



Frequently Asked Questions By Audience

GENERAL MEMBER

What is the reasoning behind the bylaw changes?

An organization's bylaws should be reviewed and revised as needed on a regular basis. Civitan International's bylaws have been changed infrequently in the last fifteen years. A lot has changed in our world in 15 years to where many of the bylaws in place are not realistic and provide little freedom to evolve Civitan into what it needs to be relevant and developing during this time. In addition, there are a few places within the document that do not adhere to Alabama non-profit law. Those definitely need to be fixed. Lastly, a transformation of the organization is needed overall to try to help stop a continuous decrease (50% over the last two decades) of membership. This new set of bylaws sets up an organizational structure change to hopefully refocus our members on the priorities of Civitan International. Districts were originally set up to help build up the organization and be the conduit between International and clubs. With the exception of our centennial year, there has been little club building and member recruitment through this avenue and many of these entities are having trouble finding new leaders who can lead that growth.

Who is going to provide support to the clubs when they have issues?

Civitan clubs can rely on two avenues of support. One avenue will be the regional leadership council that is led by the International Director, which will include that region's most knowledgeable recruiter(s) and club builder(s). The other is staff at world headquarters. In the end, both of these groups will be working together to develop and build clubs. We anticipate the collaboration between these two groups will lead to enhanced support on the local level.

Districts provide fellowship – how is this going to be done now?

Fellowship is one thing districts have done fairly well with over the last few years. However, the recent membership survey shows much feedback that there are some members who still feel left out of those events. We imagine there will be opportunities for fellowship on the regional level, including events like regional service days and

regional workshop days. In addition, fellowship on the International level will be reimagined to try to fill this niche.

Our District has a lot of money saved up. What's going to happen to this money?

Many districts have worked hard to build up money in their treasuries and now is the time for that money to go to a great purpose. District leaders will be given a guide as to options on what to do with their coffers. For example, a district could donate it to Civitans at the Helm or back to the clubs within the district. Or, a donor advised fund could be set up at a community foundation in the area or even at Civitan International. More guidance is coming out through additional tools over the coming months.

Is this really necessary?

The adhoc committee that developed these bylaw changes is made up of six Past International Presidents and several former International directors with more than 300 years of Civitan service combined. Each member is heavily involved in their district and club. The committee has spent more than 500 hours on the issues that are forcing these changes – discussing options and the realities of what's going on internally and externally with the organization. They have thought long and hard about them, and included the International Board on their ideas. This group believes these changes are needed to ensure Civitan survives beyond the next decade. In addition, this group believes that these changes open up enormous opportunities for the organization to evolve and revamp itself.

What about new clubs?

In regards to new clubs, each region will have goals to meet regarding club building and bringing new members into the organization. For now, this club building process will still include the support of sponsoring clubs too, near that new club, so it can develop well. The recent membership survey results showed us that while a few new clubs received support from their districts, many had issues in relating and getting the help and knowledge they needed. It will be the regional leadership council's job to support clubs that are chartered within the region and help them to develop into thriving groups.

How will the district dues paid by clubs change?

The recent membership survey showed an almost even split as to members who saw value from their district dues, versus those who were unaware as to what value they received from paying these fees. District dues, along with any associated expenses will be eliminated. Civitan members and clubs will have more funds to serve the communities around them. There will be a smaller quarterly region fee to help offset the costs of training, workshops, fellowship activities, and resources used in these "new" regions.

A cost of living increase is mentioned in the new "dues" section of the bylaws. How will that work?

This allowance is limited and has to be approved by the Civitan International Board. Many membership associations have started including this in their governance documents to keep from going to their full membership frequently for a minimal increase. If an increase is needed above the maximum mentioned in the bylaws, that proposal will have to be ratified by membership, as usual. By the way, a 2% increase on quarterly dues of \$18 is 36 cents.

Some regions currently meet once a year so will we go back to doing that?

Yes, that could happen based on the region. We certainly want to provide an opportunity for face to face meetings when we can but will limit those so members can focus on the good work they are doing in their communities. Any meetings on a regional level will be used primarily for training, development of the member, and collaborative service.

CLUB

Who do we go to for help?

As mentioned in the member section, there will still be a support system for clubs through the regional leadership councils and world headquarters staff. You will have true partners in the mission. These groups will work together to support the incredible clubs and members who are a part of the organization.

Will we have the opportunity to be involved at the region level?

Yes. Any member in good standing will be able to apply for the leadership council roles in each region, and can serve on the committees that support that council.

Will there be any structured meetings with other clubs/areas in our region?

Virtually, there will be several opportunities to meet with other clubs in your region for trainings and update calls and such. We are also looking at planning regional service days as well as one-day workshops in regions that will not only develop a member's leadership skills but also help with club issues and management.

