

Special Rule of Order for the Restructuring of Diocesan Council

Background and Rationale

Last year, Convention approved on First Reading amendments to Article XI, Section 1 of the Diocesan Constitution that if passed on Second Reading this year will restructure Diocesan Council, so that Council will consist of the 8 members of the Standing Committee, one Lay Deputy from each of the 4 Districts, the Bishop and the Chancellor. The purpose of this Special Rule of Order is to establish the sequential process for the consideration and implementation of the proposed constitutional amendment if approved upon Second Reading.

The Special Rule of Order provides that if the amendments are approved on Second Reading, this Convention will then proceed to take up the necessary canonical amendments, and hold the District elections, so that the new structure for Diocesan Council will be in place to begin its work effective January 1, 2021. To do that, the Special Rule of Order suspends the ordinary rule that constitutional and canonical changes do not become effective until the close of the convention approving them, for the sole purpose of allowing the canonical changes and elections to take place at this sitting of Convention.

The restructuring of Diocesan Council was presented to Convention upon the recommendations and report of the Governance Working Group of Project CREED, which also recommended that the terms of office for the District representatives on Council be four (4) years. The four-year terms of the members of Council elected by the Districts will be comparable to the four-year term of the members of Council who will serve on Council as a byproduct of their election or appointment to the Standing Committee. Appropriate and necessary revisions to Canon V, Of the Diocesan Council, have also been prepared. The Special Rule of Order also provides a means for electing the District representatives on a rotating basis.

The sequence would thus be:

1. Adopt Special Rule of Order.
2. Take up Second Reading of Amendment to Article XI, Section 1.
3. If approved, take up proposed amendments to Canon V to implement constitutional change.
4. Elect the 4 new District representatives to Council during District Commission meetings, for terms to begin 1/1/2021.

Special Rule of Order for the Restructuring of Diocesan Council:

1. This Special Rule of Order shall govern the process for considering and effective time of the proposed amendments to Article XI, Section 1 of the Diocesan Constitution, and Canon V, Of the Diocesan Council, regarding the composition of Diocesan Council.
2. After adoption of this Special Rule of Order, at the appointed time on the Agenda, Convention will take up the Second Reading of the proposed amendment to Article XI, Section 1.
3. If the amendment to Article XI, Section 1 is approved as required by Article XV, Convention may proceed during the same session to consider and act upon the amendments to Canon V, Of the Diocesan Council, proposed to implement the constitutional amendment.

4. Upon approval of the proposed amendments to Canon V, Convention may proceed during the same session to hold the District elections for the four (4) Lay Deputies to be elected to Diocesan Council under the amended Canon V, for terms commencing January 1, 2021.
5. To enable elections to proceed from year to year on a rotating basis, the Lay Deputies from the Districts shall be elected to staggered initial terms on Diocesan Council, with one elected to a term of one (1) year, one elected to a term of two (2) years, one elected to a term of three (3) years, and one elected to a term of four (4) years.
6. Prior to the District elections at this Convention, the President of Diocesan Council and the Chairpersons of the District Commissions shall have agreed collectively on the distribution of the staggered initial terms on Council among the Districts. Failing agreement, the distribution will be determined by lot.
7. The new composition of Diocesan Council will otherwise become effective January 1, 2021. The terms of office of the current Clergy and Lay members of Diocesan Council shall end on December 31, 2020, regardless of when elected. All current Lay members of Council who are Deputies and who shall not have completed four (4) full years of service as a member of Council as of December 31, 2020 shall be eligible to stand for election at this session of Convention for service as the representative from their District on the restructured Diocesan Council.
8. Any other Rule of Order inconsistent with this Special Rule of Order is suspended solely for the purpose of allowing this Special Rule of Order to take precedence.