

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL CONSTITUENCY SESSION

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

September 19, 2021

Virtual Constituency Session via Zoom
Broadcast From North American Division Office
9705 Patuxent Woods Drive, Columbia, MD 21046

DEVOTIONAL SERVICE

OPENING

The Special Virtual Constituency Session of the Southern California Conference (SCC) began at 9:00 a.m. pacific time via Zoom technology with the SCC Executive Officers being at the North American Division Headquarters using their equipment and expertise.

SPECIAL MUSIC

Pre-recorded music was presented by a variety of students from various SCC Academies.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF DEVOTIONAL SPEAKER

Elder Velino Salazar, SCC president, opened the session on behalf of the officers of the Southern California Conference, welcoming the delegates to this special session of the Southern California Conference on this Sunday, September 19, 2021. He thanked the SCC students for their music and introduced the devotional speaker: Elder Bradford Newton, the newly elected president of the Pacific Union Conference.

DEVOTIONAL

Elder Bradford Newton, President of the Pacific Union Conference, shared thoughts from the Gospel of John, Chapter 1, verses 4-5, and 9, on the power of light. The spiritual light that the Gospel of John speaks of is the source for fixing all the dysfunction of our life and our world. We live in unbelieving, unchurched neighborhoods and we, as Christians, need to share God's light of Salvation with others.

SEASON OF PRAYER

Elder Velino Salazar introduced the new SCC Treasurer, Kathleen V. Diaz. Kathleen led us in opening the session through prayer.



INTRODUCTIONS

Elder Salazar introduced the participants:

Elder John H. Cress, Executive Secretary
Mrs. Kathleen V. Diaz, Treasurer, CFO
Elder James G. Lee, Jr., Executive Vice President

Pacific Union Officers

Elder Bradford Newton, President
Elder Sandra Roberts, Executive Secretary
Mr. Stephen Mayer, Treasurer, CFO
Elder Leon Brown, Executive Vice President

Region Directors

Elder Samuel Lee, Asian Pacific Region
Elder Royal Harrison, Greater Los Angeles Region
Elder Jaime Heras, Hispanic Region
Elder Daniel Chan, Los Angeles Metro Region
Elder Gregory Hoenes, West Region

BUSINESS SESSION

READING OF THE OFFICIAL CALL

Elder John H. Cress, SCC executive secretary, read the official call of the session, which was published in the June, July, August, and September 2021 issues of the Pacific Union Recorder, as required by the Bylaws of the Southern California Conference.

The purpose of this special session is to receive a comprehensive report from the Ad Hoc Region Structure Evaluation Committee, with the committee's assessment and analysis.

This special session was requested by the delegates at the 65th Constituency Session on September 22, 2019. *(Appendix A)*

SEATING OF THE DELEGATES

The conference executive secretary reported to the session chair that according to the formula set up by the bylaws, the churches of the Southern California Conference were asked to elect 642 delegates. One delegate per organized church and one delegate for every 75 members or a major fraction thereof.

(Appendix B)

Additionally, the conference executive secretary reported that according to the SCC bylaws, 60 percent of all regular delegates need to be present to transact business (60 percent of 642 = 385). At this time there were 40 delegates short, so delegates could not be seated at this time.

ADVICE OF THE PARLIAMENTARIAN

Advised two options in order to proceed: 1) end the meeting; 2) Receive reports, but they cannot be officially received, voted, or any changes be made. Rather, the delegates would need to act as a infomal Ad Hoc group until/or unless quorum is made.

HISTORY OF ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE REPORT

While waiting for quorum to be satisfied, Elder Velino Salazar presented a report on the History of the Organizational Structure for the Southern California Conference for the last 40 years.

(Appendix C)

QUORUM CHECK

Elder John Cress noted that at the end of the History of the Organizational Structure Report we still did not have a quorum. We were close, having 379 of the needed 385 delegates.

PROCESS FOR THE REGION STRUCTURE STUDY

Elder Velno Salazar introduced the process the Executive Committee used for choosing the Ad Hoc Region Structure Committee and the company chosen to help them with this study: “Culture Shift, LLC.” This company is focused on strategic planning and foresight for business, nonprofit, and also religious organizations, and nationwide. It was founded by Dr. Karen Cress. She has a bachelor degree in theology, a master’s degree in organizational leadership with a concentration in consulting, and a doctorate in strategic leadership with focus on strategic foresight.

The ad hoc committee that the executive committee formed was a group of 15 individuals plus the president of the Southern California Conference as the chair of the ad hoc committee, which is ultimately responsible for this report, while Dr. Cress facilitated the process. Dr. Cress was introduced to the delegates.

DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Elder John Cress announced that a quorum was now present to transact the business of the Special Constituency Session as required by the Bylaws of the Southern California Conference.

Elder Velino Salazar, as president of the Southern California Conference, declared that this special constituency session of the Southern California Conference held on Sunday, September 19, 2021 is now open for business.

SEATING OF THE PARLIAMENTARIANS

VOTED To ask Todd McFarland, General Counsel for the North American Division and General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, to serve as Parliamentarian for this Session.

READING OF CONSTITUENCY SESSION RULES AND PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES

Todd McFarland described how in a Virtual Constituency Session the delegates could participate through the “chat feature of Zoom.” There they could request to make a comment, a motion, an amendment, or a parliamentary inquiry which would take priority over any other request.

Elder John Cress introduced the process for the Virtual Rules of the Special Session voted by the Executive Committee of the Southern California Conference.

VOTED To accept the the proposed Rules and Procedures to hold this virtual Constituency Session that were approved on August 10, 2021, by the Southern California Conference Executive Committee.

(Appendix D)

AGENDA FOR THE SPECIAL CONSTITUENCY SESSION

VOTED To approve the Agenda for this Special Constituency Session as recommended by the Executive Committee on September 7, 2021.

(Appendix E)

REGION STRUCTURE REPORT

The Region Structure Report was presented by Dr. Karen Cress. This report had been available to delegates in a long version and short version on the Session Website. A report of the town halls and survey that was completed by the Ad Hoc Region Structure Study Committee was also available on the session site.

VOTED To receive the Ad Hoc Region Structure Study and Analysis Report.

PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

Elder Velino Salazar presented Preliminary Recommendations on Region Structure that had been recommended by the Executive Committee on September 7, 2021.

A **Motion** was made to accept the Preliminary Recommendations submitted by the SCC Executive Committee, which include adaptations of the region structure document without changing the SCC bylaws.

About 50 delegates had the opportunity to make questions and comments about the Region Structure and the Preliminary Recommendations, including affirmations and opportunities to improve.

A **Motion** was made to refer the Preliminary Recommendations and Ad Hoc Report to a special committee appointed by the Executive Committee comprised of majority lay-members, culturally diverse, gender-balanced, including youth, to develop the specific changes for improvement to the Region Structure.

VOTED not to refer.

VOTED to accept the original motion, “to accept the preliminary recommendations submitted by the executive committee, which include adaptations of the region structure document without changing the SCC bylaws.”

CLOSING REMARKS

Elder Velino A. Salazar closed this session meeting remarking on a concern expressed several times today: the involvement of young people in the church leadership, including constituency sessions. Elder Salazar appealed to the local church leaders to elect young people when nominating committee time comes for elections at the church and include those under 30-year olds as delegates to conference constituency sessions.

ADJOURNMENT

VOTED To adjourn to the Special Constituency Session of the Southern California Conference.

BENEDICTION

The benediction was offered by Elder James Lee, the Executive Vice President of SCC.

Velino A. Salazar, Chair
John H. Cress, Secretary