

COMMISSION ON GOVERNANCE

Underlying Principles

Governance in a religious institute is generally understood as a proper management of resources, both human and economic, towards achievement of corporate and apostolic goals. Its practice is rooted in and defined by basic principles found in the rule of Saint Augustine and the Constitutions of the Augustinian Order: *“The foundation of Augustinian life is life in common, in which all the brothers by sharing themselves, construct a path directed to God in service to others, and in the communion of all their goods, perfecting themselves through the gift of divine grace”* (Const. 6; Rule I, 4).

Governance, therefore, should lead towards a building of a strong community, both local and provincial. And while the exercise of governance is mainly entrusted to friars elected or appointed to key offices for the operation of the community or Province is the responsibility of all each according to his talent and position, to contribute to the building of such community by faithful observance of established norms and by active participation in the implementation of adopted programs and projects (Cfr. Const. 11).

Moreover, in the management of economic resources, the Constitutions of the Order call our attention to the proper spirit that should govern our attitude in its exercise: *“While we are exiles from the Lord in this world (see 2 Cor. 5:6), we have to make use of temporal goods as the gifts of God, necessary for sustaining temporal life and for engaging in apostolic works especially among the poor. In order to accomplish their purposes, therefore, houses, provinces, and the Order may acquire, possess and administer temporal goods – all of which serves the good of the Church.”* (Const. 491).

Situational Analysis

1. The pursuit of good governance, a holistic view of the Province Vision and Mission is necessary in order to identify institutional directions and priorities. This means aligning programs and projects along the perimeters established by the Vision-Mission.
2. Realistic assessment of the resources of the Province, both human and material, is also needed vis-à-vis its institutional and apostolic commitments. Engagements in projects or programs which are considered important but demand resources that are very much taxing on the Province should be carefully studied and prioritized.
3. Friars have to obtain better preparation in handling administrative and apostolic responsibilities. Efficient financial management and proper investment of capital to generate better income should also be engaged in.
4. Lastly, the corporate awareness of all the friars, characterized by unity and harmony, should be enhanced for a more effective governance to exist in the Province.

Action Plan: Proposals Approved by the Chapter

1. To appoint formators in the seminary for two-terms of service for continuity of formation program. (to be included in the policies; responsible – Council)
2. To add qualified friar-personnel to serve as spiritual directors, confessors and teachers in all levels of formation. (When available; responsible – Council)

3. To adopt the existing CBCP Protocols in dealing with accusation of sexual improprieties and other abuses against evangelical vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. (to be discussed with friars; responsible – com. on Community life and Ongoing Formation)
4. To come up with a publication on cultural heritage, preferably to coincide during the celebration of our founding anniversary (30th Year) and other milestones in the Province (450th Year of the Founding of the Image of the Sto. Niño). (Publication on 30th Foundation of the Province and on the 450th Year of the finding of the image of Sto. Niño; responsible – a committee composed of Berdon, Juloc, Rentoria and Pilongo for the 30th Foundation, and a Committee composed of Mejares, Juloc, Rentoria, Dizon and Pido for the 450th year of the finding of the image).
5. To study the possibility of establishing an Augustinian Volunteer program to inculcate the spirit of volunteerism and promote Augustinian values. (To define its nature and create program; responsible – JPC (Luzon, Soquiño and an ad hoc committee to be formed.)
6. To confirm the acceptance of the offer of the Archbishop of Cebu to establish a religious residence and eventually a parish mission in Kinatarcan Island, Sta. Fe, Cebu.
7. To accept the offer of the Diocese of Surigao to manage the Burgos Parish in Siargao Island, Surigao del Norte. (Already done)
8. To accept the offer by the Bishop of Bayombong Diocese of a mission parish in the town of Saguday, Quirino in northern Luzon. (Already done)
9. To create the University of San Agustin – Sambag extension, Iloilo City, as a new community of the Province. (Already a residence, to be formalized as a community)
10. To explore the possibility of opening a community in Davao City, either a school or a parish community. (To make appointment with the bishop of Davao; responsible – Bugna and Gonzaga)
11. For the Province to assist financially for the construction of an Augustinian residence in Centro Sant' Agostino in Don Salvador Benedicto, Negros Occidental. (Let CSA-Bacolod make a proposal; 3-5 million contribution from the Province)
12. The Prior Provincial and his Council should study with the Educational Apostolate, On-going Formation and Financial Affairs Commissions and when possible, implement a plan that will take into consideration:
 - a. The need to re-locate the present Novitiate and Prayer House
 - b. The improvements needed in the present site of the Colegio del Sto. Niño.
 - c. And whether the rental properties of adjacent properties should be re-allocated for the use of the Colegio.
 - d. Study of possible future site for expansion and/or transfer of CSN.
 - e. What use would the current location of CSN be.
 - f. The need for a house for the elderly and sick of the Province.
 (Study the urgency and financial capability of the Province)

These will be presented for review and approval at the Intermediate Provincial Chapter. (Council to form an ad hoc Committee to do the study)

13. To create a permanent fund immediately with a seed money of ₱10 million, and to be augmented later from other sources and allocation from tax masses.
14. To create immediately Accounts Sweep in the Province to help the Province collect funds systematically from all earning communities and other sources. (Not implemented as not considered feasible by the Council as assessed by the Office of the Provincial Treasurer).
15. To establish the Provincial Profit Corporation that will handle all legal profit- undertakings of the Province. (Being studied; responsible - Office of the Provincial Treasurer)
16. To study the possibility of constructing a Provincial Library as well as an appointment of a lay assistant to the Provincial Archivist-Librarian. (Dependent on future use of CSN; possible extension in Mohon parish or novitiate; responsible - Council).
17. To study the possibility of improving San Jose Catholic School as an educational institution and its infrastructures, including the prospect of renting its ground spaces for commercial use. (Council has to form a committee to study this proposal)
18. That each Commission must set a specific program of action regarding the approved decrees, suggestions or recommendations, and must establish definite objectives and approaches on how to realize and to monitor them. (All commissions have to do this following this format, though more elaborated).
19. No selling or buying of real estate or other precious properties should be undertaken without the approval of the majority of members of the Province. (To be included in the Statutes of the Province)
20. To request the Archdiocese of Manila for an extension of our presence and administration of the Guadalupe monastery and church in Makati City. (To write the Archbishop of Manila; responsible - Council)

OTHER SUGGESTIONS TO THE 8th ORDINARY PROVINCIAL CHAPTER

For Consideration of the Provincial Council 2012-2016
and allotted to the Commission on Governance but not yet discussed

1. To select friars who have the inclination and potential to be formators, and to amply train them for such work.
2. To revisit the policies and procedures of exlaustration, leave of absence and re- integration of friars.
3. To conduct seminars on Project Management that should be held regularly in addition to financial management.
4. To include in the Book of Norms and Policies a number/or a section regarding the criteria in the selection of construction firms.
5. To construct structures in our selected properties that would generate additional income for the Province.
6. Revisit the policies and details of the Province's sabbatical leave.

7. Various trainings for and suggested qualities of Local Priors.
8. To build a mausoleum in burial lot in Dasmarinas, Cavite.
9. To create and design an organizational chart that is standardized or common for the entire Province.