

CHURCH ORDER AND APPEALS

Chair: Rev. Neil (Kornelis) De Koning
Reporter: Rev. Chelsey L. Harmon

Council of Delegates

A. Materials: Council of Delegates Report (section II, A, 9, 13, b-c, including Appendices B, D-E), pp. 31-32, 34-35, 59-72

B. Privilege of the floor: Rev. Paul R. De Vries, chair of the Council of Delegates; Mr. Andy de Ruyter, vice chair of the Council of Delegates; Dr. Steven R. Timmermans, executive director; and members of the executive staff as needed

C. Recommendations

1. That synod approve the action of the Council of Delegates with respect to the appeals regarding a decision of Classis Chicago South (II, A, 9; Appendix B).
2. That synod not accede to the Judicial Code Committee request (COD Report II, 13, c and Appendix E) that synod appoint a task force that would report observations about, and recommendations for, changes to the Judicial Code.

Grounds:

- a. While changes to the Judicial Code were recommended by the COD, on the whole the Judicial Code is functioning as intended and has served synod well since its origin. We believe the recommended changes are a sufficient response to the actions recommended by Synod 2018.
 - b. There was not sufficient evidence presented to the advisory committee to warrant the creation of a task force.
 - c. The COD communicated its “nonendorsement” of the JCC recommendation.
 - d. The formation of the task force as noted in the JCC request conflicts with synodical rules.
3. That synod instruct the Council of Delegates to review the Judicial Code every five years, seeking input from the Judicial Code Committee, the Office of Safe Church Minisry, and Church Order experts, to ensure that the Judicial Code continues to function as intended, and to assess if updates and/or modifications are needed.

Grounds:

- a. This allows the Judicial Code Committee and others who work with the Judicial Code to be involved in the review process.
- b. Reviewing policy is a helpful practice.