

GuideStone trustees establish presidential search committee

September 29, 2020

DALLAS (BP)—President O.S. Hawkins asked trustees of GuideStone Financial Resources to appoint a search committee to begin considering a new president for the organization.

No timeline has been set regarding the 73-year-old Hawkins' eventual retirement.



O.S. Hawkins

Hawkins assumed the presidency of GuideStone in 1997 and has seen the ministry grow into the sponsor of the largest faith-based mutual fund family in the United States. Including the mutual funds, GuideStone has more than \$18 billion in assets under management as of Aug. 31.

Mission:Dignity, which provides financial assistance to retired Southern Baptist ministers and workers and their widows, has raised more than \$150 million during Hawkins' tenure.

Trustees formed the search committee during a regularly scheduled meeting of the board, which met in a virtual format due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Members of the search committee are Chairman Steve Dighton,

retired Kansas pastor; Randall Blackmon, pastor of Faith Baptist Fellowship in Cambridge, Md.; David Cox, layman who has served as treasurer of the Greater Detroit Baptist Association and secretary of the Michigan African American Fellowship; Jim Scrivner, layman in Oklahoma and long-serving member of GuideStone's board; and David Rainwater, Arkansas layman. The committee also includes trustee board Chairwoman Renée Trewick of New York and trustee board Vice Chairman Johnny Hoychick of Louisiana as ex-officio members.

"The time has come for us to prayerfully consider who the eighth president of GuideStone might be," Hawkins told trustees. "We are as confident in God's call and as energized to lead as we have ever been. However, we believe the time has come to begin the process of a permanent transition. We intend to take steps proactively and methodically to ensure a smooth, seamless transition in God's timing and with his leading."

Trustees recognize accomplishments

Trustees applauded Hawkins' tenure, which is approaching a quarter century, the longest of any GuideStone president.

"O.S. Hawkins was charged to 'take something great and make it greater,'" Trewick said. "By every imaginable measure O.S. has done exactly that."

Trewick indicated Hawkins will continue providing leadership to GuideStone for 2021 and perhaps longer if needed.

The search committee was not given a timeline to finalize a recommendation. Southern Baptists interested in forwarding recommendations may do so through Jan. 1. These should be sent via email to Tim.Head@GuideStone.org or through the mail to Tim Head, c/o GuideStone, 5005 LBJ Freeway, Ste. 2200, Dallas, TX 75244.

Total GuideStone assets increase

In other reports, Chief Operating Officer John R. Jones told trustees meeting via Zoom that despite market volatility, total assets are up almost \$1 billion, or 5 percent, since the end of 2019.

“Since reaching a low in March, shortly after the pandemic began, assets have grown by \$2.7 billion, or almost 18 percent,” Jones said.

While volatility remains likely due to the pandemic, the election and other headlines, GuideStone remains well-positioned to weather the current climate.

As part of the Vision 20/20 long-range plan that GuideStone completes this year, three strategic goals were identified: increasing market share, responding to changes in the marketplace and aggressively managing costs while keeping customer service No. 1. All have been priorities for the GuideStone team, Jones said.

“We have underspent our budget year-to-date by \$4.4 million, or 7 percent,” Jones told trustees, adding that the savings came from underspending in travel, marketing and information technology. “Our staff has worked diligently to reduce costs throughout the organization, aggressively managing costs to keep our budget lean. In fact, we remain on track in 2020 to spend less than we did in 2014.”

Trustees also were introduced formally to Chu Soh, a retired U.S. Air Force officer and health care executive, who joined GuideStone in June as chief insurance officer.