Who will be providing our officer training?

The regional leadership council and world headquarters staff will work together to provide this training.

Will we receive regular communication?

Absolutely. Currently, world headquarters is sending out monthly e-mail newsletters to all members and club leaders. That will continue. One of the benefits of this restructure will be that consistent messaging from world headquarters about mission and service will be directly sent out instead of sent to just a small group of leaders who are supposed to forward those messages out. Clubs should be better informed and more suited to serve after this change takes place.

Will the club honor club application be changed to reflect these new changes?

All award applications on the club level will be reviewed in light of these changes.

Will the CATH levels or the way we are recognized change?

No. We anticipate that Civitans at the Helm will stay the same, since clubs are recognized on their individual philanthropic accomplishments. Clubs will still receive the recognition they deserve for these gifts.

Will the Candy box awards / levels or the way we are recognized change?

No. The candy and coin box program recognizes clubs on an individual level so they will still be recognized appropriately for their participation and success.

DISTRICT

What is going to happen to our District projects?

The projects that Civitan districts have embraced over the decades have certainly changed thousands of lives. With this change, we know the infrastructure that is usually supportive of those activities goes away. For any districts having consistent, significant stand-alone projects, we suggest that local clubs in the area take up the cause on their own. For example, if the district supported a Boys and Girls Home with monetary donations, the clubs in the area can now directly write their checks to the Boys and Girls Home, not the district. This change doesn't mean support has to cease for those causes. It just means rerouting some of those resources used in the past to directly impact them.

What will happen to District treasuries?

As mentioned in the member section of this FAQ, now is the time for those district treasuries to fulfill their purpose. There are several options, and many of those can be combined. District leaders will be getting more guidance over the coming months. Some examples include: donating it to a specific cause to International, donating it to the new region for club building or service days, donating it back to clubs, and setting up a foundation.

How will region fees be used?

Region fees will be used to offset the costs of workshops and training for members, for other member resources, and to support fellowship activities. In addition, the money will be used to build and develop clubs in the region.

What will happen to any associated foundations?

Some districts have foundations. These foundations have two options. One of those would be to continue operating, but due to increased risk there will be a process for these entities to apply for a licensing agreement to use the Civitan brand/logo/name.

These entities can still have boards of directors, but will not be directly related to Civitan which includes not being on the organization's insurance policy and not receiving compliance assistance. The second option is dissolving and following one of the routes that is listed for district treasuries to pursue. In the end, while many of these Foundations were set up with the Civitan spirit, they were not authorized by/tied to the International organization.

What options do we have to donate our funds to the Civitan International Research Center, projects, etc?

In regards to remaining district treasuries, the options include: donating to Civitans at the Helm to benefit the CIRC, donating to Light The Way to help preserve the legacy of the overall organization, donating to the Shropshire Scholarship Fund to provide more scholarships for students, and donating to the new region in which the former district exists – to be used for a specific cause like service days or workshops/training.

What is the timeline for treasury funds to be donated / responses given on how we want them handled?

A full timeline with deadlines will be sent out by October 1, 2021. Likely a deadline for a district's intentions on finances would be set for January 1, 2022, to give these leaders time to make these decisions. That gives everyone time to take appropriate action after decisions are made. For instance, it takes a few months to set up accounts at a community foundation, or to close out an account, etc. The new structure should be in place by October 1, 2022, so anything on a district level should be resolved by then.

Will Regions be able to have fundraisers like districts have today?

Fundraisers can be organized for Civitan International related efforts (Junior Civitan, CIRC, Light The Way, etc.), and not to offset expenses. Fundraising activities on a district level may have been fruitful but have taken away attention from the true purpose of a district. We want to focus on growing the organization. We've found the same members have been asked to support these fundraisers each year. That leads to donor fatigue, and less passion for the mission over time.

Will members get financial statements that track region fees paid?

Yes, since Civitan International will have a budget for each region, there is a responsibility to show members and clubs how those region fees are spent. Regular financial updates will be a part of this new structure.

Will there be assistance if we choose to set up our own 501(c)3?

Civitan International will provide initial guidance for these cases, but if further assistance is needed we will ask the district to pay for those services. Again, any 501(c)3 operations set up from this change will be considered separate of the mother organization (Civitan International) and will need to follow the process for applying for a licensing agreement.

In voting matters as a district we have 2 votes each at International conventions - will we only have ONE vote used by our International director going forward?

The bylaw changes proposed feature an incredible benefit for Civitan membership. Now, every member who registers and attends the International convention gets a vote, if they come from a club in good standing. That means the “2” district votes no longer apply. The voting process for Civitan International Board members will remain the same. This change allows for the voices of more of our membership to be heard.

