executive Director, the association's ministry staff, and one designated representative of each affiliated ministry shall serve as ex-officio members of the Executive Board. Staff serving as pastors of cooperating churches shall be regular members of the board.

Cooperating churches are those churches that fulfill the characterization of member churches found in Article III, Section 1 and have contributed financially to the PBA within the 12 months prior to the meeting date.

A quorum shall be ten percent (10 %) of the total eligible board membership.

Section 3. Officers.

- a. The association's executive officers shall consist of the moderator, vice-moderator, treasurer, and any other officers as needed.
- b. Persons receiving a simple majority of votes cast in an association meeting shall be elected.
- c. The moderator, the vice-moderator, and the Executive Director shall be ex-officio members of the association boards, support teams, committees, and affiliated ministries.
- d. The moderator, vice-moderator, and treasurer shall be the corporate trustees of the Pasco Baptist Association.

Section 4. Staff.

Executive Director.

- a. The association may employ a missionary to coordinate the missions and ministries strategies of the association. This person shall be known as the Executive Director.
- b. The Executive Director reports to the Leadership Team.

Other Staff.

- a. The association may employ other staff as needed. Staff are to report to the Executive Director.

Article V: Meetings and Reports

Section 1. Annual Meeting.

The association shall meet in annual session in October of each year with other meetings of the association called as deemed appropriate. The purpose of the Annual Meeting shall be to review the association's program, act upon items of business, plan for the future of the association, and provide an opportunity for Christian worship and fellowship.

Section 2. Executive Board Meetings.

The board will meet three times a year (January, May, & September). At the annual meeting the dates for the executive board for the following year will be presented.

Section 3. Special Meetings.

In the event of an emergency, Special Meetings may be called by a two-thirds majority of the Leadership Team. Notice of any special meeting shall be provided to member churches at least thirty days (30) prior to the meeting.

Section 4. Church reporting.

Cooperating churches are strongly encouraged to provide an annual report on forms provided by the Florida Baptist Convention detailing the previous year's ministry. Annual reports should be forwarded to the association at least two weeks prior to the Annual Meeting.

Section 5. Quorum.

Those messengers present representing at least fifteen percent (15%) of the cooperating member churches shall constitute a quorum.

Cooperating churches are those churches that fulfill the characterization of member churches found in Article III, Section 1 and have contributed financially to the PBA within the 12 months prior to the meeting date.

A minimum of thirty (30) days' notice shall be given to the churches regarding the meeting.

Section 6. Minutes

The Officers and Leadership Team of the PBA shall ensure the taking of minutes at all PBA meetings listed above and see to the executive board members receive corrected minutes in due time.

Article VI: Amendments

The Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority of the messengers present and voting at the Annual Meeting of the Pasco Baptist Association. Proposed amendments must be submitted to the Executive Board prior to the annual session. All proposed amendments shall be published and distributed to the churches at least fifteen (15) days before the Annual Meeting. If an amendment is brought to the annual session without approval by the Executive Board, such an amendment would require a two-thirds vote for approval in two consecutive Annual Meetings.

BYLAWS

Article I: Election, Term of Office, and Duties of Officers

Section 1. Election.

The moderator, vice-moderator, and treasurer shall be nominated by the Executive Board and elected at the Annual Meeting and take office at the close of the Annual Meeting.

All officers of the Pasco Baptist Association shall be members of cooperating member churches.

Section 2. Term of Office.

The tenure of office of the moderator and vice-moderator shall be limited to a maximum of two consecutive years or until successors are elected. The terms of office of the treasurer are not so limited.

Section 3. Duties of Officers.

- a. The moderator shall preside over all meetings of the Pasco Baptist Association and the association's Executive Board and shall perform such other duties as are prescribed by the parliamentary authority adopted by the association. The moderator shall give general supervision and support to all activities of the association. The moderator shall be an ex-officio member of all teams and committees.
- b. The vice-moderator shall assist the moderator in the performance of assigned duties. The vice-moderator shall preside over meetings in the absence of the moderator and if the moderator shall resign or move away shall serve as moderator until the association elects another moderator. The vice-moderator shall be an ex-officio member of all teams and committees.
- c. The treasurer shall be responsible for receiving and disbursing all association funds in accordance with the budget adopted by the association.
- d. The moderator, vice-moderator, and the treasurer shall act as legal officers of the Pasco Baptist Association. They shall hold in trust the association's real and personal property. With respect to association's real property, upon specific vote of the Leadership Team and Executive Board or the association in annual or called session, they shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer any association property. When signatures are required, any two shall sign legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase or rental of property, or other legal documents related to association matters.

Article II: Leadership Team, Support Teams, and the Nominating Process.

Section 1. Election of Leadership Team.

