

Diocese of New Jersey
Rules of Order, Special Convention on 2024 Budget
December 9, 2023

I. Terminology, Notice and Broadcast Provisions for Electronic Meetings

1. For purposes of Conventions held in part or in whole by electronic means, these constitutional and canonical terms shall have the following interpretation:
"Convention": The meeting of clergy and laity of the Diocese of New Jersey conducted wholly or in part via remote electronic participation by its members;
"seat": The ability to participate in the Convention via electronic connection;
"voice": The right to make oral statements during the Convention; and
"vote": The right to cast an oral voice or electronic poll vote or file an electronic ballot during the Convention.
2. In order to facilitate the conduct of an electronic meeting of the Convention, the Ecclesiastical Authority shall appoint one or more Convention Managers to assist the President and Secretary of the Convention.
3. Notice of Meeting of Virtual Convention and Connection Information
 - A. If the Ecclesiastical Authority shall call for a meeting of Convention by electronic means, the notice for such meeting shall be given by publication on the diocesan website and otherwise no later than four weeks prior to the date called for the opening of the meeting.
 - B. No later than three weeks before any such meeting, every member of the clergy entitled to seat, voice, or vote in Convention must notify the Ecclesiastical Authority of his or her email address in order to receive the ability to participate in a Convention held electronically. No later than such date, every rector, vicar, or a warden of any congregation entitled to representation in Convention must notify the Ecclesiastical Authority of the email address of (a) every Lay Deputy of such congregation or (b) any Alternate who pursuant to Canon 2, Section 3 will replace an elected Lay Deputy who will be unable to attend the Convention.
 - C. No later than three days before such meeting, the Secretary of Convention or his or her designee shall send an email to every member of Convention setting forth (a) the time of the meeting, (b) the URL and codes necessary to connect to the Internet meeting service, and, as an alternative and backup to the audio connection included within the Internet service, the phone number and access codes the member needs to participate aurally by telephone, and (c) if applicable, a Voter ID code.
 - D. Each member is responsible for his or her audio and Internet connections; no action shall be invalidated on the grounds that the loss of, or poor quality of, a member's individual connection prevented participation in the meeting.
 - E. All participants' microphones will be muted until they are recognized to speak by the President of Convention. The President of Convention may cause or direct the disconnection or muting of a member's connection if it is causing undue interference with the meeting. The President's decision to do so, which is subject to an undebatable appeal that can be made by any member, shall be announced during the meeting and recorded in the minutes.
4. The President, the Secretary, or their assistants shall cause a video of the President to be displayed throughout the meeting except during play of prerecorded matter or during a recess, and shall also cause display of the video of the member currently recognized to speak (if such display is permitted by them) or report.
5. The Convention Managers shall arrange for broadcasting via livestreaming or otherwise so that the public and members of the Diocese other than members of the Convention may observe the proceedings.

II. Opening of Convention

1. The Convention shall be opened and closed with prayer, and at noonday there shall be appropriate intercessions for missions.
2. Prior to each session of the Convention there shall be such worship services as the Ecclesiastical Authority may direct.
3. All Members of the Clergy and all lay Deputies must register their attendance at each session of the Convention in such manner as the Secretary of Convention may direct. For electronic meetings, members must identify themselves as required to sign in to the Internet meeting service, and shall maintain Internet and audio access throughout the meeting whenever present, but shall sign out upon any departure before adjournment.
4. The Convention shall be called to order on Saturday, December 9, 2023 at 10:00 o'clock a.m. by the Bishop if present; otherwise, the Secretary of Convention shall call the meeting to order and, provided a quorum is present, shall supervise the election of a President pro tempore.
5. The Convention Managers shall determine and report to the Secretary the presence of a quorum as required by the Constitution on the basis of (a) those members physically present and (b) for those participating remotely, members' login information and a subsequent confirmation. The members so present may continue to do business until adjournment, notwithstanding the withdrawal of enough members to leave less than a quorum. Less than a quorum can adjourn.

III. Order of Business

The Order of Business shall begin as follows:

1. Report of the Secretary as to whether a quorum is present.
2. Report of the Committee on the Credentials of Lay Deputies.
3. Report of the Committee on the Classification of Congregations.
4. Report of the Committee on Rules of Order and Dispatch of Business.
5. Report of the Finance and Budget Committee on the Preliminary Diocesan Budget for the calendar year 2024.

