



Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia
February 25, 2023

Rules of Order for 131st Annual Council

I—ORGANIZATION

Section 1. Council shall be duly organized when the President shall have taken the chair and satisfactory evidence of a quorum been made.

Section 2. After the organization of Council, the President shall appoint the following Committees of Council:

- a. *Credentials*—A committee of three, of both clergy and lay.
- b. *Agenda*—A committee to expedite the Agenda of Council prior to Council and during it, if necessary.
- c. *Dispatch of Business*—One or more persons, the number to be determined by the President of Council, to expedite the business of council prior to and during the time of council.
- d. *Constitution and Canons*—A committee of four, two of each order, the duties of which are to consider proposed amendments to the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese both during and between Councils and to report to the Council with recommendations as to form or substance or both. Members of this committee take office at the conclusion of the Annual Council at which they are appointed. They serve continuously until their successors are appointed and take office. Interim appointments to fill vacancies may be made by the President of Council.
- e. *Resolutions and Memorials*—A committee of four, two of each order, to which shall be referred all proposed Resolutions and Memorials. This Committee is charged with editing, as appropriate or necessary, all material submitted as Resolutions or Memorials, reporting them, if deemed in order, to Council with or without recommendation(s). Excepted are those which under these Rules are properly referable to some other committee.
- f. *Journal of Council*—A committee of two, of which the Secretary of the Diocese shall be chairperson, charged with the preparation of the Journal of Council for publication.
- g. *Committee to Certify the Minutes of Council*—a committee of three, one of whom shall be the Diocesan Secretary, who shall certify the Minutes of Council prior to publication of the Journal.

Section 3. The President may appoint a Parliamentarian for any meeting of Council.

Section 4. An Agenda and an Order of Business shall be early enacted. They shall allow for reports and addresses, elections, petitions, program and budget, and matters pertaining to the schedule of Council.

II—PROCEDURE FOR DEBATE AND ACTION

Section 1. The Rules of Order as last enacted shall remain in force until changed by a later Council.

Section 2. All resolutions, including those for the Rules of Order of Council, shall be submitted to the Secretary of the Diocese sixty days prior to Council's annual convening, which will allow for their dissemination to delegates prior to the annual meeting. Such resolutions shall automatically be deemed in possession of Council.

a. Resolutions, including those for the Rules of Order of Council, not previously submitted to the Secretary of the Diocese for this Council will be permitted from the floor upon a two-thirds vote only at the start of the first business session of Council and only when they carry a clear statement in writing of the circumstances that led to the request for their consideration. Such resolutions should be duplicated in advance.

b. No other substantive resolutions shall be later introduced unless two-thirds (2/3) of those present shall consent.

Section 3. Resolutions affecting the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese not submitted sixty days prior to the convening of Council may be introduced only if:

a. They are designated as "emergency" by the President of Council; and

b. They are accepted as an item of business by two-thirds (2/3) of delegates voting.

Section 4. All main motions and amendments shall be reduced to writing and read by the Secretary of the Council before they shall be debated; and none shall be debated until seconded.

Section 5. All motions affecting the Rules of Order of Council shall be submitted as an early order of business at Council, and opportunity shall be given for the offering of such motions. Motions affecting the Rules of Order not submitted sixty days in advance of council in accordance with Section 1 must receive a two-thirds majority in order to be enacted.

Section 6. No new motion or proposition shall be admitted under color of an amendment or substitute for the matter under consideration.

Section 7. If the question under debate contains several distinct propositions, the same shall be divided at the request of any member, and a vote taken separately, except that a motion to strike out and insert shall be indivisible.

Section 8. When a proposed amendment is under consideration, a motion to amend the same may be made, but no further amendment to such second amendment shall be in order; but a substitute to both amendments may be received, and if adopted, shall operate as an amendment to the original proposition.

Section 9. When a question is under consideration, no motion shall be received except to adjourn, to lay it upon the table, for the previous question, to postpone to a certain time, to postpone indefinitely, to commit it, to amend it or to substitute for amendments as in the last section, to limit or extend the limits of debate, to suspend rules, or to go into informal consideration of the matter at hand; and motions for any of these purposes shall have precedence in the order herein named. However, a motion to table, to move the previous question, to postpone or to commit a resolution shall not be in order unless opportunity to speak on the resolution has been afforded to at least two proponents and two opponents. If a motion to lay an amendment on the table is adopted, the matter before the Council shall be considered as if no such amendment had been offered.

Section 10. Motions to lay on the table or adjourn shall be decided without debate; and such motions shall always be in order, except while a member has the floor, or a vote on any question is being taken. Until decided, all debate, amendments, and other motions shall be out of order.

Section 11. Motions for the previous question, i.e., to close debate and proceed immediately to vote on the pending question, shall not be debatable and shall be decided by a majority vote.

Section 12. When a question has been decided by the Council or postponed indefinitely, a motion to reconsider can only be made by one member and seconded by another who voted with the majority. A motion to reconsider must be made the same day the vote is taken, or on the succeeding day.

Section 13. When a member desires to speak or present any matter to the Council, the member shall rise and respectfully address the President, and shall confine all remarks to the question under debate, avoiding all personalities. On debatable matters under consideration, speakers may address Council for up to three minutes, except that upon request, a majority vote may extend this time to a length specified; and no speaker shall be heard more than once upon the same motion or amendment until all others desiring to speak have had opportunity.

