

PARISH COUNCIL BYLAWS

ARTICLE I: SELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS

Section 1: There will be 9 at-large members on the Parish Council. At each annual selection, one-third of the members shall be selected for a term of three years to fill the vacancies caused by the members whose terms are due to expire.

Section 2: At least 60 days prior to each annual selection of new members, the chairperson shall appoint a Selection Committee of at least four members, two of whom are Council members. The Selection Committee's responsibility is to manage all aspects of the selection process including:

- a) **Education of Parishioners:** Parishioners are educated about the Council and the selection process for at least two weeks. They are asked to give prayerful consideration to the submission of their own names or the names of other parishioners for membership on the Council.
- b) **Submission of Names:** Forms for submission of names of parish members for membership on the Council are distributed at all Masses on a designated weekend. Parishioners are invited to submit the names of individuals they believe have the essential characteristics of a Council member. Forms for the submission of names will also be available outside of the designated weekend and may be submitted at any time. Names submitted anonymously will not be considered.
- c) **Notification:** Individuals whose names were submitted by other parishioners are contacted by Selection Committee members to inform them that their names were submitted and that there is a required orientation. Individuals who submitted their own names are also informed by the Selection Committee about the required orientation.
- d) **Orientation:** The Selection Committee plans the orientation and requires the attendance of those individuals willing to consider serving on the Council. This orientation is optional for current Council members who are seeking a second term.
- e) **Acceptance:** Those who feel called to serve as Council members after their orientation inform the Selection Committee of their willingness to serve and provide the Committee with biographical information and statements of parish vision. The Selection Committee tries to ensure that the slate of possible Council members is representative of the parish community. If a member of the Selection Committee expresses a desire to serve on the Council, that individual ceases to be a Selection Committee member.

- f) **Facilitation:** The Selection Committee facilitates the actual selection process and announces the names of new Council members to the parish along with their biographical information.
- g) **Sequence of Selection Process** will typically be as follows:

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| Week #1 | form Selection Committee |
| Week #2 | educate parish |
| Week #3 | educate parish |
| Week #4 | names of possible Council members submitted |
| Week #5 | confirm possible Council members |
| Week #6 | orientation |
| Week #7 | selection of new members |
| Week #8 | announce new members to parish |

Section 3: The selection of new members of the Council shall be by discernment. In the context of prayer, and with the help of a facilitator if necessary, the Selection Committee discerns the individuals best suited to serve on the Council at this time.

Section 4: The selection of the youth member(s) shall be facilitated by the Coordinator of High School Youth Ministry who will ensure that all eligible youth have the opportunity to be considered for one of these positions.

ARTICLE II: VACANCIES AND REMOVALS

Section 1: Any member of the Council may resign by filing a written resignation with the chairperson, with a copy to the pastor.

Section 2: At any meeting of the Council, any at-large member may be removed for good cause by consensus or, if necessary, by an affirmative vote of three-fourths of the total Council membership.

Any member whose removal has been proposed shall be given an opportunity to be heard at a meeting. Good cause includes missing two consecutive meetings without good reason, physical or mental incapacity, or failure to perform duties as a Council member.

Section 3: A vacancy among the at-large members shall be filled by a qualified parishioner appointed to serve the remainder of the term. The chairperson will make the appointment, with approval of the Council and Pastor.

Section 4: A vacancy among the youth members shall be filled by a qualified parishioner appointed to serve the remainder of the term. The Coordinator of High School Youth Ministry will make the appointment, with approval of the Council and Pastor.

ARTICLE III: OFFICERS

Section 1: Selection of officers of the Council shall be by discernment from among and by the Council members present at the annual transition meeting. Offices shall be filled in the following order: chairperson, vice-chairperson and secretary.

Section 2: At the transition meeting following the annual selection of Council members, newly selected members join the existing Council for the purpose of selecting Council officers for the following year.

Section 3: The chairperson:

1. Is aware of the tasks and responsibilities of the Council and communicates these to the Council, committees and parish community.
2. Organizes/coordinates activities and work of the Council. Develops and maintains an annual Council calendar consistent with the parish calendar.
3. Prepares the meeting agendas in consultation with the pastor and other Council officers. Ensures that time is spent in prayer. The agenda is posted for parishioners to review at least the weekend before the meeting. Submits the agenda to Council members at least 3 days before the meeting.
4. Provides formation/education for Council members, utilizing the parish staff and offerings at the regional and diocesan levels.
5. Facilitates Council meetings by helping members work together, participating fully in discussions and decision-making through consensus. Also oversees parish meetings.
6. Monitors implementation of all Council recommendations and decisions.
7. Is an ex officio member of all standing and ad hoc committees of the Council.
8. Performs duties consistent with the office as the Council may direct.
9. Coordinates the discernment of officers at the annual transition meeting.
10. Assists the next chairperson in understanding the Council's history, responsibilities and resources. Transfers all Council materials to the new chairperson.