IV. Motions and Amendments

1. No motion shall be debated or voted on until it is seconded.
2. For meetings held electronically, a member shall use the Zoom "raise hand" request and await recognition, provided, that members responding "so moved" to a request from the President for a motion, or seconding any motion that requires a second, must do so using the Zoom "raise hand" feature without needing to be recognized by the President. Once the pending action is completed, the Convention Manager shall clear the online queue.
3. No vote shall be taken on a nonprocedural motion until a written copy of the text of the motion with the mover's name and parish affiliation is given to the Secretary and restated by the President immediately before the vote is taken. For meetings held electronically, shall, in addition to using the Zoom "raise hand" request, before or after being recognized, post the motion in writing by an email to info@dioceseofnj.org, preceded by the member's name and parish affiliation. The Secretary may furnish forms for such submissions. In addition, the Secretary shall designate an online area exclusively for the display of the immediately pending question and other relevant pending questions (such as the main motion, or the pertinent part of the main motion, when an amendment to it is immediately pending); and, to the extent feasible, the Secretary, or any assistants appointed by him or her for this purpose, shall cause such questions, or any other documents that are currently before the meeting for action or information, to be displayed therein until disposed of.
4. Votes may be taken by the Zoom polling feature. Votes by orders shall not be permitted. Results of votes may be reported to the President by the Secretary.

5. When a question is under consideration, no further motion may be made unless to lay upon the table, to postpone it to a time certain, to postpone it indefinitely, to correct it, to amend or divide it, or to offer a substitute; and motions for any of those purposes shall have precedence in the order herein named, provided that an amendment, once amended, may not be further amended before a vote. A motion to lay upon the table shall be in order only when its purpose is to lay aside the matter under consideration for more urgent business. A proper motion to lay upon the table, or a motion to postpone, shall always be in order unless some member is speaking.

V. Rules for Debate

1. Any members desiring to speak must first identify themselves and their church or other affiliation, must with due respect address their remarks to the President, and must speak directly to the point.
2. No member shall speak more than twice (except the mover, who is entitled to reply) in the same debate or for a period longer than three minutes without leave of the Convention. In the case of a motion or resolution moved by a committee, the proposer of the motion or resolution (or if there is more than one proposer, one representative of the proposers) shall have the rights of a mover under the preceding sentence.
3. If any member, in speaking or otherwise, transgresses the rules of the Convention, the President shall, or any member through the Chair may, call him to order; and if ruled out of order said person shall immediately yield the floor unless permitted by the Convention to explain or to proceed in order.

VI. Order for Special Debate

1. The Committee on Rules of Order and Dispatch of Business may propose an order for special debate on a particular question, to include a time limit for consideration of the question, and a limit on the length of each speech.
2. The Convention may, by a two-thirds majority, call for an order for Special Debate.
3. Whenever such special order has been adopted, no motion to table, postpone, call the question, or otherwise terminate debate shall be in order until the time to terminate debate set forth in the order shall have expired, or until there are no further members who desire to speak, whichever occurs first. To the extent practicable, the President shall recognize speakers of opposite views in alternate succession.

VII. Committee of the Whole

At the direction of the President or on motion, the Convention may resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole.

VIII. Points of Order

All questions of order shall be determined by the President without debate; any member may appeal from the decision, and on such appeal no member shall speak more than once without leave of the Convention.

IX. Adjournment

1. A motion to adjourn is always in order unless some member is speaking.
2. Any vote to adjourn, if carried, is subject to the consideration by the Convention of closing motions by the Secretary or Assistant Secretary. Such closing motions as directing that the treasurer of the diocese be directed to pay convention expenses, sending greetings to retired bishops and members of the clergy who were unable to be present due to illness, and the like, are prior to the closing prayers.

X. Amendments to and Suspension of Rules of Order

These Rules of Order may be amended by a majority vote after reference to and report from the Committee on Rules of Order and Dispatch of Business, or by a two-thirds vote without such reference. They may also be suspended by a three-fourths vote.

XI. Other Matters of Parliamentary Procedure

Except when in conflict with the Constitution or Canons or any rule hereof, the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the procedure of the Convention.