

# FLORIDA BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION: BYLAWS

*Revised November, 2011*

In order to carry out the provisions of the Constitution, the following Bylaws are adopted for the government of the Florida Baptist State Convention.

## **Bylaw 1: Rules of Order**

A. Rules of Order: The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the State Convention in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the Bylaws of the Florida Baptist State Convention and these standing rules.

B. Standing Rules: The Committee on Order of Business shall act as the Committee on Standing Rules in presenting any standing rules (parliamentary and non-parliamentary procedural rules) for consideration by the State Convention during the first session of the State Convention meeting.

(1) The Committee on Order of Business, at the time it presents the program for adoption, shall call to the attention of messengers present, the existence of the following permanent rules that shall govern the conduct of business during the State Convention meeting:

(a) For admission to the assembly hall, under certain conditions and at the discretionary order of the State Convention president, to facilitate identification and seating, messengers, visitors, and others may be required to wear the badge issued by the Registration and/or the Credentials Committees.

(b) A resolution offered by an individual messenger(s) shall be in writing, signed by the maker who shall be a registered messenger to the State Convention, and shall be delivered directly to the desk of the Recording Secretary, after the resolution has been introduced. The introduction of a resolution shall be limited to only the title and/or topic of the proposed resolution being presented, with neither further explanation nor discussion.

(c) No messenger shall speak in debate more than twice on the same question during the same session, for no longer than three minutes each time, without the permission of State Convention messengers who may grant such a privilege by a two-thirds vote without debate.

(d) All reports and other material for the permanent record or printed proceedings shall be in typewritten form and, immediately on presentation, shall be delivered to the Recording Secretary.

(e) Nominations for each elected office to be filled by the State Convention shall be limited to one nominating speech of three minutes for each nominee. Nominees for any elected State Convention office shall be: a registered messenger; shall have agreed to be nominated; and shall be present on the platform at the time in which they are nominated.

(f) When more than one candidate is nominated for any convention office, a written ballot shall be taken from all registered messengers present and voting. The Teller's Committee, appointed by the State Convention President, shall collect the ballots, count the ballots, verify and certify the voting results. The chairman of the Teller's Committee shall provide to the State Convention President, on a timely basis as soon as is practicable after the respective vote, a written report on voting results. The report shall include the actual number of ballots cast, the number of votes received by each candidate, and the number of invalid ballots collected.

(2) All motions, resolutions and memorials, except those proposed by the State Board of Missions or by standing committees, and all recommendations made in reports of officers or committees of the State Convention, shall be referred to the Committee on Order of Business. The Committee shall determine appropriate disposition of these motions, resolutions and memorials. Motions of resolutions and recommendations proposed by the State Board of Missions or by State Convention Committees shall be presented by the Board or proposing committee directly to the State Convention, at a time designated by the Committee on Order of Business.

## **Bylaw 2: Baptist Cooperation**

A. Cooperation: Cooperation is a cornerstone to the very foundation of Southern Baptist life. A basic principle inherent in cooperation is the autonomy of the local church, the Baptist association and the state convention. Inherent in autonomy is the responsibility of this State Convention to define with whom it will cooperate and define what constitutes cooperation.

It is the desire of the State Convention that each church be affiliated with a cooperating Baptist association and the Southern Baptist Convention. A cooperating church does not have to be affiliated with a cooperating Baptist association or the Southern Baptist Convention in order to cooperate and affiliate with this State Convention. A church may seek to affiliate directly with the State Convention by securing Church-at-Large status as defined within these Bylaws.

B. Cooperating Local Church: The State Convention declares that a cooperating Southern Baptist church shall be that autonomous body of Christian believers, which by its free will makes a commitment to and demonstrates cooperation according to State Convention criteria:

(1) **Participation**: A cooperating church is entitled to certain defined benefits through its cooperation and financial support. These benefits shall include, but not be limited to:

(a) Eligible to send messengers to the State Convention's annual meeting;

(b) Eligible for its church members to be elected to serve as a State Convention officer and/or to be elected or appointed to serve as a member or director of a State Convention committee, board, agency or institution;

(c) Eligible to be a recipient and beneficiary of the ministries, resources, services, assistance programs and endorsements provided by the agencies and institutions of this State Convention; and

(d) Eligible to participate in the cooperative missions and evangelism efforts of Southern Baptists in Florida, the United States and around the world.

(2) **Cooperation**: The following criteria shall be demonstrated by any Southern Baptist church which seeks to be considered cooperating and affiliated with the Florida Baptist State Convention and its agency, the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc.:

(a) **Theological**: The church shall have specified within its adopted Statement of Faith and Practice and/or governing documents, a declaration that the basis for its theology, faith, practice and polity is the Bible, with the Baptist Faith and Message, revised in the year 2000, or any other declaration of faith which parallels the tenets of our historic Baptist faith, as the theological framework.

(b) **Declaration**: The church shall, in a regular business session, by an affirmative vote express its intent and commitment to cooperate and be affiliated with the Florida Baptist State Convention. Such action shall be recorded in a written communication to be sent to the Executive Director-Treasurer of the Florida Baptist Convention.

(c) **Financial**: The church shall annually make a \$250 financial contribution through the Cooperative Program.

(d) **Statistical**: The church shall annually provide an annual church statistical profile which demonstrates its statewide cooperation and partnership with other Florida Baptist churches.

(3) **Acceptance of New Congregations**: Each year, during the annual meeting of the State Convention, a report shall be made by the State Board of Missions identifying the then known newly-constituted Southern Baptist churches organized within the past year in Florida. The report shall include both those new congregations recognized as being a Church-at-Large, as well as those churches which have made commitments through a respective Baptist association's credentialing process to cooperate and affiliate with a local Baptist association that cooperates with this State Convention.

The recommended Church-at-Large congregations shall be endorsed by the State Convention, through an affirmative vote of the messengers present during a designated business session.

Following the action of the State Convention, the State Board of Missions in accordance with its policy guidelines, shall send a written notification to the pastor of all newly-constituted and cooperating churches. This notification shall summarize the Bylaw 2 criteria and benefits for cooperation.

(4) **Existing Relationship**: Any Southern Baptist church or church-type mission, including those designated as Church-at-Large, which were organized, functioning and cooperating with the Florida Baptist State Convention at the time this bylaw was approved [November, 1996], shall be considered and designated as cooperating for the purposes of these bylaws.

(a) In recognition of its historic role as the theological guardian of Baptist faith and practice, a cooperating local Baptist association that approves for affiliation any Southern Baptist church, for the purposes of this bylaw, those churches will be accepted for affiliation with this State Convention.

(b) It is the desire of the State Convention to encourage any cooperating church, which does not presently fulfill the parameters of cooperation, to do so.

(5) **Assignment to the State Board of Missions**: The State Convention directs and empowers the State Board of Missions to determine and mediate questions involving churches which seek affiliation on the basis of Church-at-Large status with the Florida Baptist State Convention.

(a) The Board shall assign this task to its appropriate committees and approve any guidelines and procedures to be followed by the Board.

(b) The Board shall annually report and recommend to the Florida Baptist State Convention for endorsement those churches at-large which have made commitments to cooperate and affiliate with this State Convention.

C. Cooperating Baptist Association: The State Convention recognizes that a cooperating Baptist association shall be that duly constituted and autonomous organization of affiliated and cooperating Southern Baptist churches, which by their collective free will as an association, make a commitment to and demonstrate cooperation according to State Convention criteria, shall be considered in sympathy and cooperation with this State Convention, its purposes and work. Those criteria are herein defined.

(1) **Defined Role:** The State Convention endorses the historic and traditional role of the Baptist association serving as the theological guardian of Southern Baptist theology, faith, practice and polity of Southern Baptist churches cooperating with the Florida Baptist State Convention.

(2) **Endorsements:** The State Convention accepts the endorsement given to a local Southern Baptist church which is made by a cooperating Baptist association.

(3) **Participation:** Within these bylaws, provision is made for each cooperating autonomous association to be entitled to a certain number of member(s) to participate on the Committee on Nominations and the State Board of Missions. In addition, a cooperating association is entitled to certain defined benefits provided by the State Convention through its agency, the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc.

(4) **Cooperation:** The following criteria shall be expected of any Baptist association which seeks to be considered cooperating and affiliated with the Florida Baptist State Convention and its agency, the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc.:

(a) **Theological:** The association shall have specified within its adopted governing documents a declaration that the basis for the theology, faith, practice and polity of its cooperating churches is the Bible with the Baptist Faith and Message, revised in the year 2000, or any other declaration of faith which parallels the tenets of our historic Baptist faith, as the theological framework. The governing document shall provide for a process by which the association shall determine if each Baptist church seeking affiliation with the association, does affirm commitment to the theology, faith, practice and polity outlined in the Bible, with the Baptist Faith and Message, revised in the year 2000, or any other declaration of faith which parallels the tenets of our historic Baptist faith, as the theological framework.

(b) **Declaration:** The association shall, in an annual meeting, by an affirmative vote express its intent and commitment to cooperate with the Florida Baptist State Convention and its agency, the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc. Such action shall be recorded in a written communication to be sent to the Executive Director-Treasurer of the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc.

(c) **Cooperative Agreement:** Each existing association if it desires, shall have opportunity to enter into a Cooperative Agreement with the State Convention's agency, the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc.

Once a Cooperative Agreement has been negotiated, the association's executive board shall make final approval of the Agreement. The proposed agreement also shall be approved by the State Board of Missions.

Such agreement shall specify the partnership roles, expectations and commitment by each entity regarding program resources, annual planning coordination, personnel assistance, potential funding, duration of the Cooperative Agreement, and any other issues of mutual concern.

