GUIDE FOR ASSESSMENT OF SUSTENTATION APPLICATIONS

The purpose of this guide is to give the Sustentation Deputies, whether of Classis or Regional Synod, guidance in the monitoring and assessment of sustentation applications.

The questions were compiled from the Rules of the Sustentation Deputies as approved by Synod 2015.

The sustentation applications are assessed on the basis of the following questions:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Introductory questions | Yes | No |
| 1. | Is the primary focus for the sustentation application the expansion of God's kingdom in the building up and development of the church according to Matthew 28? |  |  |
| 2. | Is financial bridging assistance being applied for? [CO, art 41 and 44] |  |  |
| 3. | Will or can the congregation grow to financial independence? [CO, art 38] |  |  |
| 4. | Is there a need that the congregation can or should continue to exist? |  |  |
| 5. | Do any alternatives exist for survival, for example forming a combination or entering into a ministry agreement? |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Yes | No |
| 6. | Is there a clear strategic ministry plan? |  |  |
| 7. | Is the need of the congregation described? |  |  |
| 8. | Are efforts to address the need indicated? For example, by forming a combination? |  |  |
| 9. | Is there a detailed statement of accumulated funds and trust funds, or funds in investments? |  |  |
| 10. | Are "ramings" in arrears and other debts indicated? |  |  |
| 11. | If the church is in combination with a church(es) that does not ask for help, are the statements of that church(es) attached to the application? |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Pre-procedure for the checking of the application by the Classis | Yes | No |
| 12. | Has the prescribed application form been used? |  |  |
| 13. | Check the numbers. Are the figures correct?  |  |  |
| 14. | Check the motivations. |  |  |
| 15. | Have non-sustentation items been deducted? |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Guidelines for uniform assessment within which certain items are considered for sustentation | Yes | No |
| 16. | Trust Funds - are not taken into account but the proceeds thereof are |  |  |
| 17. | Trust Funds - should be clearly indicated and motivated why the capital may not be used |  |  |
| 18. | Sustentation may be given for audit costs |  |  |
| 19. | Other items that are clearly declared - are assessed on merit |  |  |
| 20. | Sustentation may be given for bank charges and interest on debt |  |  |
| 21. | Has surplus at the end of year been taken into account? |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Items not eligible for sustentation (mark Yes, unless the necessity for the sake of ministry is indicated) | Yes | No |
| 22. | Donations |  |  |
| 23. | Maintenance and repair of buildings |  |  |
| 24. | Gardener |  |  |
| 25. | Honoraria |  |  |
| 26. | Affiliation fees |  |  |
| 27. | Depreciation |  |  |
| 28. | Shortages of previous years |  |  |
| 29. | Contributions to funds such as Bible distribution, entertainment allowance, study allowance |  |  |
| 30. | “Ramings” in arrears |  |  |
| 31. | Capital expenditures |  |  |
| 32. | Repayments of loans or other debts |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | The responsibility of the Classis is/has been met by doing the following | Yes | No |
| 33. | Have the sections that must be completed by the Classis been completed? |  |  |
| 34. | Have the Classis attached a full report with recommendations? |  |  |
| 35. | Have the church contributions of the congregation been checked? |  |  |
| 36. | Has the number of adult members been indicated? |  |  |
| 37. | Have the contributions of the PGT of the minister been checked? |  |  |
| 38. | Have the medical membership fees of the minister been checked? |  |  |
| 39. | Have the travel costs been checked? |  |  |
| 40. | Has the "ramings" amount of the Classis been filled in? |  |  |
| 41. | Has the "ramings" amount of the Regional Synod been filled in? |  |  |
| 42. | Has the "ramings" amount of the General Synod been filled in? |  |  |
| 43. | Is the minister being cared for with proper provision? [CO, art 11]  |  |  |
| 44. | Has the Classis indicated what amount will be made available from own funds? |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | The Deputies Regional Synod together with the Deputies of the Classes | Yes | No |
| 45. | Do the applications conform to the Rules? |  |  |
| 46. | Did the Regional Synod provide its own motivation? |  |  |
| 47. | Did the Regional Synod indicate what amount will be made available from own funds? |  |  |

Church Order, Article 11

The church council, which represents the church, shall provide adequate means of support to their ministers of the Word and shall not deny them support nor dismiss them from office without the knowledge and approval of the classis, with advice from the deputies of the regional synod.

Church Order, Article 38

When a church council is instituted for the first time, or reinstituted, it must be done with the advice of the classis. If there are only a small number of elders, the deacons may be considered to form part of the church council by way of local arrangement; this shall apply only in cases where there are less than three elders.

Church Order, Article 41

The classis is a meeting of neighbouring churches of which each delegates a minister and an elder, or two elders if there is no minister, to represent them. The venue and time of the next classis is determined at each meeting. Such meetings shall be held at least once every three months. The various ministers shall preside over the classis in rotation, or one shall be chosen by the meeting; however, the same minister shall not be chosen twice in succession. The chairman shall inquire whether the churches hold meetings of the church council, exercise church discipline, take good care of the poor and the schools, and whether any of the churches require the advice and assistance of the classis in any matter regarding proper management. At the last meeting prior to the regional synod, delegates must be chosen to attend the synod.

Church Order, Article 44

The classis shall authorize at least two of the oldest, most experienced and competent ministers to conduct regular visitations at all the churches in the classis. They must ascertain whether the office bearers perform their duties faithfully, adhere to sound doctrine, comply with the church order at all times, and apply themselves diligently, as far as they are able to do so, to building up the congregation and promoting the education of the youth. If anyone should be found to be negligent in his office, they must admonish him in a brotherly spirit, and they must assist the church, through word and deed, in the management of everything that is conducive to peace and the building up of the church in its best interests.