- a. The Leadership Team shall be composed of the moderator and vice-moderator of the association; three (3) at-large members from the Executive Board church representatives, elected for three-year terms, one elected each year. Ex-officio members include the Executive Director and associational Treasurer. The moderator shall serve as chair of the Leadership Team.
- b. In the event that a vacancy is created on the Leadership Team, the Moderator drawing from discussions and recommendations from the Leadership Team may appoint a replacement to fulfill the term of that member until the next Annual Meeting. The replacement member must receive a simple majority vote at the Annual Meeting if they are to continue serving out the remainder of the term.

Section 2. Responsibilities of the Leadership Team.

The Leadership Team responsibilities include:

- a. Implement association policy between Executive Board meetings; coordinate the planning, development, and publishing of the association's calendar; and developing strategic plans.
- b. Propose the annual budget to the Executive Board.
- c. Recruit, hire, and terminate support staff; recommend the hiring or termination of ministerial employees to the Executive Board; evaluate employee performance on a systematic basis; and recommend personnel policies to the Executive Board.
- d. Present to the Annual Meeting nominees to serve on the Leadership Team from the pool of names submitted by the Executive Board for review 60 days prior to the Annual meeting.

Section 3. The Nominating Process.

The Nominating Process for Leadership Team members shall be as follows:

1. Sixty (60) days prior to an Annual meeting, the Leadership team shall accept nominations for available Leadership Team positions.

2. Nominations may be made from any Executive Board member of a cooperating church.
3. The Leadership Team will meet prior to the Annual meeting to vote on an order by which a name will be brought to the Annual meeting for consideration.
 - a. During the voting process among the Leadership Team the following factors will be considered:
 - i. Diversity. The team will seek new members who help ensure that the team reflects the diversity of our member churches in as many respects as possible (culture, church size, worship style, age of congregation, geography (east/west), etc.).
 - ii. Cooperation. The team will seek new members who have led their ministries to financially cooperate with the PBA in the recent past.
 - iii. Servant-leadership. The team will seek new members who demonstrate a care for other pastors, churches and civic matters beyond the scope of their own church duties.
 - iv. Capacity. The team will seek new members who have the capacity to attend meetings and devote time to Associational activities as an encouragement to other pastors and ministry leaders.
4. The Leadership Team shall communicate with prospective candidates to ensure that, before their name is presented to the Executive Board, they are willing and able to commit to serving on the Leadership Team.
5. The Leadership Team will create a single list representing their top 3 recommendations for each available position on the Leadership Team. (ex: If there are two vacancies, a list of 6 names will be made. For three vacancies, the list will be 9, etc.)
6. The Leadership Team will nominate the top name on their list for the vacancy on the Leadership Team.
7. Should the person nominated not receive a simple majority of support, the Leadership Team will then move to the second name and third if necessary.
8. Should no name presented by the Leadership Team receive enough votes for nomination, the Moderator will receive nominations from the floor. The process will be by secret ballot with the moderator offering up the name that received the most balloted votes and then the second, etc. until a vacancy has been filled.

Discussion and debate during this phase of balloting will be at the discretion of the Moderator. The threshold for a nominee from the floor shall rise to two thirds of those meeting at the Annual Meeting.

Article III: Affiliated Ministries

Section 1. Definition.

An affiliated ministry is a ministry endorsed by the association and supported by the member churches. Endorsement of a ministry shall be dependent upon demonstration of an affinity with the mission and the aims of the association. Affiliated ministries are required to allow the Moderator and Vice Moderator to serve as ex officio members on their governing board. Churches within the association are encouraged to cooperate with and support affiliated ministries. While affiliation with the association shall not guarantee financial support, affiliated ministries shall be eligible for ministry grants from the association.

Article IV: Appointed and Standing Committees

Section 1. Ad Hoc Committees.

The moderator shall appoint ad hoc committees as needed.

Section 2. Credentials Committee.

The moderator may appoint a credentials committee at least thirty (30) days in advance of the Annual Meetings. The Credentials Committee is responsible for verifying the eligibility of messengers to the association and for registering messengers to the association.

Article V: Rules of Order

Section 1. The Opening and Closing of Meetings.

Meetings of the Pasco Baptist Association will be opened and closed with prayer.

Section 2. Governing Rules.

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern the meetings of the Pasco Baptist Association in all cases in which they are not inconsistent with the Bible, these bylaws, and any special rules adopted by the association.

Section 3. Rules of Debate.

No person may speak more than twice on the same question or proposition until everyone wishing to speak has had opportunity to speak. All speeches are limited to five minutes except by unanimous consent.

Section 4. Motions.

All motions will be written and a copy given to the vice moderator by the one making the motion.

Article VII: Amendments

These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds majority of the messengers present and voting at the Annual Meeting provided that such proposed amendments have been submitted to the Executive Board prior to the Annual Meeting.