(5) **Existing Relationship:** Any Baptist association which was organized, functioning and cooperating with the Florida Baptist State Convention and its agency, the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc., at the time this bylaw was approved [November, 1996], shall be considered and designated as cooperating for the purposes of these bylaws.

**D. New Associations:** Any newly-organized or re-organized Baptist association must fulfill State Convention criteria before it shall be recognized as a "cooperating" association affiliated with the Florida Baptist State Convention and its agency, the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc.

(1) **Membership:** The association shall be comprised of at least 15 constituted Southern Baptist churches and whose combined total church membership shall be at least 7,000 persons.

(2) **Application:** The association's executive committee shall prepare and submit an "Application for Cooperation" to be received, reviewed and approved by the State Board of Missions and its appropriate committee.

(3) **Theological:** The association shall have specified within its adopted governing documents a declaration that the basis for the theology, faith, practice and polity of its cooperating churches is the Bible, with the Baptist Faith and Message, revised in the year 2000, or any other declaration of faith which parallels the tenets of our historic Baptist faith, as the theological framework.

(a) This governing document shall provide for a process by which the association shall determine if each Baptist church seeking affiliation with the association, does affirm commitment to the theology, faith, practice and polity outlined in the Bible, with the Baptist Faith and Message, revised in the year 2000, or any other declaration of faith which parallels the tenets of our historic Baptist faith, as the theological framework.

(b) The association shall provide documentation that all of its then current cooperating churches do endorse the theology, faith, practice and polity outlined in the Bible, with the Baptist Faith and Message, revised in the year 2000, or any other declaration of faith which parallels the tenets of our historic Baptist faith, as the theological framework.

(4) **Declaration:** Each newly-organized association shall, in an annual meeting, by an affirmative vote express its intent and commitment to cooperate with the Florida Baptist State Convention and its agency, the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc. Such action shall be recorded in a written communication to be sent to the Executive Director-Treasurer of the Florida Baptist Convention.

(5) **Cooperative Agreement:** Each newly-organized cooperating association shall have the opportunity to enter into a Cooperative Agreement with the State Convention's agency, the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc.

Once a Cooperative Agreement has been negotiated, the association's executive board shall make final approval of the Agreement.

(a) Upon the "provisional cooperating acceptance" by the State Board of Missions, the association's executive board shall, within six months, negotiate and make final approval of the Cooperative Agreement entered into with the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc. The proposed agreement also shall be approved by the State Board of Missions.

(b) Such agreement shall specify the partnership roles, expectations, and commitments by each entity regarding program resources, annual planning coordination, personnel assistance, potential funding, duration of the Cooperative Agreement and any other issues of mutual concern.

(6) Provisional Status: The State Convention directs and empowers the State Board of Missions, through its appropriate committees to establish guidelines and procedures, by which to receive, review and grant "provisional cooperating acceptance" status to any newly-organized association which seeks to be considered for "unconditional cooperating" status.

(a) When the parameters of cooperation have been met, an association shall be considered ready for presentation to the State Convention. The State Board of Missions may recommend that the Florida Baptist State Convention, during its next annual meeting, confer unconditional cooperating status upon the requesting association.

(b) The year, following approval by the State Convention, and in subsequent years, the newly-organized or re-organized association shall then be eligible for a member on the State Convention's Committee on Nominations and shall qualify for at least one member from its cooperating churches being nominated to serve on the State Board of Missions, as provided for in these bylaws.

E. Southern Baptist Convention: The Florida Baptist State Convention declares that it fraternally cooperates with and supports the Southern Baptist Convention and its agencies of work.

(1) As a demonstration of this cooperation, the State Convention promotes giving through the Cooperative Program and serves as the conduit for the distribution of Cooperative Program funds given by cooperating churches.

(2) To facilitate Baptist cooperation, this State Convention has empowered its State Board of Missions to enter into Cooperative Agreements with selected agencies of the Southern Baptist Convention which relate to mission, ministries, and support services provided by the State Convention agency, the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc.

F. Compliance Remedies — Cooperation: Every cooperating church is expected to demonstrate its commitment to cooperation with the State Convention on an annual basis by doing two things as defined within these bylaws: (1) making an annual \$250 financial contribution through the Cooperative Program; and (2) providing an annual church statistical profile on the health and vitality of the church. A church which fails to fulfill its commitment to either requirement for three consecutive years shall be counseled by the State Board of Missions. The Florida Baptist State Convention assigns to the State Board of Missions the authority to make a final determination and recommendation of the appropriate response towards a church which is chronically in non-compliance with the expectations for cooperation. The procedures for reviewing compliance and the making a determination of whether or not to finally withdraw fellowship from a non-contributing or non-reporting church shall be developed, defined and implemented by the State Board of Missions, as stated in its policy on "Baptist Cooperation."

G. Compliance Remedies — Theological Integrity: Every cooperating church and cooperating association is expected to maintain their commitment to and integrity with the Baptist Faith and Message revised in the year 2000, or any other declaration of faith which parallels the tenets of our historic Baptist faith. Any church or association which undertakes questionable theology, faith, practice or polity, shall be subject to having fellowship withdrawn by the Florida Baptist State Convention. The Florida Baptist State Convention assigns to the State Board of Missions the authority to make a final determination for withdrawal of fellowship from a church or association. The procedures for reviewing compliance to theological integrity and the making a determination of whether or not to withdraw fellowship from a church or association shall be developed, defined and implemented by the State Board of Missions, as stated in its policy on "Baptist Cooperation."

### **Bylaw 3: Responsibilities of Officers**

A. President: The president of this State Convention shall perform the following duties:

(1) Preside over the annual meeting or any special session of the Florida State Baptist Convention held during the year following his election. In his role as presiding officer, the president:

(a) Shall appoint one or more parliamentarians (one to be designated as chief parliamentarian) who shall provide counsel and interpretation of parliamentary procedure to the presiding officers;

(b) Shall appoint a Tellers Committee of between 8 and 12 persons whose task shall be to collect, count and report to the presiding officer results from any ballots taken by convention messengers;

(c) May designate the first and second vice-presidents to preside over specific convention sessions.

(2) Serve as an ex officio member (non-voting) of each of the convention's boards, agencies, and institutions.

(3) Serve as an ex officio member (non-voting) of the State Board of Missions. Be an ex officio member (voting) of the Administrative/Personnel Committee of the State Board of Missions.

(4) On or before the first day of May of each year, the President and the First and Second Vice-Presidents, after giving due regard to the desire of this State Convention for responsible lay participation in its activities and governance, shall appoint a Committee on Nominations. This Committee shall consist of one member from each cooperating Baptist association within the state of Florida.

(a) The list of committee members is to be submitted for publication in the Florida Baptist Witness before the end of May.

(b) The president shall serve as an ex officio member (voting) of the Committee on Nominations.

(5) Serve as a voting member of the Committee on Order of Business during the year of service as president.

(6) Serve as the ceremonial representative of the Florida Baptist State Convention in attending fraternal or secular events.

(7) Carry out any other duties or responsibilities specifically designated by vote of the messengers attending the annual session of the Florida Baptist State Convention.

B. First Vice-President: The first vice-president of this State Convention shall perform the following duties:

(1) Assume the position of president should the office of president become vacant for any reason.

(2) Participate with the president and second vice-president in appointing a Committee on Nominations. The first vice-president shall serve as an ex officio member (voting) of the Committee on Nominations.

(3) Serve as an ex officio non-voting member of the Committee on Order of Business during the year of service as first vice-president.

(4) If requested by the president, preside over one or more sessions of the Florida Baptist State Convention.

(5) Assist the convention president by carrying out any other assigned duties.

C. Second Vice-President: The second vice president of this State Convention shall perform the following duties:

(1) Assume the position of president should the office of president become vacant and the first vice-president is unable to serve as president.

(2) Participate with the president and first vice-president in appointing a Committee on Nominations. The second vice-president shall serve as an ex officio member (voting) of the Committee on Nominations.

(3) Serve as an ex officio non-voting member of the Committee on Order of Business during the year of service as second vice-president.

(4) If requested by the president, preside over one or more sessions of the Florida Baptist State Convention.

(5) Assist the convention president by carrying out any other assigned duties.

D. Recording Secretary: The recording secretary of this State Convention:

(1) Shall be present at the place of the annual meeting at least one day in advance of the meeting, for the purpose of enrolling the members of this State Convention who shall present themselves with the proper evidence of their right to be enrolled, and this enrollment shall be recognized as constituting this State Convention. The Recording Secretary is authorized to add the names of accredited messengers who arrive later than the opening day.

(2) Shall assist the staff of the Executive Director-Treasurer in recording the proceedings of the State Convention. An original and a copy of these proceedings shall be furnished on a timely basis to the Office of the Executive Director-Treasurer for publication in the Annual.

(3) May be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred for services rendered and may choose an assistant.

#### **Bylaw 4: Committees of the Convention**

The State Convention shall have two categories of committees – appointed and elected – which shall carry out responsibilities specified within these bylaws.

A. Those committees which shall be appointed as prescribed by these bylaws shall be:

(1) Committee on Nominations

(2) Committee on Credentials

B. Those committees which shall be elected by messengers to the annual meeting of the State Convention shall be:

(1) Committee on Order of Business

C. Any and all other standing committees reporting to this State Convention and any and all committees authorized during the sessions of this State Convention, shall be appointed by the Committee on Nominations. An exception to such appointments shall apply when the State Convention specifies committee membership and/or delegates the

committee appointment to one or more of the State Convention's officers or to some committee, board or agency of the State Convention.

D. The State Convention establishes the following guidelines which shall be used in the consideration of persons to be nominated and/or elected to serve on Convention committees, boards, corporations or agencies.