Section 4: The vice-chairperson:

1. Conducts meetings in the absence of the chairperson.
2. Becomes chairperson in the event of vacancy.
3. Ordinarily serves as a liaison to the Finance Council
4. Performs duties consistent with the office as the chairperson or the Council may direct.

Section 5: The secretary:

1. Oversees the accurate recording of the minutes of each meeting. Sees to it that the agenda and minutes and are made available to the Council members, Standing Committee chairpersons, Finance Council, and the parish. Provides a condensed report of the meeting for posting in the parish.
2. Takes attendance at meetings and records absences.
3. Maintains a list of all Council and standing committee officers and members and their terms, the list of all ad hoc committee chairpersons and members and keeps these lists updated with current contact information.
4. Provides parish office with Council materials to be archived.
5. Reports to the Council all communications. Handles all correspondence for the Council, including agendas, minutes, notification of regular and special meetings, notes of thanks, etc.
6. Performs such duties consistent with office as the chairperson or Council may direct.
7. Assists the next secretary in understanding the responsibilities of the office and transfers all secretarial materials to the new secretary.

Section 6: The Council will designate a non-member as recording secretary of the minutes.

ARTICLE IV: MEETINGS

Section 1: Regular meetings of the Council shall be held at such time, place and date as the Council may designate. Prayer shall be an integral part of the meeting.

Section 2: The agenda shall be developed in advance of the meeting by the chairperson in consultation with the pastor and other Council officers based upon the proposals from committees, liaison reports, financial reports, the Council annual calendar, strategic plan or mission goals, ongoing needs and concerns of the parish. Parishioners may submit possible agenda items for consideration to any Council member at least one week before the meeting.

Section 3: Advance notice of the time and place of the meetings of the Council shall be published in the parish bulletin, and all members of the parish shall be entitled and welcome to attend as observers. The Council may open any meeting to discussion by parish members on such subjects and under such rules as the Council may announce.

Section 4: Special Meetings. Notice of special meetings shall be given to all members within a reasonable time before the meeting and posted in the parish, stating its time, place and purpose. No other business than that stated as the purpose shall be conducted at that meeting.

Section 5: On a rare occasion when a question arises at a Council meeting that relates to a person's right to privacy, the Council may request the absence of visitors for that portion of the meeting. The content of the closed session is not part of the formal minutes of the meeting and is not made public.

Section 6: Absence. Notification of intended absence should be given to the Council Chairperson, Vice-chairperson or Secretary before the meeting.

ARTICLE V: PARISH STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 1. Purpose. Each Standing Committee implements parish priorities and goals in its own areas of responsibility in the collaborative spirit of working together to accomplish the parish's stated mission. All committee work leads to building a faith community, proclaiming the Word of God, calling people to prayer and motivating people to serve others.

Section 2: Scope. All committees are accountable to the Council. Committees make decisions in their areas of responsibility following the principle of subsidiarity, which means making decisions at the most appropriate level in the parish committee structure.

Section 3: Functions. The basic functions of each Council Standing Committee are to:

1. Identify needs of the parish within its areas of responsibility and in keeping with the parish mission.
2. Establish priorities among the needs and communicate how these needs can realistically be addressed and where inter-committee collaboration might be effective.
3. Formulate long-range and short-term goals and objectives.
4. Research and investigate options to implement goals.
5. Share the proposed programs to the Council for support.
6. Communicate with the pastor and pastoral staff about the implementation.
7. Maintain communication with the parish concerning programs, encouraging active support and involvement.
8. Maintain communication with the respective diocesan offices and agencies for guidelines and resources.
9. Provide for on-going formation of committee members in its area of responsibility through reading, study, prayer, spiritual formation, workshops, etc.
10. Suggest budget priorities in the area of the committee's responsibility and make recommendations to the Finance Council (through the Administration and Planning Committee).
11. Continually evaluate the effectiveness of programs and activities.
12. Provide the Council with regular reports, oral or written, of their committee.

ARTICLE VI – Parish Council’s Relationship with Finance Council

Section 1: Parish Council and Finance Council are the two primary bodies in our parish structure.

Section 2: Parish Council is charged with assisting the pastor in determining and facilitating the mission of our parish. Finance Council exists to support the parish mission by assisting the pastor in the wise use of parish resources.

Section 3: In order to promote adequate communication between the Parish Council and the Finance Council, a Parish Council member will serve as liaison between the Parish Council and the Finance Council. This liaison will ordinarily be the vice-chairperson of the Parish Council.

Section 4: Parish Council will supply Finance Council with the agenda and minutes of its meetings.

ARTICLE VII – Parish Council’s Relationship with Deacons Assigned to Parish

Section 1: Any deacon is welcome to attend any Council meeting.

Section 2: Once a year all the deacons will be invited to a Council meeting to share their experiences and observations so as to assist the Council in determining and facilitating the mission of the parish.