How will candidates or the leadership opportunities and "pool" be affected?

These changes will open up new possibilities for potential leaders. Development opportunities will abound for the general member, as training will be enhanced and more information will be directly communicated about Civitan International. In addition, the role of International Director now holds much more responsibility under these changes and will be seen as a more exclusive opportunity. That will hopefully strengthen the leadership pool for the overall organization.

Will regions have liability insurance requirements like districts have had in the past? Would these fees come out of the region fees?

Liability insurance coverage for each region will be taken care of by Civitan International. These types of expenses would be offset by the region fees.

Will regions have awards to recognize club achievements? Or only international awards going forward?

Yes, there will be a regional awards system that will funnel up to the Civitan International Competitive Awards program. Winners on the regional level will be considered at the International level so there will be one application that is consistent for each category.

Will regions have Civitan of the Year and Regional honor keys to replace the district ones in place today?

These types of recognitions will be integrated into the International Awards program. So it's very likely there will be a Civitan of the Year on an International level, whose nominees will come from the regional level. More information on the awards program will be sent out soon.

Will regions have President's Council levels of recognition like are in place today at the district level?

Not truly, but there will be some sort of competition between the regions that ranks International giving successes.

Will the qualifications for how members can run for international director change since district leadership will no longer be in the mix?

Yes, any policy or requirement that involves district leadership roles or functions will have to be reviewed and revised accordingly. These changes will come about sometime in the 2021-2022 year but well in advance of deadlines related to processes like international director qualifications.

How can members get leadership experience in the region with so many members and only a few chairperson positions?

There are several ways to get leadership experience beyond the club level at Civitan International. First, one can serve on the regional leadership council as a chair. Those chairs can also have committees if the need exists, in which there will be places to serve. In addition, International adhoc committee opportunities will be advertised more to allow the general member to take part.

Will new regional leadership be required to attend a structured training in order to be "certified" to hold their position?

Regional leadership council members will be trained consistently and included constantly, in the activities of the region. We're planning one-on-one training with each member, and group trainings with all of the members of a specific type, similar to GE Academy calls that are happening now – but with their specific focus. The investment that Civitan International puts into Governors and Governors-Elect will now be put into these leadership councils.

Will international bill clubs directly for region fees?

Yes. Clubs will receive one bill each billing cycle.

What if clubs do not pay region fees? What are the consequences?

It's likely that region fees will allow for free registration/attendance at workshops and fellowship activities for members of any club in the region. We're anticipating a club would see the need to pay this fee as they see the value of being a part of this new structure. More details and information will be developed about the region fees and how that affects club standing in the coming months.

Who will be approving / disbursing regional funds for things expensed by chair people or volunteers?

An approval system along with guidelines on expenditures will be put into International policy once firm budgets are set, but it will likely be the International Director as well as a senior world HQ staff person.

Will the regional leadership be determined by the numeric size of the region or the geographic size of the region?

It certainly could be. For instance in a region that is large like the one that could consist of most of the American states west of the Mississippi River, there may be a need for co-chairs of Junior Civitan within that regional leadership council that supports the clubs in those areas because of the geographic size of that region. There will be set guidelines in policy as to how many council members are too many, however – as that has been an issue with the current district structure (too many leadership roles to fill).

DIVISION

Why is Europe being combined with other parts of the world?

For more than thirty years, Europe has had its own division, with its own office. Membership on that continent at that time was more than two times what it is now (1880 members in Norway and Germany alone in 1997). There was an intense need for support other than the world headquarters with so many members who spoke different languages and felt disconnected from CI. Membership within our European Division is now more than 800 people, with two of the three districts there having less than five clubs each. At this point, there are multiple layers of leadership that are unnecessary for its size. In addition, this Division has had a seat on the International Board but now with its current membership size, it barely rivals other areas of the Civitan world that do not have representation on the board. For instance, South Korea Civitans are just as large in number almost as Europe but truly get no representation on the International Board. We want to be more balanced in this representation as well as the decisions that are made on behalf of clubs outside North America.

What does this mean for the districts within the European Division?

With these new bylaws, districts are no longer a part of the infrastructure. That means just like districts in North America, these entities would need to cease in current operations. However, as plans for what an International Division looks like develops, there may be a need for the former leaders of these districts to serve on the council that supports the full International Division.

How would an election of an International Director work for the International Division?

These new bylaws allow anyone attending the International Convention from a club in good standing to vote in International elections. Therefore, any individuals from clubs in that Division would elect that director.

What does this mean for the European Office?

The European Office of Civitan International has been run and managed independently by the Division without true legal oversight by the world HQ. The staff person who works there does not work for International. The office's purpose was to support the European Division. Since there will not be a European Division, there may not be need for a European Office, unless Civitan International deems it a need.