(1) No salaried employee or officer of any board, commission, corporation or agency of the Florida Baptist State Convention, and no person receiving a portion of his or her salary from Cooperative Program funds, shall be eligible for election as a member of any of the boards, corporations or agencies of the Florida Baptist State Convention.

(2) Salaried employees or officers of any board, corporation or agency of the Florida Baptist State Convention may serve as an ex officio, non-voting member of any such board, corporation or agency.

(3) No person shall serve concurrently on more than one board or agency of the State Convention, except the President of the State Convention.

(4) Any individual may serve concurrently on the board or agency and also serve on an appointed committee of the State Convention.

(5) Trustees and directors of boards, except as provided for by their respective charter, shall be composed as follows:

(a) The members shall be divided into three groups as nearly equal as possible, and one group shall be elected each year to serve three years.

(b) Members who have served two full terms shall not be eligible for re-election until at least one year has elapsed. Exception may be made in the case of a member whose technical service to a given board, or agency in such matters as medical, legal or financial affairs seems to make it advisable that he be continued as a member. The preceding provisions shall not apply to nominees to the State Board of Missions who have served two consecutive terms. Such a person will not be eligible for nomination until a period of three years has elapsed.

(6) Persons nominated to serve on State Convention committees or as trustees or directors of Convention agencies or as a member of the State Board of Missions, should be recognized as having high levels of honesty, sincerity, respect for the integrity of others, committed to the purposes of this State Convention, projection of Christian values and other characteristics of Christian behavior.

(a) Each nominee shall: [1] give evidence of having received Jesus Christ as personal savior and Lord; [2] have been a member for at least one year of their present church, which cooperates with the Florida Baptist State Convention by giving to world missions through the Cooperative Program; [3] be in good standing in their local congregation; [4] give evidence of good stewardship including the tithe through their church; [5] agree to abstain from drinking alcoholic beverages and using any other recreational drugs; and [6] support all the principles set forth in the Baptist Faith and Message, revised in the year 2000, or any other declaration of faith which parallels the tents of our historic Baptist faith, as the theological framework.

(b) When a person ceases to be a resident member of a cooperating Florida Baptist church, that person shall no longer be eligible to serve as a committee member, trustee, director or member of the State Board of Missions.

(c) Persons elected to serve as either a committee member, trustee, director or member of the State Board of Missions are expected to attend required meetings and perform other responsibilities associated with their assigned task.

#### **Bylaw 5: Composition of Boards**

Trustees or boards of directors of institutions, except as provided for by their charter, shall be composed as follows:

(1) The members shall be divided into three groups as nearly equal as possible, and one group shall be elected each year to serve three years.

(2) For the purposes of these Bylaws, a person's service to fill a temporary vacancy will be considered as a full term only if the individual has served more than one-half of the time specified for the term (i.e. six months of a one-year term, 12 months of a two-year term; or 18 months of a three-year term). This Bylaw provision shall supersede any stated or unstated Bylaw provision for unexpired terms that may appear in the Bylaws of the agencies and institutions of the State Convention.

(3) To ensure diverse representation, no more than one person (including new nominees and those continuing service) from any given cooperating local church shall be permitted to serve on the same board of any given State Convention agency or institution. Additionally, no more than four persons (including new nominees and those continuing service) from any given cooperating local church shall be nominated by the Committee on Nominations to serve on the combined boards of all State Convention agencies and institutions. The following shall serve as exceptions to the aforementioned provision:

(a) A State Convention officer or ex-officio member of a Board may hold membership in the same church as an elected Board member and such membership shall not be counted in the preceding restriction;

(b) An individual(s), during the course of their tenure on a State Convention board and who by their choice changes membership to a local church that results in this Bylaw provision being compromised, shall be permitted to continue and complete their potential full term(s) of service.

(4) Members who have served two full terms shall not be eligible for re-election until at least one year has elapsed. The preceding provisions shall not apply to nominees to the State Board of Missions who have served two consecutive terms. Such a person will not be eligible for nomination until a period of three years has elapsed.

(5) Exception may be made in the case of a member whose technical service to a given board, commission, or agency in such matters as medical, legal, or financial affairs seems to make it advisable that he be continued as a member.

#### **Bylaw 6: Concurrent Service**

No person shall serve concurrently on more than one board or agency of the State Convention, except the President of the State Convention. An exception to this shall be those trustees duly elected by the State Convention to serve on the Board of Trustees of the Florida Baptist Financial Services and who are required to additionally serve as a trustee of one or more of the Florida Baptist Financial Services' subsidiary corporation's board of directors.

#### **Bylaw 7: Committee on Nominations**

This committee shall select persons to serve on selected State Convention committees and shall nominate for State Convention approval, those persons to serve as members of the State Convention's boards and agencies.

A. The committee shall consist of one member from each of the existing cooperating Baptist associations within the state of Florida, all of whom shall be appointed as a result of a joint consultation by the State Convention president, first vice president and second vice president. Service on the committee is normally limited to the year of their appointment, except as provided within this bylaw. In addition the State Convention's president, the first vice-president and second vice-president shall serve on the Committee as ex-officio members with voting privilege.

(1) The officers may select, but shall limit up to one-half of its appointed membership, any persons who served on the Committee on Nominations during the prior calendar year. A person who has been annually appointed for each of three consecutive years shall not be eligible for re-appointment until at least three years have elapsed.

(2) The officers will ensure that there is an adequate representation of laity and ordained persons on the committee.

(a) Ordained persons and members of the professional staff of a cooperating local church and/or an association shall constitute the ordained group. Within this group are included directors of associational missions, whose representation on the Committee shall be limited to two members per year.

(b) No more than three-fifths of the members of the Committee shall be drawn from either the laity or ordained groups.

(c) The officers shall give due consideration to appointing persons who reflect the ethnic and cultural diversity within Florida Baptist churches.

(d) Persons appointed to serve on the Committee shall meet the requirements as defined in Bylaw 4 (6)(a)(b) and (c).

(3) The officers shall make every reasonable effort to identify and select persons from each cooperating association who have demonstrated involvement in the life and work of their respective association. Such individuals shall have been a member of a cooperating church in their respective association for at least two years. However, in no instance shall the State Convention officers be obligated by any recommendation made by the association and its leadership.

B. On or before the first day of October of each year, or as soon thereafter as may be practicable, the Committee on Nominations, after giving due regard to the desire of this State Convention for responsible lay participation in its activities and governance, shall appoint the following committees (whose tasks are described in these bylaws) and their respective chairman and vice-chairman. If practicable, the names of these appointees shall be published in the *Florida Baptist Witness*:

(1) Committee on Credentials

C. On or before the first day of October of each year, or as soon thereafter as may be practicable, the Committee on Nominations, after giving due consideration to the desire of this State Convention for responsible lay participation in its activities and governance, shall nominate members for the following committees, boards, commissions, corporations and agencies. If practicable, the names of these nominees shall be published in the *Florida Baptist Witness*:

(1) State Board of Missions (hereinafter described)

(2) Board of Trustees of Florida Baptist Children's Homes

(3) F.B.C.H. Pool of Nominees of potential directors of the Florida Baptist Children's Homes'

Supporting Organizations (herein described);

(4) Board of Trustees of The Baptist College of Florida;

(5) Board of Directors of Florida Baptist Financial Services, Inc., who also shall serve as the board of trustees for the Florida Baptist Foundation; Florida Baptist Auxiliary Enterprises, Inc., and Church Growth Investment Fund, Inc.

(6) Board of Directors of Florida Baptist Witness

(7) Committee on Order of Business

D. The Committee shall nominate persons to serve on all other boards, corporations and agencies which now are or may hereafter be created by, or which now are or may hereafter be otherwise related to, this State Convention.

E. The Committee shall annually select up to twenty (20) persons to be assigned to what shall be designated as the F.B.C.H. Pool of Nominees. These persons shall be for the exclusive use by the Board of Trustees of the Florida Baptist Children's Homes (FBCH), who is legally obligated to appoint persons to serve as directors of the Homes' separate Supporting Organizations. These organizations include: FBCH Land Holdings, Inc.; FBCH Landing Holdings II, Inc.; and the Orphan's Heart Foundation, Inc.

(1) The persons nominated to the F.B.C.H. Pool of Nominees shall meet all criteria as defined in Bylaw 4(6)(a) of the Bylaws, Florida Baptist State Convention and their selection and service shall be governed by applicable provisions defined in Bylaw 4 and Bylaw 5, Bylaws of the Florida Baptist State Convention.

(2) The persons designated for appointment to the F.B.C.H. Pool of Nominees shall meet all criteria as defined herein this Bylaw 7 of the Florida Baptist State Convention.

(3) Appointment to the Pool of Nominees shall only be good of one year. At the end of one year, the Committee on Nominations may determine to re-appoint persons or select new persons to be added to the Pool.

(4) The Board of Trustees of the Florida Baptist Children's Homes shall select persons from the F.B.C.H. Pool of Nominees, who are annually approved by the Florida Baptist State Convention, to fill vacancies that occur on the several boards of its Supporting Organizations. Those appointed directors shall serve terms of service as provided in the respective governing documents of the Supporting Organizations.

F. In the discharge of its duties, the Committee on Nominations is requested to follow this procedure:

(1) In May of each year the Executive Director-Treasurer will provide to the Florida Baptist Witness a list of those persons who have been named to serve on the Committee on Nominations. Individual Baptists will be invited to propose the names of worthy individuals, lay and ordained, to be considered for membership on the various committees, boards, corporations and agencies of this State Convention. Employees of the State Board of Mission, corporations and agencies of this State Convention are hereby discouraged, but are not altogether prohibited, from making unsolicited submissions of proposed nominees to these State Convention entities.

(2) The Executive Director-Treasurer of the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc., shall serve as staff resource for the Committee. He is responsible for furnishing to each member of the Committee of Nominations, as soon after May 1 of each year as possible, complete information relating to the appointments and nominations to be made by the Committee and written suggestions regarding the proper discharge of the duties of the Committee members.

