

Press Release for the Board of Governors of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches [Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary] for a meeting held on September 6, 2012

The Board of Governors met at the Seminary facilities in Hamilton, Ontario on September 6, 2012. Present at the meeting were Archie J. Bax, Hank Kampen (Treasurer), Lammert Jagt, Rev. Richard Aasman (Chairman), Barry Hordyk, , Dr. Andrew J. Pol (Secretary), Rev. Willem B. Slomp, Rev. Eric Kampen, Rev. John VanWoudenberg, Rev. John Ludwig and Karl J. Veldkamp (Vice-Chairman/Corresponding Clerk). The Principal, Dr. G.H. Visscher also was present. The meeting was opened by Rev. R. Aasman with the reading of Philippians 3:7-21 and prayer.

Memorabilia

In our memorabilia we remembered: the illness of Prof Geertsema; the 63rd birthday of Dr. J. DeJong; the situation and health challenges for Dr. N. Gootjes; the current situation with Mrs. Faber; the upcoming peremptory examination for br. Abel Pol, scheduled for the week of September 10, 2012, D.V.; and the challenges of health for the parents of Rev. Slomp.

Minutes, Agenda & Officers of the Board - The minutes of the Board meeting held on March 1, 2012 were adopted. The agenda for the meeting was settled.

Correspondence of Note

- a. Press Release for March 1, 2012 Board meeting
- b. A letter to Dr. A.J. de Visser confirming in principle approval of his sabbatical proposal. Such sabbatical to take place the second term of the 2012 – 2013 academic year.
- c. A letter was written to Mr. J. Walker confirming the terms of his appointment as an adjunct lecturer to teach first year Greek for the 2012-2013 academic year.
- c. A further letter sent to the Deputies for Training for the Ministry (appointed by Synod 2009 of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia) regarding their inquiries and desire for comprehensive consideration of some form of distance education for the freshmen year.
- d. Letter received from the Senate setting out a proposal for guidelines around admission standards for new students – setting out a minimum grade point average. This is approved.
- e. A letter from Dr. A.J. de Visser setting out a detailed summary of his sabbatical plans and intentions, focused on writing a book on Mission Studies. Received with gratitude.
- f. A letter from the Senate proposing the appointment of a Principal on 3 year renewable terms to a maximum of 3 consecutive terms – which was approved. Dr. G. H. Visscher was appointed as Principal for the period 2014 to 2017, subject to approval by the next synod.

g. Proposal from the Senate for the curriculum and program scheduled for the interim semester of 2 weeks in January 2013, with a focus on Catechism teaching and preaching. Approved with gratitude.

Receipt of Reports-Material Agenda Items:

- a. **Exit Surveys** – Following a meeting between two members of the Academic Committee and the Senate, it was agreed that elements of the process for soliciting exit surveys requires further analysis and reflection and this was taken on by the Academic Committee.
- b. **Catechism Satellite Conferences** – a proposal from the organizers of the Heidelberg Catechism conference for January 2013 to conduct satellite conferences was received and approved.
- c. **Visits to the Lectures** – The Revs. R. Aasman and W. Slomp provided their report on the visits to the lectures completed in the spring of 2012. The reports are comprehensive and very positive. Such reports were presented and received with gratitude.
- d. **Finance & Property Committee Matters** – The following elements were dealt with:
 - i. all Finance & Property committee minutes have been circulated. It is further confirmed that the minutes of this committee are being circulated to the Deputies of the FRCA on a confidential basis as well;
 - ii. the audited financial statements for the fiscal period ending December 31, 2011 were received;
 - iii. the proposed budget for the fiscal period ending December 31, 2013 was reviewed and approved.
 - iv. The annual report of the committee was received by the Board. The continued faithful support of the church community was noted with gratitude. The facilities of the Seminary continue to serve the Seminary well. As part of the report, the committee suggests an increase in annual tuition to \$2300.00, which was approved.
- e. **Senate Matters** – In connection with the Senate, the following reports were received: Registrar, Librarian, Lecture Schedule, Convocation Committee, Faber-Holwerda Bursary Fund, Website of CRTS and Calendar for 2012-2013 Academic Year. All reports were comprehensive and were received with gratitude and acknowledgment of the ongoing diligence and work at the Seminary.
- f. **Speaking Tour for Manitoba and Denver** – the report of Dr. A.J. de Visser on speaking tours he completed to Manitoba and Denver in June and August respectively was received. Support for these tours is evident.
- f. **Governance Committee** – It was confirmed that all compliance documentation required from the Board and Faculty have been signed. New Orientation Policies for new board members, new faculty and new staff were approved for the College Handbook. An amended version of the operating bylaw number 12 which incorporated the necessary amendments to reflect the role of adjunct professors and adjunct lecturers was approved for submission for approval by the next synod.