How will one director be able to handle multiple countries and languages?

Much like the regions in North America, the International Division will have a leadership council, made up of various chairs. In addition, most of the contacts with our clubs outside North America speak/read/write English or have a representative who works with them who can speak English. Civitan International will also support this International Director with any resources, including translation services, needed.

BOARD

What will be the regional structure?

Each region will be led by an International Director who facilitates a leadership council made up of leaders with expertise in specific areas.

Who will decide/approve leadership roles in the region?

Applications for each regional leadership role will be accepted by Civitan International. Then, the International Director in each region will review the applications, perform interviews and make decisions on roles. Staff will have some input, and there will be guidelines/requirements for each position that can't be waived without full International board approval.

What will be the term of the regional leadership roles?

A typical term for a regional position will be determined by International policy. More information about that will come out as soon as possible.

If I am considering running for International office, what do I need to know?

The terms for International directors elected in the summer of 2021 may be shortened or lengthened based on the changes in these new bylaws, which set up six International director positions, instead of nine. So, if you are elected you may end up serving two years, three years or four – based on the formula approved within the bylaws. Anyone looking to serve on the International Board in the coming years needs to be familiar with this new regional system and prepared to lead in ways unprecedented for this position.

How will the region's funds be tracked, expensed and reported?

Each region will have an account within Civitan International's general fund and tracked very similarly to staff department accounts. There will be guidelines for expenditures and forms to file related to those. Updates will come out similarly to what is tracked and distributed on the International level.

Will each region have a different budget based on the number of members in each region?

It's possible, mostly due to size of some of the regions or unique situations where parts of a region may be in another country. These items are being worked out over the coming weeks and more information will be distributed soon. Ultimately, it will be an International Board decision, with input from the Finance Committee for the organization.

Will region budgets change from what we have been budgeted / allocated in the past?

Yes they will, by virtue that more activities and efforts will be associated to a region. This does not mean necessarily you will be able to travel more. Financial resources in a region will first be used, as we all want it used, for the benefit of the general member, club and Civitan overall.

Will I receive reports of the budget versus what is spent?

There will be some sort of consistent, frequent reporting to each International director of the expenses in each region.

Will I have any say over creating a region budget? And how are those funds going to be used?

Input from the International Director will have to be integrated into the official process of budgeting for the next year, as executed by the Finance and Audit Committee. International Directors will approve the majority of expenses for a region, not withstanding generic expenses that will be consistent from region to region, like the cost of a Zoom license specific to a region or an insurance fee allocated for each region.

Will each International Director be in charge of facilitating /planning region meetings?

A staff person from world headquarters will be assigned to each region and will assist the International Director in facilitating and planning any meetings, trainings and activities in a region.

Will I be responsible for regular monthly communication with club members in my region?

Right now, the sample/model for the leadership council in each region has a communications leader who would work hand in hand with the International Director to send out any messaging, updates, or information to clubs within the region. The staff person assigned to your region would also support this effort with templates, verbiage, artwork, etc.

Will the regional leadership "report" to me?

Yes, however the idea is that the leadership council acts as a team to further the mission of Civitan in these regions. So, while the International Director would act as the leader from time to time of the group, it's expected any of these leaders could pick up the torch so to speak if needed.

What if the appointed regional leaders do not or are not doing their jobs? How can they be replaced or removed?

There will be International policies that describe a regional leader's responsibilities and guidelines as to how they can be removed and replaced. The International director will have a strong role in this process.

How will these regional leadership roles work in very large regions? Will there be more volunteers on the committee for larger member numbers?

If there is a large geographic area, there may be more than co-leaders in a specific area, as well as a committee that supports the leader of each committee. Policies will need to be created to set up minimums, maximums and other criteria to ensure efficiency.

Will there be regular Zoom meetings or person meetings that match the district (and in some cases region meetings) that occur today?

Yes, but we anticipate them to be more enhanced and focused on the member and the club more so than the regional entity.

What about the district fundraisers for the CIRC today that occur at meetings - can these continue at region meetings and gatherings?

Absolutely. This new regional setup gives us more of a chance to unite Civitans around our flagship project, hearing directly about updates, new information and new tools to promote it in their communities.

JUNIORS/CAMPUS

How will this affect the Junior Civitan International Board and its districts?

Best case scenario is that we would like any program of Civitan's to replicate the mother organization's practices. We will need to set forth a committee made up of members (Civitan and Junior Civitan) to review how this will affect our program. In general, Junior Civitan is not its own entity. It is a program of the mother organization and could operate in any way the leaders of the mother organization sees fit. Considering there are no districts mentioned in the new bylaws of Civitan International, there would be no districts in the Junior Civitan program. As plans develop for Junior Civitan, we will issue that information out.