(3) Each member of the Committee on Nominations is encouraged, upon being appointed, to search out and identify competent persons, both lay and ordained, from their association, to be considered by the Committee on Nominations in the discharge of its duties. In April of each year, the chairman of the Committee on Nominations will notify in writing, both the moderator and the director of missions in each association, of State Board of Missions vacancies which exist in their respective association. And the Nominating Committee chairman will request the committee designated by the association to send written suggested nominees in keeping with Florida Baptist State Convention Bylaw 12,C(3).

(4) The State Convention officers and the chairman of the Committee on Nominations, in consultation with the Executive Director-Treasurer, will select a time and place for the Committee on Nominations to meet during the month of August. The Executive Director-Treasurer will assist in the meeting arrangements and send the meeting notices to Committee members. The chairman of the Committee shall schedule a time period during the Committee on Nominations meeting for the executive officer of each agency and institution of the Florida Baptist State Convention, to discuss with the committee the qualifications required of persons to be nominated to serve on their respective board.

(5) Each Committee member and any interested Florida Baptist should submit nominations to the Executive Director-Treasurer's Office on or before July 1.

(a) All nominees shall be sent a "Nominee Qualifying Questionnaire" for completion and return to the chairman of the Committee on Nominations. This questionnaire shall contain the following information categories:

[1] Personal (name, address, telephone number, occupation, place of employment, length of Florida residency, and classification as either laity or ordained);

[2] Church Statistics for the prior church year as reported on the Annual Church Profile (ACP) [specifically the name of the church of which the nominee is a member, amount the church contributed to the Cooperative Program; percentage of church budget sent through the Cooperative Program; number of resident members; number of baptisms and ratio of baptisms to resident members]; and

[3] Bylaw Qualifying Requirements [as specified in Bylaw 4(6)(a)] written in question format with provision for either a yes/no response or an open-ended response.

[4] The nominee must sign and return the questionnaire to the chairman of the Committee on Nominations in a timely manner.

(b) The chairman will provide the collective nominations, and completed "Nominee Qualifying Questionnaires" received from individual Baptists, associations, and Committee on Nomination members to the Executive Director-Treasurer by August 1.

(c) The Executive Director-Treasurer's Office will duplicate all of the submitted "Nominee Qualifying Questionnaires" and send copies to each member of the Committee on Nominations two weeks prior to their scheduled committee meeting.

(6) Following the Committee on Nominations meeting, the chairman of the Committee will notify in writing and request a response from those persons nominated to serve on the committees, boards, corporations and agencies of the State Convention. The chairman shall submit, on a timely basis, the complete list of nominees, to the Florida Baptist Witness for publication on or before October 15.

(7) In carrying out its assigned task, the Committee shall give due consideration to each potential nominee and the church to which the nominee is a member in good standing.

(a) The committee shall review the "Nominee Qualifying Questionnaire" submitted by each nominee. The committee may not recommend to the State Convention a nominee who has not submitted a completed and signed questionnaire.

(b) The Committee, in considering a nominee, may give consideration to the nominee's church's baptism record and giving to world missions through the Cooperative Program.

(c) The Committee shall give due consideration to nominating persons who reflect the ethnic and cultural diversity of Florida Baptist churches.

(8) The Committee on Nominations may, for just cause, replace any person currently serving on a standing State Convention committee or who is serving as a director, trustee or board member of a State Convention agency. Additionally, the Committee on Nominations may, for just cause, replace any person who is eligible for re-election to a standing State Convention committee or who is eligible for re-election as a director, trustee or board member of a State Convention agency. Just cause would specifically include: failure to attend regularly scheduled State Convention committee or agency board meetings (defined as being absent from at least two or more meetings without good and sufficient reason); resignation from a State Convention committee or agency board service; or a person removed from a State Convention committee or agency board service as provided for in Bylaw 12, G(10). The Executive Director-Treasurer will be responsible to provide to the Committee on Nominations each year information on any individual who would be subject to replacement for just cause.

(9) The Committee on Nominations shall nominate persons to fill vacancies which may exist on any board, agency, institution or State Convention committee.

(a) The Committee shall understand that the number of persons required for the F.B.C.H. Pool of Nominees may fluctuate from year to year. The number of nominees required will be determined by the Executive Director-Treasurer, Florida Baptist Convention, in consultation with the President, Florida Baptist Children's Homes, Inc. The nominee count shall be based upon a formula consisting of the anticipated total director vacancies to be filled on the FBCH's Supporting Organizations during the following year, plus three additional persons.

(b) Persons who have been named to fill a temporary vacancy by the respective board, agency, institution or State Convention committee bylaw's procedure, shall be eligible for nomination and election to complete a partial term and/or a new full term. A person's service to fill a temporary vacancy will be considered as a full term only if the individual has served more than one-half of the time specified for the term (i.e. six months of a one-year term, 12 months of a two-year term; or 18 months of a three-year term.)

#### **Bylaw 8: Committee on Credentials**

This Committee shall be responsible for all matters related to the registration and seating of messengers from cooperating Baptist churches as defined in Bylaw 2, Bylaws of the Florida Baptist State Convention.

(1) The Committee shall consist of seven members, including a chairman and vice-chairman, all of whom shall be appointed by the Committee on Nominations.

(2) This committee shall be responsible to review credentials of all messengers, and if necessary, issue credentials to persons who provide adequate evidence that they have been duly elected as a messenger from a cooperating Baptist church or church-type mission.

(a) An acceptable credential shall be the State Convention designated official "messenger card" on which has been completely and properly recorded all requested information concerning the messenger's church, and which is duly signed by the respective church's clerk or moderator.

(b) In the absence of an official messenger card, the Committee may accept an original typewritten communication, preferably appearing on the church's official stationery. The communication must include the following: the name of the duly elected messenger from the respective cooperating church or church-type mission being listed; the total church membership; the church's total gifts to the Cooperative Program during the prior year; the date of the church's authorization of messengers; and the signature of the respective church's clerk or moderator. A single communication may be used to identify all the duly elected messengers.

(c) The Committee shall use the most recently published issue of the Florida Baptist Annual or a listing provided by the State Convention's agency, the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc., to verify that the messenger's sending church is designated as a cooperating Florida Baptist church and to secure statistical data.

(3) Any question arising on the floor of the State Convention meeting concerning the seating of messengers shall be referred to the Committee on Credentials for consideration. The committee shall report back to the State Convention on a timely basis.

(a) The Committee shall make a reasonable attempt to hear from both the person(s) making the challenge of messenger seating, as well as the messenger(s) being challenged. The Committee is not required to hear presentations from any other persons.

(b) The Committee shall use as their source authority Bylaw 2, of the Bylaws of the Florida Baptist State Convention, as a means of determining if the messenger represents a cooperating Florida Baptist church.

(c) Any other issues which were cited in the challenge of a specific seating of messenger(s) shall be considered by the Committee members, based upon their collective understanding of Southern Baptist theology, faith, practice and polity.

(d) In attempting to render a decision and recommendation to the State Convention on the messenger seating challenge, the Committee shall have as their options: (1) deny the challenge; (2) sustain the challenge and withdraw the credentials of the challenged messenger(s); (3) present no recommendation and request the State Convention to make a determination; (4) recommend that the challenge issue be referred to the State Board of Missions' Denominational Polity and Practice Committee.

(4) The Committee shall work with the Florida Baptist Convention's staff representative and the local registration committee to facilitate the registration of messengers and visitors.

(5) The Florida Baptist Convention's staff representative shall work with the chairman of the local registration committee in maintaining an up-to-date count of messengers and visitors. This count shall be reported to the Recording Secretary of the Florida Baptist State Convention upon [his] request. A final total count of messengers and visitors will be reported to the Recording Secretary upon completion of the registration.

(6) The chairman of the Committee on Credentials shall assign a member of the committee to the registration area for each State Convention session and shall notify the Florida Baptist Convention's staff representative of the assignment.

(7) The procedures to be followed in the enlistment, assigned tasks, training, and schedule of the local registration committee are delineated by the State Board of Missions' policy on "Florida Baptist State Convention: Annual Meeting."

#### **Bylaw 9. Committee on Order of Business**

This committee shall prepare a suggested order of business for each annual and called special meeting of this State Convention and shall otherwise function as a program committee for each meeting of the State Convention.

(1) The Committee shall consist of twelve (12) members, of which nine (9) shall be regular members, including a chairman and vice-chairman, who shall be elected by the State Convention as hereinafter provided, and three (3) members who shall fill designated permanent positions for a one-year period by virtue of their election as a State Convention officer, as hereinafter provided.

(a) The regular nine (9) members, including the chairman and vice-chairman, shall be elected by this State Convention for a term of three years, except for the lesser terms hereinafter provided. Each of these terms has a staggered starting and ending year to provide for the replacement and addition of at least three new members each year.

(b) The three permanent member positions shall be filled by the then currently elected and serving State Convention officers, specifically the president, first vice-president, and second vice-president. The term of service on the Committee will correspond to the one-year period of service as a Convention officer. The president shall be a voting member of the Committee and the first and second vice-presidents shall be ex officio non-voting members.

(c) The Committee chairman and vice-chairman shall be annually designated by the Committee on Nominations and recommended for approval by the State Convention.

(2) No person who has served a full three-year term or a two-year term, or as much as two years of an unexpired term, shall be eligible for re-election until at least one year has elapsed following his previous service.

(3) The Committee on Order of Business shall act as the Committee on Standing Rules in presenting any standing rules (parliamentary and non-parliamentary procedural rules), as prescribed in Bylaw 1(B) of these Bylaws, for consideration by the State Convention during the first session of the State Convention meeting.

