

Constitution and Bylaws Of the



Amended and Adopted
October, 2001
Amended October 19, 2009
Amended October 18, 2010
Re-written and Adopted September 21, 2020

Located at
14810 St. Stephens Ave., P.O. Box 1447
Chatom, AL 36518-1447

CONSTITUTION

Adopted in Annual Meeting, October 2001
Amended in Annual Meeting, October 2009
Amended in Annual Meeting, October 2010
Amended in Executive Meeting, September 2020

Article I. Identity

The name of the association is Washington Baptist Association; its motto is “Cooperative Ministry, Mission, and Fellowship Since 1909.” The office is located in Washington County at 14810 St. Stephens Avenue in Chatom. The mailing address is P.O. Box 1447, Chatom, Alabama, 36518-1447. Telephone numbers are 251-847-2753 and FAX 251-847-8404.

Article II. Nature

The association exists as an autonomous, cooperative organization respecting the autonomy of each church, each association, and each convention. Upon request the association assists individuals or churches, facilitates the sharing of ideas and information between a request and a source, conducts training sessions as needed, and coordinates various ministries whose nature requires more than one church can do

Article III. Purpose

The association promotes and applies the biblical, global mandate expressed in Matthew 28:19-20, known as “The Great Commission,” in this county area primarily by assisting individuals or churches to witness and model the gospel to lost people, to seek a healing in human relationships, to nurture discipleship among believers, and to nurture fellowship among the churches, and secondly by cooperating with other community ministries of mutual purpose.

Article IV. Membership

A Baptist church becomes a member of the association through a Membership Committee process. A member church adheres to the Baptist Faith and Message, 2000. This document contains the Articles of Faith of the Southern Baptist Convention. Each member church is expected to cooperate with the association, the Alabama Baptist State Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Article V. Staff

The staff of the association includes employed personnel and elected members of the member churches who serve as committee people, directors, messengers, officers, or volunteers as needed. Adequate job descriptions will be kept on file at all times.

Article VI. Amendments

This constitution and bylaws may be amended by a simple majority vote at an annual meeting provided a written statement of the amendment, either an addition or a modification, is communicated by mail or some other appropriate method to each member church at least one month prior to the date of an annual meeting.

BYLAWS

Adopted in Executive Meeting, September 2020

I. Meetings

Associational meetings shall be conducted according to the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*.

1. Annual Meeting. The WBA annual meeting is held during an Executive Committee meeting during the calendar year. This meeting completes associational business and prepares for the next calendar year, including adoption of the annual budget and officer nominations. Churches will be notified in advance of time, date, and location of the Executive Committee meeting, and the agenda for business.

2. Special Called Meeting. A Special Called meeting may be initiated by the Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Associational Missionary, or the Executive Committee. The request for a Special Meeting may come from a member church through one of the above individuals or group. The scope of the meeting will be limited to the purpose for the calling of the Special Meeting.

3. Committee Meetings. Committee meetings will be held as needed to conduct associational business and planning.

II. Messengers

A representative, known as a Messenger, is elected by a member church to attend and participate in all Executive Committee meetings of the association, especially in the Annual Meeting of the Executive Committee. Messengers are voted in by member churches for a one-year term. Each member church is eligible for three messengers regardless of total membership. Additional messengers, up to a limit of ten, are based on total membership as follows:

1-99 Members	3 Messengers
100-149 Members	4 Messengers
150-199 Members	5 Messengers
200-249 Members	6 Messengers
250-299 Members	7 Messengers
300-349 Members	8 Messengers
350-399 Members	9 Messengers
400+ Members	10 Messengers

Different from a Delegate who votes as instructed in a designated manner, a Messenger votes on each issue in a free spirit as a believer/priest guided by the Holy Spirit.

III. Employees

1. Associational Missionary (Formerly Director of Missions or Executive Director). A candidate for the position of Associational Missionary (AM) is recommended by the Advisory Committee and employed for an indefinite term by a majority vote at a meeting of the Executive Committee, in cooperation with the State Board of Missions of the Alabama Baptist State Convention. If the AM resigns the work, or if the association requests a resignation, a two-week notice is expected. When this position becomes vacant, the Advisory Committee seeks another AM.

