

SBC Executive Committee to seek new CEO

April 3, 2018

NASHVILLE—The Southern Baptist Convention’s Executive Committee will meet April 17 to elect a search committee to find a successor for President Frank Page, who stepped down as chief executive officer March 27 after acknowledging a “personal failing.”

“As you know, concerns and questions abound in regard to the sudden and grievous departure of our EC president,” Chairman Stephen Rummage said in the letter to all members of the Executive Committee, calling a special meeting in mid-April at the SBC Building in Nashville.

Committee members received an email copy of the notice March 29, with paper copies sent by first class mail in compliance with bylaws notice requirements for a called meeting.

In a March 27 statement, Rummage noted Page’s immediate decision to step down “was precipitated by a morally inappropriate relationship in the recent past.”

At the April 17 meeting, Rummage will provide a report of activities related to Page’s unexpected departure. The Executive Committee also will discuss administrative and interim leadership matters, and members will elect a presidential search team for the first time under a bylaw adopted in 2012.

Under normal procedure in the absence of a president, the Executive Committee’s executive vice president, August Boto, has the responsibility for day-to-day operations of the staff.

In the event the president leaves office, the bylaws empower the officers to

designate, pending action by the full board, an interim president from among the vice presidents.

The Executive Committee will elect six members of a search committee by written ballot among nominees from the floor during the special meeting. The board chair also serves as an ex-officio member with the right to vote, constituting a seven-member presidential search committee.

The Executive Committee's officers have been in regular communication since these events unfolded and plan to meet together this week, according to Roger S. Oldham, vice president for convention communications and relations.

"As previously reported, Dr. Page announced his imminent retirement on Monday evening, March 26, to the officers, and made clear on Tuesday morning that his retirement would be immediate. Chairman Rummage and Dr. Page had a conversation on Tuesday in which Dr. Page was forthcoming about a matter Dr. Page considered to be disqualifying from further leadership with the Executive Committee," Oldham said in a prepared statement.

"Based on that conversation, the officers have no reason to suspect any legal impropriety. The Executive Committee will exercise due diligence to determine if anything has occurred that would require further action."

Page led the Executive Committee almost eight years, previously serving as vice president of evangelization for the North American Mission Board in 2009-10 and nine years as pastor of First Baptist Church in Taylors, S.C. He was the 2006-08 president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Based on a report compiled by Art Toalston of Baptist Press.