(4) The committee shall present its report for its possible adoption at the first session on the first day of the meeting of the State Convention.

(5) The committee, acting as the program committee, shall be responsible for the arrangements of speakers, reports and program special events.

(6) The committee shall annually select a person to serve as the "convention preacher" to bring the annual convention sermon.

(a) In selecting the convention preacher the committee shall consider only persons who are serving in a cooperating Florida Baptist church and who have served in Florida continuously for the prior seven years. The individual selected shall have a pastoral ministry that reflects effective leadership in outreach, Cooperative Program support and cooperation. The committee also shall give due consideration to persons who reflect the diversity of Florida Baptist churches.

(b) The committee may select an alternate convention preacher who would be ready to substitute for the designated convention preacher, but who otherwise will be assigned to participate in the "Convention at Worship" period in which the annual convention sermon is scheduled.

(7) The committee shall provide adequate time for serious discussion of the business, needs, problems and opportunities of the State Convention.

(8) All matters of business shall be introduced to the State Convention by the end of the morning session of the second day of the annual meeting of the State Convention.

(a) The Committee shall schedule adequate times for miscellaneous business to permit the introduction of new business.

(b) This restriction shall not apply to those reports and/or recommendations previously published in either the Book of Reports or the Florida Baptist Witness, and which the Committee on Order of Business has scheduled for consideration on the third or subsequent day(s) of the State Convention.

(9) All matters of business to be considered during a special session of the State Convention shall be restricted to the specific item(s) for which the special session is convened.

#### **Bylaw 10: Resolutions**

This State Convention shall no longer encourage the presentation of resolutions inasmuch as such recommendations can be appropriately presented as motions by messengers, any standing committee of the State Convention and/or the State Board of Missions. However, any and all motions of resolution offered shall be governed as follows:

(1) A motion of resolution offered by an individual messenger(s) shall be in writing, signed by the maker who shall be a registered messenger to the State Convention, and shall be delivered directly to the desk of the Recording Secretary, after the resolution has been introduced. The introduction of a resolution shall be limited to only the title and/or topic of the proposed motion of resolution being presented.

(2) The messenger's introduction of a motion of resolution shall be presented during the designated time of miscellaneous business. The presentation of a motion of resolution being recommended by the State Board of Missions or a State Convention standing committee shall be presented by the Board or proposing committee directly to the State Convention, at a time designated by the Committee on Order of Business.

(3) All motions of resolution by messengers shall be referred to the Committee on Order of Business that shall determine appropriate disposition of these motions, resolutions and memorials. No motion of resolution may be introduced to this State Convention after the last period of miscellaneous business, unless by unanimous consent of the messengers present and voting.

(4) The consideration of a motion of resolution shall be governed by the Standing Rules that are defined in Bylaw 1,B of these Bylaws.

#### **Bylaw 11: Time, Place and Preacher**

A. The annual meeting time of the State Convention shall be scheduled to occur on the second Monday and Tuesday of the month of November, when practicable, with the session meeting times to be determined by the Committee on Order of Business.

B. The State Convention shall select the future city location for the annual meeting of the Florida Baptist State Convention to be held seven years hence, based upon a recommendation by the State Board of Missions.

(1) Such a recommendation shall seek to propose meeting site locations that ensure, when feasible, that four out of every six years the site location shall be in the central area of the state.

(2) Such a recommendation shall propose meeting facilities locations that meet the criteria defined by policies of the State Board of Missions.

C. The Convention directs the Committee on Order of Business to select the "convention preacher" and alternate to bring the annual convention sermon.

#### **Bylaw 12: State Board of Missions**

The State Convention shall elect a governing board to be known as "The State Board of Missions of the Florida Baptist State Convention," which body is incorporated by the State of Florida under the name of "Florida Baptist Convention, Inc."

##### **A. Membership:**

(1) The State Board of Missions shall be composed of members elected from within the bounds of each cooperating Baptist association. The geographical distribution of Board members is to be made on the following basis of church membership as recorded in the associational statistical reports which appear in the prior year's published issue of the Florida Baptist Annual.

(a) One Board member for 1-15,000 church members which shall increase by one Board member for each additional 15,000 church members or portion thereof;

(b) Total elected membership of the Board shall be at least 90 members and no more than 99 members. If the total membership is projected to fall below 90 persons or exceed 99 persons in the succeeding year,

the basis of church membership shall be adjusted accordingly either by decreasing or increasing by 1,000 church members as needed.

(c) In no instance shall any association be permitted to have more than seven (7) elected Board member representatives.

(2) Persons eligible for membership on the State Board of Missions are hereby divided into two groups – ordained to the gospel ministry and lay person:

(a) One group shall be comprised of ordained persons whether they serve on the staff of a cooperating local church and/or an association. For the purposes of this bylaw, a person who has been ordained to the gospel ministry shall be classified as ordained, whether or not they are serving in a ministry capacity.

(b) The second group shall be comprised of lay persons who are not ordained to the gospel ministry and who are members in good standing with a cooperating local church. No more than three-fifths of the members of said Board shall be drawn from either grouping.

(3) Not more than one person from any given cooperating local church shall serve on the State Board of Missions. An exception would permit an ex officio Board member and a regular Board member to hold membership in the same church and serve on the State Board of Missions concurrently.

(4) No person shall be nominated to serve on the State Board of Missions until after the person has been a member for at least one year of their present church. The Board member's church must be in friendly cooperation with the association which will be represented by the nominee. And the Board member's church must be affiliated with the Florida Baptist State Convention and give to world missions through the Cooperative Program.

(5) There will be three (3) ex officio members assigned to the Board. These shall include:

(a) The President of the Florida Baptist State Convention who also will be a voting member of the Administrative/Personnel Committee.

(b) The Recording Secretary of the Florida Baptist State Convention.

(c) The Executive Director-Treasurer of the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc.

(d) The Recording Secretary and the Executive Director-Treasurer shall be without vote.

(6) The Board shall elect its own president and other officers.

(a) The President and Vice-President of the Board shall be the President and the Vice-President, respectively, of the Corporation.

(b) The Executive-Director Treasurer shall be the General Secretary of the Corporation.

(c) The Assistant Executive Director shall be the Assistant General Secretary of the Corporation.

#### B. Term of Office:

(1) Each member, with the exception of the ex officio members, shall be elected for a three-year term, except when elected to fill an unexpired term and except as hereinafter provided.

(2) The terms of the President of the State Convention, the Recording Secretary of the State Convention, the Executive Director-Treasurer and the Assistant Executive Director shall be for such periods as they hold their respective offices or positions.

(3) Terms will be for three years, with a Board member being eligible for a second term.

(4) An unexpired term will be considered as a full term if the individual serves more than one-half of the time specified for the term.

(5) Following service on the Board, a person will not be eligible for nomination until a period of three years has elapsed.

(6) A variety of restrictions shall govern continued membership on the Board including the following exceptions:

(a) Membership on the Board shall cease when the Board member either: [1] moves from the state; or [2] moves their church membership to a congregation which cooperates with another association; or [3] ceases to be a member in good standing with a church that is in cooperating fellowship with the local Baptist association and/or the State Convention; or [4] becomes deceased. See item (7) that follows for clarification on residency.

(b) Additionally, a person's membership on the Board shall cease if the church of which they are a member either: [1] no longer cooperates with the local Baptist association; or [2] no longer cooperates with the State Convention, as defined by Bylaw 2 of these Bylaws, or [3] the church affiliates with another Baptist association.

(7) A Board member shall retain membership on the Board should they change church membership to another cooperating Florida Baptist congregation cooperating with the same association from which the Board member was elected to represent. Additionally, a Board member may continue their Board service, although their residence may change, as long as they either continue being a member in good standing or serving on the paid staff of the church cooperating with the same association from which the Board member was elected to represent.

(8) Membership on the Board will automatically be terminated when a member is absent for three (3) consecutive meetings of the Board, unless the Board votes to excuse the absence for good and sufficient reasons.

(9) Vacancies will be filled according to provisions outlined in the State Board of Missions Bylaws.

#### C. Method of Election:

(1) Members of the Board, other than ex officio members, shall be elected by the State Convention in annual session.

(2) The Committee on Nominations of the State Convention shall bring nominations for all vacancies.

(3) Due to the recognized Baptist principle of the autonomy of various Baptist bodies, and while recognizing the value of an association's experience and advice, the Committee on Nominations shall not be bound to accept the suggested nominees from an association.

(a) If an association chooses to suggest nominees to the Committee on Nominations, the association should submit at least twice the number of persons required to fill the Board vacancies in that association.

(b) These nominees should be grouped as specified in Bylaw 12,A(2). Specifically, one group shall be comprised of ordained persons and members of the professional staff of a cooperating local church and/or an association; the second group shall be comprised of lay persons other than members of the professional staff of a cooperating local church and/or an association.

(4) Notification of the final date for suggestions will be made by the Committee on Nominations in the *Florida Baptist Witness*.

(5) The Committee on Nominations shall indicate in its report to the State Convention, the total number of years each nominee has previously served on the Board.

#### D. Meetings:

(1) The State Board of Missions shall meet four (4) times annually, one of which meetings shall be held immediately preceding the annual meeting of the State Convention.

(2) Special meetings of the Board may be called by the President of the Board or by the Executive Director-Treasurer, Florida Baptist Convention, as necessary.

(3) The Florida Baptist Convention will pay expenses for all meetings of the Board, except the pre-convention meeting, unless the Board member's church does not normally provide his expenses to the annual meeting of the Florida Baptist State Convention.

#### E. Organization:

The State Board of Missions shall organize itself to carry out the work of the State Convention as committed to it.

