

Letter from the Personnel Committee

By now you have received the report from Consultant David Olsen and the call for a special meeting of Presbytery on June 24. You may be confused about why we are having another meeting and what happened to the agreement approved as amended in Ithaca. I think I can offer some additional clarity.

You will recall that the approved agreement was contingent upon Joelle's acceptance. She declined to accept the offer as amended. It was also contingent upon favorable legal review. The Presbytery-appointed lawyer, Mel Olver, had some substantial concerns, more than the minor changes the Personnel Committee was authorized to make; thus the offer had to be withdrawn. The report from David Olsen became available the same day. Given the recommendations in the report, the Council determined that a special meeting of Presbytery should be called to address the relationship. At the time the call was sent out, it was not known – and it still is not known – whether Joelle would voluntarily resign, with an agreed upon severance package, and it was felt that the call therefore needed to provide for consideration of termination, pursuant to the Position Description, but with wording which would permit consideration of other terms, as recommended by the Personnel Committee, if there was a resignation. The Personnel Committee has met again to formulate a new offer which takes into account both what Presbytery previously approved and what the lawyer advised. This new document is being presented to Joelle and her lawyer this week, and the lawyers are in conversation. If she accepts the proposed severance and offers her resignation, that severance and resignation will be presented to Presbytery for approval and acceptance. If an acceptable agreement cannot be reached with her resignation, the Presbytery will be asked to vote to dissolve the call and approve terms of severance in accordance with the Position Description and Personnel's recommendations.

We apologize for any unwarranted anxiety that has arisen. We wanted to be able to offer a clear word, and that has been coming into focus over these last days.

If you have questions or concerns, don't hesitate to call me.

With blessing,

Debbie Grohman
Chair of Personnel