

# POWER

## POWER Decision Making

### **Background**

POWER entered an extended period of Reflection and Renewal in the Fall of 2015. Input was gathered from all levels and all corners of the organization to determine priority needs and desires for future directions. Surveys were collected from member congregations; a Leadership Assembly was devoted to gathering feedback and a full day retreat including Strategy Team Co-Chairs, Staff, Clergy Reps, Board members and the Executive Director (ED) was held with the consulting help of Dragonfly Partners. From that retreat, a committee was selected to pull all of the feedback about the need for a clear and transparent decision-making process into a recommendation to the ED.

The committee met on Dec. 15, 2015. In attendance were:

Bishop Dwayne Royster, ED  
Wiley Redding, Board Chair  
Paula Paul, Economic Dignity  
Cecily Harwitt, Organizing Staff  
Donna Searchfield, Intern  
Rabbi Julie Greenberg, Clergy Caucus, Education Strategy Team

Joining by phone:

Jude-Laure Denis, POWER Northeast ED

### **Process**

The committee set forth to answer the following questions.

1. What are the constituent parts of POWER?
2. How does a person become a member of each part?
3. What is the role of each part?
4. What decisions does each part make and what other parts have to be consulted?

The committee worked with a large visual graphic of POWER's organization and assigned roles to each constituent part. At the center of POWER's work is a commitment to racial justice. Groups working on Whites Confronting Racism and on Sacred Conversations about Race are at the heart of POWER's organizational chart. At the core of this work is our commitment to a transformational and faithful moral vision. (See chart)

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## **Decisions about the Role of each Constituent Part of POWER**

### The Legislative Assembly (formerly called The Leadership Assembly)

This Assembly is responsible for serious input into major decisions about federated campaigns and the nature of POWER's purpose, in conjunction with the Board which has final legal authority.

The Legislative Assembly is led by two Co-Chairs with staggered terms of two years each, elected by the Assembly.

The Co-Chairs are responsible for planning four Assemblies per year, one each season.

The Co-Chairs vet new proposals that must be recommended by at least five congregations (so that new ideas also reflect new organizing). The Co-Chairs can put new proposals on the agenda and initiate a process of further research, decision-making and possible referral to the Action Team.

Each paid-up member congregation of POWER can send as many people to the Assembly as it likes; each Local Organizing Committee (LOC) gets one vote.

Decisions in the Assembly are made based on one congregation one vote using majority rule.

### The Board

The Board is responsible for:

Fiscal and legal oversight  
Supervising the Executive Director  
Fundraising in conjunction with the ED and Staff  
Strategic planning.

The Board consists of:

\* 5 At-Large Members appointed by the Board for expertise that they can bring to the organization,

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\* 8 representatives chosen by the Legislative Assembly based on geographic regions (2 reps from each quadrant of the city),

\* 2 POWER Metro Reps,

\* 1 Clergy Rep,

\* the ED who is ex-officio but is empowered to break a tie.

The terms are three-year staggered terms.

## Local Organizing Committees (LOCs)

The LOCs are responsible for organizing congregants in their communities to participate in POWER campaigns and activities.

LOCs consist of two Co-Chairs in staggered terms and a group of local congregants. *We need to create a job description for the Co-Chairs.*

## The Action Team

The Action Team will meet once a month, on a POWER Tuesday, as a united Action Team. There will be whole group time together as well as break-out time for each separate Strategy Team.

Each POWER congregation is encouraged to send at least three LOC members to the Action Team meetings.

The purpose of the Action Team is to design and organize campaigns on issues chosen by the Legislative Assembly in conjunction with the Board with the goal of winning measurable outcomes in the building of a just world.

Currently POWER has five Strategy Teams:

Education

Economic Dignity

Live Free ~ Criminal Justice~ Mass De-carceration (*not yet staffed or organized but in the works*)

Fundraising

Communication

Each Strategy Team has two Co-Chairs in staggered two-year terms.

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Members of Strategy Teams must be on the LOC of their congregation for six months, if possible; have a one-to-one orientation with a Co-Chair or someone appointed by the Co-Chair; and attend three meetings before proposing or voting.

Each paid-up member congregation gets one vote when present at Strategy Team meetings.

## The Clergy Caucus

The purpose of the Clergy Caucus is to provide a prophetic narrative and moral messaging for POWER; to offer outreach to other clergy and congregations to grow POWER and to build relationships between communities.

In addition, the Co-Chairs of the Clergy Caucus are the Rapid Response Team that is consulted in urgent situations by the ED.

The Clergy Caucus has two Co-Chairs in staggered terms of two years.

Each congregation has one vote when present at the Clergy Caucus.

## The Staff

The role of the staff is to be the backbone of POWER by providing service in four areas:

Organizing expertise (including coalition building)

Administration

Fundraising

Communication

## Executive Director

The role of the ED is to implement the overall strategic and operational mission of POWER.

The ED allocates resources within the organization, including the deployment of staff, to fulfill this mission.

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The ED works closely with senior staff members.

The ED calls for periodic times of Reflection and Renewal.

The Ed delegates the handling of speaking engagements and other requests that come to POWER for involvement with other organizations.

The ED is welcome to constitute an Advisory Group / Core Leaders Team although this input will be advisory, not binding.

The ED is accountable to the Board which represents the organization.

The ED is responsible for shaping the activities of all other component parts of POWER, working with the Co-Chairs of each component and calling on other volunteers and consultants as needed to accomplish the mission.

## **Flow of Decision Making Within POWER**

1. Emergency decisions are made by the Executive Director in consultation with the Co-Chairs of the Clergy Caucus; the ED is responsible for immediately informing the Board Chair and when relevant activating the staff to work on communicating with POWER congregations. Examples of such decision-making moments would be unexpected current events that call for an immediate rally, press release or other rapid response.
2. Intermediate level decisions related to the justice work of POWER are made by the Strategy Teams. For example, the Strategy Teams build the arcs of the campaigns that the Legislative Assembly and Board approve, choose tactics within the campaigns, and engage in research and ally - ship. The work of the Strategy Teams is reported to and endorsed periodically by the Legislative Assembly to make sure it is in line with the overall goals chosen by the Legislative Assembly.
3. Major decisions about priorities for POWER, new directions for POWER, and very controversial issues within POWER are made by the Board in close and substantive consultation with the ED, the Clergy Caucus and the Legislative Assembly. For example, questions such as whether to organize beyond the limits of the city, whether to prioritize voter engagement or direct action, and how best to hold legislators accountable to the people, are questions for the body of the whole to wrestle with. No constituent part of POWER can make these major decisions alone; only with wide-spread agreement between the Legislative Assembly, the Clergy Caucus, the ED and the Board can major new decisions be made.

## **Flow of Information Within POWER**

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The Co-Chairs of each constituent part of POWER, or someone appointed by them, are responsible for communicating with the ED and with the communications staff about all important developments.

The ED supervises the flow of information through the organization, in part by ensuring that there is a regular newsletter, and that there are regular updates at all events.

Submitted by Julie Greenberg for the Decision Making Clarity Committee

Approved by Executive Director Bishop Royster, January, 11 2016.

Shared with POWER Legislative Assembly Jan. 18, 2016

Updated and Revised by Executive Director, Jan. 21, 2016