g. Conference Attendances – The report of Dr. G.H. Visscher relating to his attendance at a meeting of the Chief Academic Officers Society of the Association of Theological Schools, and the Biennial meeting of the Association of Theological Schools held in Minneapolis, MN in June of 2012 was received. The Librarian, M. Vandervelde (who is also the ATS self study coordinator) also attended the Biennial Meeting and contributed to the report.

h. Assessment – The Board received and approved in principle the Assessment Plan as prepared by the Senate. The Assessment Plan is intended as a comprehensive framework which directs and prompts continuous review and consideration of the functioning and activities of the Seminary to ensure its ongoing faithfulness and adherence to his statement of institutional purpose. M. Vandervelde, Librarian was appointed as the interim assessment coordinator with the direction to provide an interim report at the next meeting of the Board.

i. Accreditation – The current draft of the Self Study report [a document of 85 pages which addresses 10 standards developed by ATS by which the Seminary is measured and considered] and its recommendations were reviewed, commented upon and approved for finalization. The deadline to submit the self study report to ATS for formal review and approval of accreditation is November 1, 2012.

j. Fifth Professor Proposal and Search Committee – The matter of the proposal to synod for a permanent fifth professor for the Department of Ecclesiology was confirmed with the understanding that the substance of such proposal will be contained in the report of the Board to the next synod. In connection with such proposal the interim report of the search committee for a possible candidate for such position, if such position is indeed approved by the next synod (which is not assumed, nor presumed), was received. Such interim report set out the activities of the search committee to a current date. Approval was given to proceed with interviewing the candidates, with the expectation that a report with a recommendation would be provided to the Board at its meeting scheduled for January of 2013.

k. Lecture visitors – the following schedule was adopted:

- i. For Semester I of the 2012-2013 academic year: the Revs. R. Aasman and W.B. Slomp.
- ii. For Semester II of the 2012-2013 academic year: the Revs. E. Kampen and J. Ludwig.

l. Report of the Board to Synod Carman West – 2013 – to be convened – The draft report was received and discussed with outstanding items duly noted. The finalization of the report was tasked to Dr. G.H. Visscher and K. Veldkamp (corresponding clerk) – with review and input from the Board as needed.

m. Nominations for new members of the Board – For the terms of the ministerial members of the Board coming to an end in 2013, it is expected that the appropriate Regional Synods will nominate same. For the nomination of new non-ministerial members of the Board who would be part of the Finance and Property Committee, it was agreed that the Board would request the upcoming General Synod to change the traditional nomination procedure, allowing for two nominations (a primary and an alternate) from Western Canada for the Finance and Property Committee. Grounds for this change in practice were confirmed as follows:

- i. neither the bylaws nor the incorporating act prescribe that Finance and Property committee members be only from Ontario. Such practice has arisen by policy and tradition;
- ii. the function of non-ministers on the finance and property committee should not be viewed as limited to the committee work as such board members also function as full members of the Board and have the attendant supervisory roles and responsibilities;
- iii. fully one half of the membership of the federation are outside of Ontario and having non-ministerial representation from Western Canada would provide for presence, inclusiveness, knowledge and a “voice at the table” for the churches in Western Canada from a non-ministerial perspective; and
- iv. the additional travel costs are relatively nominal and would be commensurate to the current expenditures now made for regular travel by ministers for Board activities for Board Meetings, lecture visits and the like.

Next meeting of the Board was tentatively scheduled for January 17, 2013, d.v.

Press Release and Closing

The completion of the Press Release was delegated to the Vice Chairman in consultation with the Executive and the meeting was closed with prayer and thanksgiving.

On behalf of the Board of Governors of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches, Karl J. Veldkamp, Vice Chairman/Corresponding Clerk