#### F. Committees:

(1) The State Board of Missions shall elect annually an Administrative/Personnel Committee, which also shall act as an executive committee of the Board having full authority to act on behalf of the Board between scheduled Board meetings. The committee shall be composed of the President and Vice-President of the Board, the President of the Florida Baptist State Convention to be a voting member, the Recording Secretary of the Board to be an ex officio non-voting member, the chairmen of the standing committees, and eleven (11) other persons on the Board, to be elected by the Board.

(2) The standing committees shall be: Budget-Allocations, Convention Properties, Program, Loans, Denominational Polity and Practice, and Nomination of Board Committees.

(3) The president of the Board shall serve as chairman of the Administrative/Personnel Committee.

#### G. Special Works:

The State Board of Missions shall have the following special works:

(1) Act for the State Convention in the interim between annual meetings. The State Board of Missions acts for the Florida Baptist State Convention between its annual meetings; thus, the State Board of Missions should counsel the agencies and instrumentalities of the Florida Baptist State Convention between said annual meetings, and there should be a free exchange between all of the agencies and instrumentalities of the Florida Baptist State Convention and the State Board of Missions.

(2) Have full charge of state mission work, including church building funds and all other loan funds.

(3) Make an annual estimate of the needs of the work supported by this State Convention and fix state objectives for all causes.

(4) Provide for the current financial support in the operation and maintenance of its work.

(a) In carrying out its fiduciary responsibilities, the Board shall ensure, by whatever policy and/or procedures are practicable, that the provisions of the State Convention's Business and Financial Plan (as defined in Bylaw 16 of the Bylaws, Florida Baptist State Convention) are followed.

(b) The Board, acting on behalf of the Florida Baptist State Convention, shall have the authority to approve financial loans, as defined by these Bylaws, and which are required by an agency, institution or the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc.

(5) Employ an Executive Director-Treasurer. The Executive Director-Treasurer shall have the following primary responsibilities:

(a) Provide general supervision of all departments of work.

(b) Take charge of the funds of the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc., and hold same, subject to the order of the State Convention or the State Board of Missions, the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc., the incorporated body, during the recess of the State Convention.

(c) Make an annual report of all receipts and expenditures, which shall be audited and published in the Convention Annual.

(d) Ensure the publication of a Convention Annual each year.

(e) Serve as a non-voting member of all State Convention appointed and elected committees and State Board of Missions committees, or, he shall appoint persons to serve with him or in his behalf, when needful or when it seems wise to him to do so.

(f) Serve as an ex officio, voting member of any newly-created committee or study group authorized by the State Convention.

(g) Serve as an ex officio, non-voting member of all boards of trustees or directors of Convention agencies and institutions. The Executive Director-Treasurer or his designee shall be permitted to attend all regular and special meetings, including executive sessions, of the respective boards and their committees.

(h) Serve as a permanent, voting member of the Florida Baptist Convention Church Site Committee and the Board of Trustees of the Pembroke Foundation.

(i) Provide reasonable secretarial and staff assistance to the State Convention and its committees as specified in the State Convention's Bylaws.

(j) In compliance with requirements by the Convention Corporation's auditor-of-record, the executive director-treasurer shall on a periodic basis submit his monthly travel expense reports to the State Board of Missions' President for review and sign-off.

(6) Develop, review, revise and approve appropriate policies to regulate assistance programs, ministries, services and procedures authorized by either the Florida Baptist State Convention or the Board.

(7) Authorize the establishment of a Florida Baptist Convention Church Site Committee, which shall operate under Board-approved policy referred to as the Church Site Plan, and procedures defined in the Board's Bylaws.

(8) The State Board of Missions may call special meetings of the State Convention as provided for in Article 12 of the Florida Baptist State Convention Constitution, and procedures defined in the Board's Bylaws.

(9) Employ, upon recommendation of the Executive Director-Treasurer, all professional staff members and such agents and employees as are found necessary to carry out its work.

(10) The Administrative/Personnel Committee of the State Board of Missions is empowered to fully investigate any charges of misconduct which are brought against any elected or appointed official or committee member of the Florida Baptist State Convention or any person serving as a trustee or director of any agency or institution of the Florida Baptist State Convention.

(a) The basis for an investigation shall be any misconduct, unscriptural practices or behavior which may bring dishonor to the cause of Christ and to the position in which he or she serves.

(b) There may be any one of several actions which could cause the Administrative/Personnel Committee to undertake an investigation of removal. These would include, but not be limited to:

[1] The individual's resignation or removal from a leadership position in his or her local church or association which was the result of the individual's misconduct, unscriptural practices or behavior which may bring dishonor to the cause of Christ.

[2] Requests by a local church or association that the Administrative/Personnel Committee remove an individual from a statewide elected or appointed leadership position. Such requests, which must be in writing and signed, shall be sent to the President of the State Board of Missions and the Executive Director-Treasurer.

(c) The Administrative/Personnel Committee shall establish its own procedure for investigating the charges. However, the Committee shall make every reasonable attempt to hear from both the party requesting the removal of an individual, as well as the individual being challenged. Once the Committee has made its determination, the Committee shall report its decision on a timely basis, to the parties involved.

(d) If the charges are substantiated and the elected or appointed official chooses not to resign his or her elected or appointed position, the Administrative/Personnel Committee shall then recommend to the State Board of Missions the removal of that elected official, committee member, trustee, or director of the Florida Baptist State Convention.

(e) A vote of removal requires a two-thirds vote of the members of the State Board of Missions present at the meeting during which the matter is presented. Should the action for removal be affirmed, the Board shall report its action and the existence of a position vacancy to the Committee on Nominations, if appropriate, and to the next annual meeting of the Florida Baptist State Convention.

(11) To provide oversight and financial resources for the Florida Baptist Historical Society, a non-corporate fraternal organization of the Florida Baptist State Convention. The Society, through its board of directors, shall promote and encourage the collection and preservation of materials and information related to the history of Southern Baptists in Florida.

(a) The State Board of Missions shall: approve proposed policy and procedures developed by the Society's board of directors; appoint its board of directors; receive annual reports from its board of directors; and provide for an annual operating budget.

(b) As a result of authorization by the State Convention, the Florida Baptist Historical Society is expected to utilize a reasonable portion of the Society's annual operating budget for assisting the Florida Baptist Historical Collection in the acquisition of historical resources.

(12) Shall establish guidelines and procedures by which to review and recommend actions on all pertinent matters pertaining to the theology, faith, practice and polity of Florida Southern Baptists, including the Florida Baptist State Convention, the State Board of Missions, cooperating Florida Baptist churches and cooperating Florida Baptist associations.

(13) The Board shall assign to the appropriate committee the task of receiving, evaluating and recommending to the Board all requests to mortgage, sell or any transfer of ownership of any real property proposed by Florida Baptist State Convention related agencies, institutions, and corporate and non-corporate entities. The assigned committee shall recommend to the Board whether or not to approve such request. Those requests approved by the Board shall then be recommended to the Florida Baptist State Convention for approval of the mortgage, sale or any transfer of ownership of any real property proposed by a State Convention related entity. This requirement shall not apply to land that was received as a gift or by other means and does not constitute an integral part of the entity's operations. Additionally, this requirement shall not apply to the Florida Baptist Convention Church Site Committee, which is governed by Bylaw 3B(6), State Board of Missions.

#### H. Conflicts of Interest:

The State Board of Missions shall adopt and adhere to a "Conflicts of Interest" policy statement and procedures that shall govern the conduct of Board members and employees of the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc. This policy shall emphasize the fiduciary duty and responsibilities these persons have to exercise their best care, skill and judgment for the sole benefit of the Convention. Each Board member shall be required to annually complete, sign and submit a Board-approved questionnaire on "Conflicts of Interest."

#### I. Quorum:

Fifty-one percent of the membership shall constitute a quorum for the State Board of Missions.

#### **Bylaw 13: Annual**

There shall be a Florida Baptist Annual published each year, which shall include the minutes of the annual meeting and of any extra sessions and the reports of the various agencies, departments, and committees. In addition, the Annual shall include the statistical reports of cooperating churches; the Florida Baptist State Convention Constitution and Bylaws (which includes the Business and Financial Plan); the annual audits of each Convention board and agency; and all such other data and material as may from year to year seem desirable. Each year, one copy of the Annual shall be provided to each cooperating Florida Baptist church and Baptist association. Additional copies of the Annual shall be made available on a cost-recovery basis.

#### **Bylaw 14: Quorum**

A. The quorum for conducting business during the annual meeting or a called special session of the Florida Baptist State Convention shall be a minimum of twenty-five (25) percent of those duly registered and seated messengers.  
B. Except as otherwise provided in the Constitution or these Bylaws, the act of a majority of the messengers present and voting at a duly constituted meeting of the State Convention, where a quorum is present, shall be the act of the State Convention.

#### **Bylaw 15: Altering Bylaws**

These Bylaws may be altered by a majority vote with a quorum present at any session of the annual meeting. Notice of any change proposed must be published in the Florida Baptist Witness at least thirty days prior to the annual meeting of the State Convention.

#### **Bylaw 16: Business and Financial Plan**

##### A. Cooperative Program:

Established in 1925 by the Southern Baptist Convention, the Cooperative Program is the unified financial appeal for nearly all denominational missions, ministry, and benevolence causes supported by this State Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention. Through the cooperation of individual Baptists and Southern Baptist churches, the Cooperative Program involves the soliciting, securing, dividing and distributing of these funds by cooperating local churches, the State Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention. All financial resources voluntarily contributed and designated as Cooperative Program and received by the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc., shall be governed by the State Convention's Business and Financial Plan, herein described.