The AM plans, coordinates, and supervises the office, programs, ministries, and fellowship of the association with the assistance of the Advisory Committee. The AM in consultation with the Advisory Committee will determine the ministry priorities for the position. This will allow the AM to minister to the pastors and churches of the association in the most effective manner.

The AM will, if possible, visit all the churches of the association during each calendar year. A request to fill the pulpit may constitute a visit. The AM attends appropriate conferences and conventions to maintain an up-to-date professional expertise pertaining to the work. Each year, the AM will be allowed to lead no more than two revivals or conferences outside the county and an unlimited number within the Association. The AM will be allowed to take short-term interim pastor positions within the Association. Any interims to exceed three months will be coordinated through the Advisory Committee.

The Advisory Committee acts as the Personnel Committee on matters for paid employees and will recommend to the Executive Committee the conditions of employment for the AM, such as vacation, pay, and sick leave.

2. Office Administrator. The office administrator is hired through a search process by the AM and the Advisory Committee, and employed by the Advisory Committee for an indefinite period of time. If the office administrator resigns the work, or if the association requests a resignation, a two-week notice is expected. When this position becomes vacant, the AM and the Advisory Committee will seek another office administrator.

The Office Administrator serves as the associational Treasurer, whose responsibilities include receiving and disbursing all business transactions of the association.

The Office Administrator also serves as the Clerk, whose responsibilities include serving as the recorder of the association for minutes of the Executive Committee and special called meetings of the association. The Clerk is responsible for ensuring the ACP (Annual Church Profile) is sent to, and received from, each church so that the preparation of the association annual report can be compiled. The Clerk prepares and publishes a book of reports for the annual meeting of the Executive Committee. The Clerk prepares and publishes an annual of each year's work after each annual meeting to maintain the history of the association.

The required office administrator skills are listed in the Job Description for this position. The office administrator reports to the AM. The Advisory Committee, in conjunction with the AM, acts as the Personnel Committee on matters for this position and will recommend to the Executive Committee the conditions of employment for the office administrator, such as vacation, pay, and sick leave.

3. Other Employees. Other positions deemed necessary for the Association and its entities to carry out necessary operations may be recommended by the AM and the Advisory Committee, in conjunction with the Financial Committee, and approved by a majority vote of the Executive Committee. A job description will be developed for each position and approved by the Advisory Committee.

IV. Officers

1. All officers will be active members and in good standing of a member church in the association.

2. Moderator. The previous Vice-Moderator becomes the Moderator at the close of the annual meeting of the Executive Committee, for a period of one year. In the case where the previous Vice-Moderator and Moderator positions become vacant at the same time, a Moderator is nominated by the Advisory Committee and elected for a one year term by a majority vote by the Executive Committee during the annual meeting of the Executive Committee. This service begins at the close of the annual meeting of the Executive Committee. If this position becomes vacant during a term, the Vice-Moderator becomes the Moderator, and a new Vice Moderator is nominated by the Advisory Committee at an Executive Committee meeting. The individual will finish the original term after securing a majority vote of the Executive Committee.

The Moderator's responsibilities include conducting annual and special called meetings of the association and coordinating the assistance of the Vice-Moderator as needed or desired. The Moderator also serves as the chairperson of the Executive Committee and the assistant chairperson to the Advisory Committee. The Moderator appoints committees as directed by the business decisions of the association. This work is supervised by the AM.

3. Vice-Moderator. The Vice-Moderator is nominated by the Advisory Committee and elected by a majority vote at the annual meeting of the Executive Committee. The term is for one year at which time the Vice-Moderator becomes the Moderator. If this position becomes vacant during a term, a Vice Moderator is nominated by the Advisory Committee at an Executive Committee meeting. The individual will finish the original term after securing a majority vote of the Executive Committee.

The Vice-Moderator serves as moderator upon the request of the Moderator or in his absence. The Vice-Moderator also serves as the chairperson of the Advisory Committee and assistant chairperson of the Executive Committee. This work is supervised by the AM.

4. Moderator Pro Tem. In the event that neither the Moderator nor the vice-Moderator is available to conduct an Advisory or Executive Committee meeting, or an annual/special called meeting, a Moderator Pro Tem is nominated from the floor and elected by a majority vote by the attending group to lead that meeting.

5. Other Officers. Other officers may be nominated as needed by the Advisory Committee and elected by a majority vote of the Executive Committee. A job description will be developed for each position.