Section 14. If any member trespasses the Rules of Order of Council, the President shall, or any other members may, call that person to order, in which case the member so called to order shall immediately be seated, unless permitted to explain, until the question of the order is decided by the President.

Section 15. All questions of order shall be decided by the President without debate, but any member may appeal such decision, and on such appeal no member shall speak more than once without the permission of the Council.

Section 16. The names of the movers of all resolutions shall appear upon the Minutes of Council. In order to be considered by Council, all resolutions must be moved by:

- a. A member of Council as defined in Article IV of the Constitution of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Southern Virginia; or,
- b. A majority vote of a duly called meeting of the vestry of a parish or organized mission which is entitled to one or more lay delegates at Council as defined in Article IV of the Constitution of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Southern Virginia; or,
- c. A majority vote of a duly called meeting of the Executive Board, any Department or Committee of the Executive Board, Commission of the Diocese, Committee of the Diocese, Committee of Council or Corporation of the Diocese of Southern Virginia.

Section 17. When two or more members rise at once, the President shall say who is entitled to the floor, and from such decision there shall be no appeal.

Section 18. The vote on any question shall be taken by ayes and noes, unless five members demand a vote by orders, as required by the Constitution.

Section 19. Every member who may be in the house when the question is put shall vote, unless the Council, for special reasons, shall excuse a member from voting.

Section 20. No member shall vote upon a question in the decision of which that member is immediately and personally interested.

Section 21. Upon a division and count no member shall be counted who is not within the limits assigned as seats of members.

Section 22. The reports of all committees shall be in writing, and all reports recommending or requiring any action or expression of opinion by the Council, shall be accompanied by the proper resolutions expressing the same for the consideration of the Council.

Section 23. Motions affecting the Constitution or Canons of the Diocese which have passed a first reading in the previously appropriate Council shall be called up for action before consideration is given to any new or revised alternatives dealing with substantially the same substance.

Section 24. Except when in conflict with church Constitution or Canons, or any Rule of Order herein contained, the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* shall govern the interpretation of these Rules and the procedure to be followed in Council.

III—ELECTIONS

Section 1. Thirty days, or more, before the meeting of Council, the Bishop shall appoint a Chairperson of Tellers for the ensuing meeting.

Section 2. Voting shall be by electronic means with a third-party vendor serving as teller of votes.

Section 3. The duties of the Chairperson of Tellers shall be as follows:

- a. To supervise the electronic voting; to liaison with the teller; to supervise the recording of nominations; and to supervise the tabulation of votes.
- b. As directed by the Bishop, to make report to the Council the results of the balloting.

Section 4. All elections shall be by secret ballot, except in cases where the number of nominees equals the number of offices to be filled. Then the election may be by unanimous consent, the Secretary of the Council casting the unanimous ballot of the Council for the nominee or nominees.

Section 5. All nominations shall be made as an early item of business (in Council). After the nominations for each office have been closed by vote of Council, no further nominations may be made. However, “write-ins” at the time of balloting will be valid.

Section 6. Ballots shall be in electronic form. The names of the nominees and any other information concerning the number to be elected for each office and from each category, the requirements for election or such other information as may be needed will be included on the ballots.

Section 7. The Committee on Credentials shall furnish the Chairperson of Tellers before the time of voting one list of the clerical delegates eligible to vote and one list of the lay delegates eligible to vote. These lists shall be in alphabetical order.

Section 8. Elections shall be an order of business as early as possible and shall continue until completed. The Council may proceed with other business while votes are being tabulated, but reports of the Chairperson of Tellers and re-balloting, if necessary, shall take precedence over all other business.

Section 9. The procedure of voting shall be as follows:

- a. Secret electronic ballots from both clerical and lay delegates shall be received by the third-party vendor.
- b. If voting on the first ballot does not produce the majority needed to elect persons for all the offices to be filled by a majority vote, the number of candidates on the next ballot will be reduced by a number equal to one-half (1/2) of the number of candidates in excess of those needed to be elected. The number of candidates in excess of those needed to be elected is defined as the number of remaining unelected candidates minus the number of offices remaining to be filled (rounding off to the larger rather than the smaller number of candidates for the next ballot). This procedure shall be used on subsequent ballots until such time as each and every person to be elected has received a majority vote.

c. In case of electing Deputies and Alternates to General Convention, the following procedure shall be used:

(i) Balloting for Deputies shall continue according to Rule of Order III, Section 8.b until the total number of persons elected by majority vote equals the total number of Deputies required to be elected. The persons elected shall be ranked first by the ballot on which they were elected (the earlier ballot having higher rank) and second, within that ballot by the total votes cast for each candidate (the candidate with the higher number of votes having the higher rank).

(ii) Balloting for Alternates shall continue according to Rule of Order III, Section 8.b until the total number of persons elected by majority vote equals the total number of Alternates required to be elected. The persons elected shall be ranked first by the ballot on which they were elected (the earlier ballot having higher rank) and second, within that ballot by the total votes cast for each candidate (the candidate with the higher number of votes having the higher rank).

Section 10. When the balloting has been concluded, the Chairperson of Tellers shall report the result as outlined above.

Section 11. When any re-balloting has been concluded, the Chairperson of Tellers shall report the result as outlined above.

IV—GENERAL REGULATIONS

Section 1. Members of Council shall attend all sessions unless by urgent cause prevented.

Section 2. The President has discretion to designate seats outside the limits of those allotted to the use of members for the seating of visitors to Council.