##### B. Convention Budget:

(1) Each department, phase of work or institution, State Convention sanctioned non-corporate or auxiliary entity, supported by the Florida Baptist Convention from Cooperative Program funds shall submit to the Budget-Allocations Committee, for its consideration and recommendation to the State Board of Missions, an itemized estimate and budget of its expected expenditures for the next fiscal year, according to the policy of the Board for making operating budgets.

(2) The Board shall annually develop and recommend to the State Convention a Cooperative Program basic budget for the following year that shall not exceed an increase of three (3) percent of the total Cooperative Program income received during the previous year, as defined by these Bylaws.

(a) The proposed budget shall consist of the budgets of all departments and non-departmental expenditures which have been submitted to the Board and approved by the Board;

(b) The proposed budget shall specify a percentage distribution of Cooperative Program income for State Convention approved priority items, the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc., the agencies and institutions of the State Convention; and the Southern Baptist Convention.

(c) In developing the annual budget, the "previous year" shall be defined as the period when all Cooperative Program income received occurred between June 1 of the prior year and May 31 of the current year.

(3) The Board may recommend for approval by the State Convention an Advance Section of the Florida Baptist Convention Basic Budget that will propose the distribution of anticipated Cooperative Program income in excess of the amount required for the annual basic budget.

(a) Any Advance Section of the annual Basic Budget shall ensure that the Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program will be designated to share in the income in excess of the basic budget at the same percentage rate as it receives from the Basic Budget.

(b) The Board may, for just cause, modify the distribution of the Advance Section income receipts in the year following receipt of the excess income. Such action would require a two-thirds affirmative vote by the Board members voting. The Board shall report such action during the next annual meeting of the State Convention.

#### C. Operation Budgets:

(1) Convention Expense. The State Board of Missions shall recommend to the State Convention all non-departmental budgets, which shall include all expenses of the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc., not included in the departmental budgets.

(2) Institutions Not Sharing in Cooperative Program Funds. The State Board of Missions may recommend to the State Convention that aid be provided to non-convention institutions ministering to areas of the State Convention territory and promoting that general work which the State Convention is set up to do, and whose policy conforms to the policy of the State Convention, provided such aid shall be appropriated from the annual Maguire State Mission Offering.

(a) All entities aided shall be publicized in the state mission material, and in consideration of such aid, recipients shall present to the Budget-Allocations Committee of the State Board of Missions an annual audit.

(b) Tuition assistance may be granted from Cooperative Program resources as a budget item to aid full-time students at Palm Beach Atlantic University who are committed to Christian ministry as a vocation without complying with any other provision in Bylaw 16,C(2).

(3) Expenses of Committees. Expenses of all standing committees of the State Board of Missions, or committees appointed by the Board or State Convention in session, shall be appropriated from the non-departmental budget (Convention Expense); said expenses must be kept in line with Florida Baptist Convention and Board policies. Itemized accounts of expenses of all Florida Baptist Convention employees and State Convention committee members shall be required and approved by an authorized person before payment.

(4) Departments, Causes and/or Institutions Sharing in Cooperative Program. The departments and institutions sharing in the state's percentage of funds shall make their operating budget in the following manner:

(a) The current operating budget of the departments and institutions shall be made on the basis of cash receipts of the Cooperative Program for the previous year, and any overdraft or debt incurred within the current year shall be chargeable against the budget of the department or institution for the Convention year immediately following.

(b) In making the annual department and priority item budgets on the basis set forth, no contingent fund is to be set up.

[1] Any unused funds of all departmental budgets shall be transferred to the State Mission Fund unappropriated surplus to meet any unbudgeted expenditures.

[2] Any unused funds in the current budget's pastoral (salary) aid fund may be carried forward and placed in a pastoral assistance reserve fund for use in subsequent years to fulfill pastoral salary assistance requests.

#### D. Creating Debt:

(1) No agency, institution, committee or the Florida Baptist Convention shall create a debt for this State Convention without instruction and authorization from this State Convention, except as provided for in either Bylaw 11,G(4), or that debt request which is in conformity with the following provisions:

(a) An exception to this provision shall be a temporary line-of-credit which shall have a 12-month or less time period for repayment in full. Any new or renewed line-of-credit which an agency or board arranges with a lending institution, must have the prior approval of its governing board of trustees. Any line-of-credit secured by an agency or institution shall be reported to the Convention's Executive Director-Treasurer, who shall make a timely report to the Budget-Allocations Committee of the State Board of Missions at their next regularly scheduled meeting.

(b) Any temporary (12 months or less) line-of-credit which is not paid in full within the time period agreed to by the agency and the lending institution shall be considered a permanent loan. Such reclassified lines-of-credit shall have the timely approval of the agency's board of trustees and the approval of the State Board of Missions. Approval may be secured by the most convenient and expedient means of polling.

(2) The State Board of Missions, acting on behalf of the State Convention, shall have the authority to approve permanent loans, as hereafter provided, requested by an agency, institution, commission or the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc. The State Board shall have the authority to approve loan guarantees for churches or other State Convention agencies and institutions as hereafter provided.

(a) This approval shall be limited to loans which: [1] represent 10 percent of the agency's prior year actual operating income; [2] when combined with the respective agency's outstanding debt, does not exceed 15 percent of the agency's total annual income; and [3] have a projected maturity date of 60 months or less.

(b) The church loan guarantee and/or a State Convention agency loan guarantee approved by the State Board shall not be governed by previous item (a). However, the combined value of these loan guarantees shall not exceed 25 percent of the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc., annual total operating budgetable income.

(c) The approval for loans and/or loan guarantees shall require a two-thirds affirmative vote of the State Board of Missions, when a quorum is present at a regularly scheduled or call meeting of the Board.

(d) All requests for loan approvals and/or loan guarantees shall be made to the Convention's Executive Director-Treasurer, at least 10 business days prior to presentation to the State Board of Missions' Budget-Allocations and Administrative/Personnel Committees. Upon approval, either committee may recommend action by the State Board of Missions. The loan or loan guarantee request shall identify: [1] the amount of loan or loan guarantee; [2] annual percentage rate of loan (whether fixed or variable and the terms); [3] amortization schedule; [4] funding sources for repayment; [5] collateral which would be pledged against the loan, if any; [6] purpose for which loan is required; [7] total of all outstanding debt, prior to this request; and [8] date of board of trustee action approving loan request.

(e) All loan and loan guarantee requests approved by the State Board of Missions shall be reported as a part of the Board's report during the next annual meeting of the Florida Baptist State Convention.

(3) The Florida Baptist State Convention shall approve any loan request, by any agency, institution, or the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc., which represents: more than 10 percent of the agency's prior year's operating income; and/or when combined with other outstanding debt, causes the agency's total debt to exceed 15 percent of the agency's annual income; and/or which has a projected maturity date of 121 months or longer. The same procedure, as specified in Bylaw 16,D(2)(d) shall be followed, and be approved by the State Board of Missions, before being recommended to the Florida Baptist State Convention.

(4) The Florida Baptist Convention Church Site Committee shall be empowered to create a debt for the Florida Baptist Convention in purchasing property for church sites as provided in the Florida Baptist Convention Church Site Plan.

(5) The Florida Baptist Financial Services, Inc., shall be empowered to create a debt for itself or one of its auxiliary enterprises, upon the approval of their board of trustees. Any and all indebtedness made by the agency shall be reported on a timely basis to the Florida Baptist Convention's Executive Director-Treasurer who shall make a timely report to the State Board of Missions.

(6) It is understood that the State Board of Missions only may borrow money for current operations or debts of the Board or Florida Baptist Convention in cases of emergency. Such action shall be reported to the next annual meeting of the Florida Baptist State Convention.

#### E. Convention Year:

The financial affairs of the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc., and all institutions owned, operated or controlled by the State Convention shall be operated on the fiscal year beginning January 1 and closing December 31. An exception to this provision shall be permitted for The Baptist College of Florida, which may operate on a fiscal year beginning July 1 of one year through June 30 of the ensuing year.

#### F. Disbursing Agency:

(1) All moneys for all causes fostered by the State Convention will be forwarded to the Office of the Executive Director-Treasurer, who will act as disbursing officer of all funds of the Florida Baptist Convention.

(2) The Executive Director-Treasurer will disburse all moneys for budgetary items, as requested by various departments, and to all institutions, by direction of the State Board of Missions. He shall also remit monthly to each agency or designated objective, funds received by the Florida Baptist Convention from churches or any other source. All designated funds received on or before the last day of the month shall be disbursed on or before the 10th day of the next month.

(3) The Executive Director-Treasurer shall make quarterly reports of all moneys received and publish same in the *Florida Baptist Witness*.

#### G. Distribution of Cooperative Program Funds:

(1) Cooperative Program funds shall be divided between state and Southern Baptist Convention causes as to the percentage voted by the State Convention.

(2) In order that the financial plan and purpose of the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc., may be operated successfully, the State Convention appeals to the churches to give to world missions through the Cooperative Program and to recognize the wisdom and right of the Convention to allocate its receipts from the Cooperative Program funds, thus assuring an equitable and satisfactory distribution of all Cooperative Program moneys.

(3) Any church may require that its Cooperative Program gifts be withheld from any specified agency, institution or cause, and the money so withheld shall be prorated among the other Florida objects participating in the Cooperative Program division of the budget adopted by the Board and State Convention.

#### H. Special Solicitations:

(1) Any special campaigns for funds or special offerings by any agency or institution owned, controlled or supported by the Florida Baptist State Convention, involving the territory or churches of the State Convention, must first be endorsed and approved by the State Board of Missions acting upon a recommendation of the Administrative/Personnel Committee or the Florida Baptist State Convention acting upon a recommendation of the State Board of Missions.

(2) This prerequisite (Bylaw 16,H(1)) does not apply to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions, the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions, the Maguire State Mission Offering or the Mother's Day Offering for the Florida Baptist Children's Homes.

