

Dear Deborah,

Thank you for following up on the Revisioning Team's March 23 meeting with the Council regarding both a proposed by-law change and a request to work together with the Council to engage members in developing a new Grail structure to be decided on by the membership this year.

You asked for the specific language that we had suggested for a by-law change. We are including that language below. However, the main thrust of our conversation with the Council on March 23 was to make clear that this is not about an up or down vote on the proposed language. This is about a partnership with the Council to devise the best by-law language and the best way forward towards a Grail restructure that has broad membership participation and ownership as well as the formal confirmation that a membership decision on a new structure will be binding.

*ARTICLE II COUNCIL, C. RESPONSIBILITIES,*

*5. Arrange for a review of the Bylaws as needed, but at least annually, in their totality for correctness and completeness. 10% or more of voting MEMBERS MAY SUBMIT ADDITIONS OR REVISIONS TO THE BYLAWS. ANY PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS WILL BE VOTED UPON BY VOTING MEMBERSHIP after an Open Forum to discuss the changes, AND APPROVED IF A MAJORITY OF THE VOTING MEMBERS WHO SUBMIT A VOTE AGREE.*

Thus, if Council members have hesitancy about specific language in this proposed by-law, please don't simply vote it down. Please propose alternative language or an alternative approach that can work. The main point is to affirm now that membership decisions on structure are binding. Deborah, you asked if that might be worded as a sentence saying that GA outcomes are binding, or something to that effect. Your alternate proposals are very welcome. We would note, however, that not all members can attend the GA, even virtually, so it may require a follow up vote as well. What we seek is a balance between spaces for active membership debate (Zoom, GA) and the broadest possible participation of membership in a vote. Ultimately, as noted in the proposed bylaw change above, we want the by-laws to state that members decide changes to bylaws. This latter point could happen as an outcome of the restructure process.

Because there were many questions by Council about the specifics of the proposed Restructure, legal aspects, and transition, we are attaching answers to some of your original questions. But the main point is that the Revisioning team is presenting an overarching vision and wants to engage members in deep discussion about it, hopefully with the Council and GA Planning Team actively involved, so we do not have answers to many specifics at this time. We welcome Council's active involvement in the conversation based on your experience.

We are happy to say that on April 16 we circulated a draft of the restructure proposal to all members to begin the conversation. The Team plans to engage actively with members at multiple levels to seek input.

In summary, we request the following action by the Council at your face-to-face meeting on April 22-24:

1. A decision on the by-law change request and/or an alternate proposal that confirms the role of membership in deciding on new structure and subsequent related by-law changes.
2. An affirmation by Council to support the process by the Revisioning Team and members in developing a new structure proposal to finalize at the GA in November.
3. A commitment by Council to request that the GA Planning Committee put this on the GA agenda with adequate time for discussion and decision-making. The Revisioning team will do the substantive work in developing a final proposal for the GA in consultation as needed with Council and the rest of the movement. We are looking forward to a collaborative spirit with Council throughout the process.

Thanks for your leadership and your commitment,

Sincerely,

*Carol Barton, Elizabeth Murphy, and Sharon Thomson*

Our combined notes of our March 23, 2021 presentation before Council:

Presenters: Something has to change. We know you are unhappy too. Wherever we sit in the organization, it's not working. This is a communal spiritual crisis. The Grail is built as a spiritual utopian community. This has been eroded in the current organizational model, partly due to lack of sufficient participation.

We want to work on this together. Unclear what is actually feasible. Realities we need to face together. The important point is participation in decision-making.

Why change the by-laws now?: It's a way to move forward with exploration of new structure. It builds on the recommendations emerging from the 2017 GA. This need was expressed then but we have not yet moved forward on it. We want to get to the GA ready for a vote on structure and then live into it.

The revisioning group represents a broad spectrum of Grail viewpoints, including many former Council members, directors of centers, etc. We're working to develop a proposal with the goal of engaging members in shaping a new structure. Something has to give. The proposal will evolve as members discuss and provide input.

Also: April asked why restructure? Isn't this just reshuffling deck chairs on the titanic? How will this change lack of member engagement and giving?

Someone asked why this by law change now, when many by-law changes would be needed later. We said that this opens the way for work on a structure change.

Thanh expressed concern about the 10% reference in our by-law proposal. She thought it referred to 10% making a decision, rather than 10% making a proposal to the membership. However, we said that if there was concern it could be changed. It is about shaping a solution together, creating a strategy, not an up or down vote. The main point is that

members have ownership of a new structure and that a membership decision on new structure is binding.

Deborah asked if we changed by-laws to state that a decision by members at the GA is binding, would this be acceptable. We said yes. However, we ultimately envision all by-laws decisions being made by the membership rather than Council.