

FOR ACTION – Item 1.2
COGA – December 15, 2022

Recommendation: That the 226th General Assembly (2024) not include an exhibit hall with physical displays of GA agencies and entities, other PC(USA) organizations, interested vendors, or others.

Rationale: As COGA noted in its outline of Plan Omega for the consideration of the 225th General Assembly (2022), one of the drawbacks of an assembly with on-line committees and in-person plenaries would be that the “traditional exhibit hall would be cost prohibitive for the short period of time.” In the traditional assembly schedule, the Exhibit Hall was open mostly during GA committee days and closed after dinner on Wednesday; commissioners and others will be otherwise occupied throughout with the in-person plenary schedule, further reducing potential traffic.

Managing the exhibit hall is very staff intensive, and not feasible for current OGA staff to accomplish in addition to their expanded duties.

Staff will conduct additional research into whether to continue an online listing as was offered for the 224th and 225th General Assemblies, along with other ways to meet other needs that the Exhibit Hall helped fill for some, such as an information center and welcome center/hospitality hub.

Recommendation: That the OGA follow its past practice of facilitating optional breakfasts, lunches, orientations and other functions by including them in the schedule of events and selling advance tickets as part of the registration materials, but limit this to those that are sponsored by one of these groups:

- GA agencies or entities (ASG, PMA, BOP, FND, OGA, PILP, PMA, and PW)
- Other committees and groups that *report directly* to the General Assembly
- PCUSA seminaries and other theological institutions in a covenant relationship with the PCUSA (currently Auburn, Evangelical and SFTS/Redlands)
- Caucuses and Councils Serving Communities of Color
- Mid Councils

Rationale: This would provide an opportunity for contact with commissioners and others for many GA entities during this plenary-only assembly. COGA noted in its Plan Omega description that “this could still allow for special dinner and breakfast gatherings” but limiting the list of eligible sponsors will make this work much more manageable for current staff, by reducing that pool considerably and mostly to groups where the financial impact is internal.

It is recognized that groups that are not eligible to be an “official sponsor” of GA-related functions may make their own arrangements with facilities and invite participants; the OGA would not be able to provide assistance.

Our renegotiated and new contracts with Salt Lake City hotels will still include food and beverage minimums in order to keep the lowest room rates, and these sponsored meal events will help us meet those with the least impact on per-capita.