V. Committees

1. Advisory Committee. Four Advisory Committee members, the Moderator and Vice-Moderator, and the AM comprise the Advisory Committee. The four at-large members are nominated by the outgoing Advisory Committee as terms expire, and new candidates are elected for a four-year rotational term by a majority vote at the annual meeting of the Executive Committee. This service begins at the close of the annual meeting. Vacancy replacements are nominated by the Advisory Committee at the next Executive Committee and elected to complete the term by a majority vote of the Executive Committee. The Vice-moderator serves as chairperson; the Moderator serves as assistant chairperson; one member of the committee is elected by the committee to serve as secretary. This committee serves as a liaison between an employee and the association, and supervises the AM in the work of the association. This committee meets quarterly or as needed to study needs, recognize trends, and decide on pertinent direction for the work of the association.

The Advisory Committee also serves as the Nominating Committee for the Association. The Advisory Committee researches needs and nominates individuals to fill volunteer positions for the upcoming associational calendar year. Nominations are voted on during the annual meeting of Executive Committee.

The Advisory Committee also serves as the Resolution committee to edit resolutions submitted to an annual meeting for consideration and produce other pertinent resolutions, all of which must agree with the Articles of Faith prescribed in the Constitution. If a proposed resolution disagrees with the Articles of Faith, the committee has the right to reject the resolution and not recommend it to the association for approval. This committee reports to the Executive Committee and to the annual meeting. The Executive Committee provides oversight for the Advisory Committee.

2. Executive Committee. Each member church elects representatives for a one year term as outlined in **II, Messengers**. One of the representatives is preferably the pastor. Representatives are encouraged to attend and participate in each Executive Committee meeting, especially the annual meeting of the Executive Committee. These representatives serve in a messenger fashion, not as a delegate. Other members of this committee are all elected officers. The Moderator serves as chairperson; the Vice-moderator serves as assistant chairperson; the Office Administrator (Clerk) serves as Secretary. This committee begins service at the close of the annual meeting of the Executive Committee, and serves during the interim to the next annual meeting of the Executive Committee.

This committee meets quarterly as needed to receive reports from committees and to conduct business for the association during the interim between annual meetings. The business decisions of this committee are equally as binding on the association as those handled at an annual meeting of the Executive Committee. The AM provides oversight for the Executive Committee.

4. Finance Committee. Three Finance Committee members are nominated by the Advisory Committee and elected for a three-year rotational term by a majority vote at an annual meeting of the Executive Committee. The term for this committee begins at the close of the annual meeting. Vacancy replacements are nominated by the Advisory Committee and are elected for the remainder of a term by a majority vote of the Executive Committee. Members of this committee may serve consecutive terms. The chairperson of this committee is elected within the committee members.

This committee meets at least once each year and at other times as needed. This committee keeps watch over the cash flow of receipts and disbursements and presents an annual budget to the Executive Committee annual meeting. The AM provides oversight to the Finance Committee.

5. Membership Committee. The Moderator appoints five members to the Membership Committee at any time the committee is needed and designates one as the chairperson. This committee is assigned specific work concerning associational relationships with member churches and prospective member churches and is released from the assignment when the task is accomplished.

This committee examines petitionary or member churches and makes appropriate recommendations pertaining to the church's affiliation with association. A petitionary church requesting membership in the association or a member church reported to have a questionable practice of the Baptist faith will be studied concerning its biblical stance, church polity, missionary efforts, and cooperative spirit. This work is supervised by the Director.

6. Trustees. The Advisory Committee nominates three trustees, one of which is designated as chairperson, to be elected for a three-year rotational term by a majority vote at the annual meeting of the Executive Committee. A Trustee may serve consecutive terms. Vacancy replacements are nominated by the Advisory Committee and elected for the remainder of a term by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.

Trustees serve as business and property managers for the association upon instructions from an annual meeting or the Executive Committee. The activities include the signing of legal documents, managing business arrangements, representing the association in business affairs, surveying property needs, and reporting information and recommendations to an annual meeting or the Executive Committee. The AM and Executive Committee provide oversight for the Trustees.

VI. Volunteers

A volunteer serves in appropriate opportunities of ministry that corresponds with the nature and purpose of the association. This work is supervised by the AM.