(3) Any such agency or institution may solicit contributions and gifts from individuals or corporations for capital funds, endowments or special projects, provided the request for funds is made on an individual and personal basis and not through a structured, organized campaign as in team member solicitation and not through cooperating local churches related to the State Convention.

(4) The Florida Baptist Financial Services, Inc., and its several related divisions of work, including the Florida Baptist Foundation; Florida Baptist Auxiliary Enterprises, Inc.; and the Church Growth Investment Fund, Inc.; however, shall have the right by any means it deems wise, except by special offerings in the churches, to solicit funds by gifts, bequests, investments, or otherwise from any and all cooperating local churches and persons related to the State Convention.

#### I. Designated Gifts:

(1) The State Board of Missions, upon recommendation by its Budget-Allocations Committee and/or the Executive Director-Treasurer of the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc., may accept on behalf of the Corporation any contribution, including any designated gift, planned gift, bequest or devise provided it is consistent with the Convention's [1] mission and priorities, [2] budget process and fiscal restrictions, [3] full ownership and control of the funds or assets, and [4] tax-exempt purposes.

(2) As so limited, donor-designated contributions will be accepted for special funds, purposes or uses, and such designations generally will be honored.

(3) The Corporation shall reserve all right, title and interest in and to, and control of such contributions, as well as full discretion as to the ultimate expenditure or distribution thereof in connection with any special fund, purpose or use.

#### J. Investment of Corporate Funds:

The State Convention directs the State Board of Missions to develop, implement and provide on-going oversight to an investment policy that defines the fiduciary guidelines, objectives and constraints of the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc., in its management of financial resources invested in any Endowment Fund(s), Special Fund(s) and undesignated investment fund(s) established by and for the benefit of the Florida Baptist State Convention, the State Board of Missions, the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc., the Florida Baptist Historical Society, and/or any financial assistance program operated by the State Board of Missions.

(1) The Board's investment policy shall provide guidelines for the State Board of Missions-designated committee in monitoring and/or providing counsel to the Executive Director-Treasurer, Florida Baptist Convention, or his designee, in facilitating the prudent management of the Convention Corporation's invested funds. Additionally the Board-designated committee shall affirm the selection, monitor, receive timely reports and provide counsel to any third-party investment manager(s) retained by the Convention Corporation.

(2) The Board-approved investment policy shall define investment principles and management guidelines which shall provide for risk management and encourage adherence to investment discipline, among other issues reflecting financial prudence.

(3) The Board shall ensure that the Convention Corporation shall not invest any funds in any enterprise that is involved in the sale, manufacture, distribution or promotion of alcohol, recreational drugs, tobacco, gambling, and pornography and/or any enterprise knowingly involved in any activity not compatible with basic Christian values, which may be further defined by the State Board of Missions.

**K. Endowment Funds:**

The State Board of Missions, upon recommendation by its Budget-Allocations Committee and/or the Executive Director-Treasurer, Florida Baptist Convention, Inc., shall approve the establishment of any special purpose endowment funds that benefit the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc.

(1) Such funds shall be designated to foster, promote and/or underwrite a specific program or ministry that is consistent with the Convention's mission and priorities. Each newly established fund shall have a defined purpose, defined limitations on expenditures, and identified funding sources.

(2) Endowment funds shall be placed with the Florida Baptist Foundation, Inc., for management, unless a compelling reason exists for the Board to authorize the specific endowment fund being placed and managed by some other qualified fiduciary agency.

(3) Endowment funds established by the Board for a specific purpose may be funded by any one or more options including, but not limited to, annual budget allocations, allocations of Cooperative Program income overages, and/or funding from other sources.

(4) The annual interest earned by an endowment fund may be either (1) added to the fund's principle, or (2) disbursed for the defined purpose of the endowment.

(5) Annual disbursements from an endowment fund shall be included as a source of income with a complementary expenditure on the annual Florida Baptist Convention basic budget for the next fiscal year.

(6) The Board, as the Convention Corporation's directors, shall reserve all right, title and interest in and to, and control of such endowment funds, as well as full discretion as to the ultimate expenditure or distribution thereof in connection with any special fund, purpose or use.

**L. Trust Funds:**

Each agency or institution of the State Convention is hereby instructed and ordered to keep all trust funds and designated gifts (for they are trust funds) sacred to the trust and designation; that they be kept separate from all other funds of such agency or institution; that they are not to be used even temporarily for any other purpose than the purpose specified; and that such funds shall not hereafter be invested in securities of any denominational body or agency.

**M. Capital Investment:**

Any institution of the State Convention shall not create any liability or indebtedness, except as such can or will be repaid from its capital funds budget or moneys provided for this purpose, without the consent of the State Convention or State Board of Missions. In order to secure the approval, the institution must make a written request to the State Board of Missions, stating the needs and provision for repayment.

**N. Contingent Reserves:**

The State Board of Missions shall require the Executive Director-Treasurer to maintain two contingent reserve funds. These funds are to be known as the Florida Baptist Convention Reserve Fund and the Operating Reserve Fund. When practicable, these reserve funds shall be maintained with the Florida Baptist Foundation, a division of Florida Baptist Financial Services, Inc. The annual audit of the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc. shall reflect the balances in each of the reserve funds.

(1) The Florida Baptist Convention Reserve Fund shall maintain a sufficient reserve, as determined by the State Board of Missions, to provide for unexpected emergency expenses, any unfunded liabilities incurred from Board-approved personnel benefit programs, and any other unanticipated mission, ministry and program expenditures deemed appropriate and authorized by the State Board of Missions.

(a) This reserve fund is to be funded annually from income over expenses realized by the State Mission Fund.

(b) To ensure a timely accessibility to these funds, a financial institution, other than the Foundation, may be utilized to maintain all or a portion of these reserve funds.

(2) The Operating Reserve Fund shall attempt to accumulate sufficient funds to provide four months operating funds for the Florida Baptist Convention budget. The fund would be used only should a budget deficit occur due to a decrease in Cooperative Program receipts or should Cooperative Program income not be sufficient to meet necessary budgetary needs.

(a) The reserve fund is to be funded annually from the advance section of the budget until such time as the fund goal is achieved.

(b) Interest earned on monies in the Operating Reserve Fund will remain with the principal.

(c) The State Board of Missions shall have the discretion to expend principal and/or interest income in the fund for needs the Board deems necessary or appropriate.

**O. Financial Reports:**

(1) The Florida Baptist Convention, Inc., and all institutions owned, controlled or supported by the State Convention from Cooperative Program funds shall close their books and accounts at the end of their fiscal year and

have them audited by a certified public accountant. These annual audits shall be in keeping with standards defined by the Financial Accounting Standards Boards (FASB).

(2) The Convention auditor of record shall be selected and employed by the State Board of Missions. Each State Convention agency shall select and employ their own certified public accountant of record.

(3) Each institution, auxiliary or recipient of funds from the State Convention shall forward two copies of its audit to the Executive Director-Treasurer, Florida Baptist Convention, as soon as possible, certainly within one hundred and twenty days after the close of the fiscal year.

(a) Additional copies of these agency audits shall be provided to the Budget-Allocations Committee of the State Board of Missions at least ten (10) days prior to the scheduled May meeting of the State Board of Missions each year. The members of the Budget-Allocations Committee shall be provided copies of the audit of the Florida Baptist Convention Corporation, and the Budget-Allocations Committee members assigned to the Audit Subcommittee shall be provided copies of all other audits of State Convention agencies, institutions and/or entities.

(b) The Budget-Allocations Committee shall meet with the Convention Corporation's certified public accountant of record at the May meeting of the State Board of Missions each year to hear the auditor's presentation and review the audit and management letter.

(c) The Audit Subcommittee shall annually meet with the certified public accountant(s) of record of each State Convention agency at the May meeting of the State Board of Missions to hear the respective auditor's presentation and review each agency's audit and management letter. The subcommittee shall report its findings to the full Budget-Allocations Committee.

(d) Each annual audit shall include a certification of the certified public accountant as to the handling of the funds and records.

(4) The financial report and the audit of the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc., and the audit of each institution supported from Cooperative Program funds by the State Convention, as well as any other entity owned or controlled by the State Convention, shall be printed in the Convention Annual each year.

#### P. Handling of Funds:

(1) All persons who handle funds or securities of the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc., or any institution of the State Convention shall be adequately bonded.

(2) The books of the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc., and all institutions supported by the State Convention from Cooperative Program funds shall be opened for inspection by State Convention officers, members of the Board and any cooperating Baptist.

(3) The securities, deeds, notes and all valuable records shall be kept in a fireproof safe or vault. The Florida Baptist Foundation may, however, deposit funds, securities, wills and legal documents for safekeeping and investment in one or more state or national banks selected by the trustees, each such bank to have a minimum of \$2,000,000 in capital, surplus and undivided profits, and to be a member of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

#### Q. Expansion Proposals and New Enterprises:

(1) The Administrative/Personnel Committee of the State Board of Missions shall study all requests for expansion in any department, institution or phase of work affecting the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc., and no report or request for expansion shall go to the Board and/or State Convention for a vote, until it has been studied by the Committee, and must be reported back to the next meeting of the Board or State Convention.

(2) Any expansion proposed will be in keeping with the policy of the Business and Financial Plan of the Florida Baptist State Convention.

(3) No new enterprise or institution involving expenditures of Convention funds shall be authorized by the State Convention, except upon favorable action by the State Convention in two succeeding annual meetings; this restriction shall not apply to a recommendation of any department or institution of the Florida Baptist Convention, Inc., concerning its own work. Any action involving this paragraph shall require a two-thirds vote of the messengers present and voting.

#### R. Former Actions:

This Business and Financial Plan supersedes any Business and Financial Plan previously adopted by the Florida Baptist State Convention.