

1st VP and more motions

June 9, 2008

Kentucky pastor Bill Henard won the Southern Baptist Convention's first vice presidency in a landslide June 10.

Henard defeated two challengers, receiving 1,748 votes—or 73.23 percent of 2,387 ballots cast—during the SBC annual meeting in Indianapolis.

Henard is pastor of Porter Memorial Baptist Church in Lexington, Ky., president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention and chairman of the board of the SBC's LifeWay Christian Resources.

He defeated John Connell, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Savannah, Ga., who received 377 votes (15.79 percent) and Crist Camden, pastor of Oconee Heights Baptist Church in Athens, Ga., who got 224 votes (9.38 percent).

In other business, messengers approved the SBC order-of-business committee's recommendations on eight additional motions presented earlier in the day. They included proposals calling for:

- Declaring Broadway Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas, to be not “in friendly cooperation” with the SBC. The church has engaged in a public dispute this year regarding whether or not homosexual couples could be pictured together as families in the church's directory. The church ultimately determined to publish a historical booklet with directory information, but it would not include photographs of families.

Result: Referred to the Executive Committee. Since the church did not send messengers to the Indianapolis meeting, the order-of-business committee determined the convention did not face a credentials issue. But it suggested compliance with the SBC's policy against affiliating with

churches that “affirm, approve or endorse homosexual behavior” merits study by the Executive Committee.

- Amending SBC bylaws to add requirements for all individuals nominated to serve on SBC committees, commissions and boards. The proposal would require nominees to “give evidence of having received Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior,” hold membership in a church that supports the SBC Cooperative Program unified budget, be in good standing with a local church, abstain from using alcoholic beverages and recreational drugs, and “support all the principles” in the 2000 Baptist Faith & Message doctrinal statement.

Result: Referred to the Executive Committee.

- Creating a “standardized form” on which the SBC’s six seminaries would report their enrolment and other data.

Result: Referred to the Executive Committee.

- Changing the length of terms and number of terms that may be served by trustees of the SBC’s agencies and institutions.

Result: Referred to the Executive Committee.

- Publishing the SBC’s Baptist Faith & Message in the five most dominant languages represented within the convention.

Result: Referred to LifeWay Christian Resources, which prints the Baptist Faith & Message.

- Considering bylaw changes that would direct convention agencies and institutions to “accommodate other events that support the work and mission of Southern Baptists” during the week in which the annual meeting is held each summer.

Result: Referred to the Executive Committee.

- Instructing the six SBC seminaries to charge students who take classes over the Internet the same tuition rates they charge on-campus students.

Result: Ruled out of order, since messengers cannot tell boards of SBC agencies what to do, but can only request that they consider proposals.

- Forbidding program personalities at SBC annual meetings from reading from or citing LifeWay Christian Resources' Holman Christian Standard Bible "or any translation that questions the validity of any Scripture or verse" during any official convention meeting or in any SBC literature.

Messenger Eric Williams of Belle Rive, Ill., claimed editors of the Holman Christian Standard Bible "believe that there are verses in the (biblical) text that do not belong in the Bible."

Result: Ruled out of order, since messengers cannot tell boards of SBC agencies what to do, but can only request that they consider proposals.