STANDING COMMITTEE RESTRUCTURING FOR BROADER REGIONAL MEMBERSHIP

The Standing Committee of the Diocese is composed of members who are nominated from the Regional Assemblies (or from nominations made on the floor at meetings of the Convention). The members are required to be elected by the Convention. (Article IV of the Constitution of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church states that “In every Diocese a Standing Committee shall be elected by the Convention thereof….”). The current Constitution and Canons of the Diocese sets the number of members at eight, provides four members will be priests and four members will be lay individuals, and provides for Regional Assemblies to submit multiple nominations for the Standing Committee. Currently there are eight regions. The number of regions may only be changed by amending the Canons.

Over the years the prevailing membership of the Standing Committee has not been a representative sample of membership from the eight regions. The members (both clerical and lay) have disproportionately been elected from certain regions more than others. The proposed amendments to the Constitution and the Canons would provide that each Regional Assembly would nominate one individual for the Standing Committee. The individual could be clerical or lay and would be from that region. In addition, any number of floor nominations could be made for Standing Committee at a meeting of the Convention. The floor nominations could be for qualified individuals from the applicable region regardless of being clerical or lay.

Each Regional Assembly may choose any qualified individual to be a nominee. A qualified individual is any cleric canonically resident in the Diocese from the region or lay communicant of this Diocese in good standing who is from the region and at least 18 years of age. The proposed amendment requires that each Regional Assembly will consider the balance of clerical and lay membership on the Standing Committee when making the nomination and authorizes the Regional Assemblies to coordinate efforts to maintain clerical and lay membership on the Standing Committee. The proposed amendment does not restrict a Regional Assembly’s choice of nominee, such as a requirement that Regional Assemblies alternate clerical and lay nominations. However, it is anticipated that the Regional Assemblies will develop a custom or practice to maintain both clerical and lay membership, such as alternating clerical and lay nominations each year that nominations are made.

The proposed amendments consolidate the provisions relating to membership in the Canons. This will have the related provisions grouped together and facilitate any future adjustments made by amendments that the Convention may decide to make.

Therefore, the Committee on the Constitution and the Canons will move at the next meeting of the Convention—

(1) the adoption of a resolution to amend the Constitution of the Diocese with this being the first of two Conventions to approve it; and

(2) the adoption of a resolution amending the Canons, as follows:
Resolved,

SECTION 1. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION ON THE STANDING COMMITTEE.

Article 10 of the Constitution of the Diocese is amended to read as follows:

“ARTICLE 10
“STANDING COMMITTEE

“SEC. 1001. ESTABLISHMENT.

“There is established a Standing Committee.

“SEC. 1002. FIRST MEETING.

“(a) IN GENERAL.— The Standing Committee shall meet on the last day of the annual meeting of the Convention, or as soon after that annual meeting as practicable.

“(b) ELECTION OF PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY.— At the meeting of the Standing Committee described under subsection (a), the Standing Committee shall elect 1 of the members to be President and another member to be Secretary.

“SEC. 1003. RULES AND PROCEEDINGS.

“(a) RULES.— The Standing Committee may establish and modify rules that—
(1) relate to the proceedings of the Committee; and
(2) are consistent with the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese.

“(b) NOTICE OF MEETINGS.— The members of the Standing Committee shall be given reasonable notice of any meeting of the Committee.

“(c) QUORUM.—
“(1) IN GENERAL.— Except as provided under paragraph (2), a majority of the members shall constitute a quorum.

“(2) EXCEPTIONS.— The rules of the Standing Committee or a Canon may require a quorum that is greater than a majority.

“(d) MINUTES.— The Standing Committee shall keep regular minutes of the proceedings of the Committee.”.

Resolved,

SECTION 1. STANDING COMMITTEE.

(a) IN GENERAL.— Canon 7 is amended to read as follows:

“CANON 7
“STANDING COMMITTEE
"SEC. 701. MEMBERSHIP."

"(a) NUMBER OF MEMBERS.— The number of members of the Standing Committee shall be equal to the number of regions in the Diocese.

"(b) NOMINATION BY REGIONAL ASSEMBLIES.— Each Regional Assembly shall nominate an individual for election as a member of the Standing Committee.

"(c) QUALIFICATIONS.— An individual is qualified to be a nominee for election to the Standing Committee, if that individual is—

"(1) a priest or deacon of this Church who is—
   "(A) canonically resident in this Diocese; and
   "(B) from the applicable region as determined under section 2302(b)(2); or

"(2) a lay communicant of this Diocese in good standing who is—
   "(A) at least 18 years of age; and
   "(B) a member of a parish, separate congregation, organized mission, cathedral or college chaplaincy within the applicable region.

"(d) CLERICAL AND LAY MEMBERSHIP.— When making a nomination for election to the Standing Committee, each Regional Assembly may—

"(1) nominate any qualified individual described under subsection (b)(1) or (2);

"(2) consider the balance of the number of clerical and lay members of the Standing Committee; and

"(3) act in coordination with any other Regional Assembly to maintain an equal or approximately equal number of clerical members relative to the number of lay members.

"SEC. 702. TERMS."

"(a) STAGGERED 2-YEAR TERMS.— The term for each member of the Standing Committee is 2 years. The terms of the members shall be staggered in 2 classes.

"(b) TERM LIMITATIONS.— A member of the Standing Committee shall not be eligible for reelection until after the lapse of 1 year, if that member has served continuously on the Standing Committee for—

"(1) 3 full 2–year terms; or

"(2) 2 full 2–year terms and any part of an additional 2–year term.

"(c) SERVICE UNTIL SUCCESSORS ELECTED.— Each member of the Standing Committee shall serve until a successor is elected.

"SEC. 703. VACANCIES."

"(a) IN GENERAL.— If there is a vacancy in the membership of the Standing Committee, the remaining members—

"(1) shall be notified of the vacancy and the time and place of a meeting of the Standing Committee to fill the vacancy; and

"(2) subject to subsection (d), shall vote at the meeting to fill the vacancy.

"(b) QUALIFICATIONS.— An individual is qualified to fill a vacancy, if that individual meets the qualifications under section 701(c)."
“(c) TIMELINESS.— A vacancy shall be filled under subsection (a) as soon as practicable after the vacancy occurs.
“(d) SERVICE.—
“(1) IN GENERAL.— An individual who is elected by the Standing Committee to fill a vacancy under this section shall serve until the first annual meeting of the Convention following that election.
“(2) REMAINDER OF TERM.— If there is any time remaining in the applicable term—
“(A) the applicable Regional Assembly shall nominate an individual to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term; and
“(B) Canon 4 shall apply to the election.

“SEC. 704. REPORTS AND RECORDS.

“(a) REPORT.— The Standing Committee shall make an annual report to the Convention of the official acts of the Standing Committee.
“(b) EXAMINATION OF RECORDS.— The Bishop may examine any record of the Standing Committee, including any record of the proceedings of the Standing Committee.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT INCLUDING DEACONS AS ASSISTANT CLERGY.— Section 4702 of the Canons is amended—
(1) by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (b); and
(2) in paragraph (1)(A) of the redesignated subsection (b), by inserting “or deacon” after “priest”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.— This resolution (amending the Canons) shall take effect on the day after the date of the second vote of approval of the amendment to amend Article 10 of the Constitution of the Diocese first approved in calendar 2022.