

**DIOCESE OF CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA
COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES
Resolution to Permit “Virtual” Convention**

WHEREAS, Article III of the Constitution of the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania provides in Section 1 that there shall be a stated Convention of the Church in this Diocese at such time and at such place as shall be fixed by the preceding Convention; and

WHEREAS, Section 1(A) of Article III provides that, for any sufficient cause occurring after the designation of the place of the meeting of the Annual Convention, the Ecclesiastical Authority may appoint another time or place, or both, for the meeting of Convention; and

WHEREAS, Title I, Canon III(B) of the Diocese provides that the Diocesan Council of Trustees shall “...carry out the program and work...” of Convention when the Convention is not in session; and

WHEREAS, the Convention Committee and the Bishop, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the risk both to individuals and the public health that have been associated with large, in person assemblies, have requested that the Diocesan Council of Trustees adopt this resolution setting forth a special rule of order permitting Conventions of the Diocese to be held as “Virtual” Conventions, using electronic communications technology having the capabilities specified in the resolution; and

WHEREAS, the procedure for conducting the Annual Convention permitted by the resolution is consistent with the requirements for conducting a similar meeting of the members of a Pennsylvania nonprofit corporation provided in Sections 5704(a) and 5708(b) of the Associations Code, 15 Pa. C. S. Sections 5704(a) and 5708(b),

Now, Therefore, **BE IT RESOLVED**:

1. The Diocesan Council of Trustees concurs with the recommendation of the Convention Committee and the Bishop that the plans for Conventions may be based on holding the meeting as a “Virtual Convention,” and approves the adoption of the Provisional Convention Rules of Order for Electronic Meetings as attached to this Resolution as Appendix “A”, to permit the Virtual Convention to be held, using electronic communications technology having the capabilities specified in this resolution.
2. That Conventions of this Diocese held hereafter may, at the discretion of the Ecclesiastical Authority, be held by means of the Internet or other electronic communications technology in a fashion pursuant to which Clergy and Lay Delegates, wherever they may be physically located, have the opportunity to read or hear the proceedings substantially concurrently with their occurrence, may vote on matters submitted to the members of Convention, pose questions to the President of Convention and members of any other body, make appropriate motions and comment on the business of the meeting, and express their consent or dissent to any matter presented to Convention for action.
3. The participation by a member of any Convention at a meeting conducted using the technological means specified in paragraph 2, including voting and taking any other

action, shall constitute the presence of, or vote or action by, or consent or dissent of the member of Convention.

4. The Agenda for the 151st Annual Convention shall include, as a first order of business, a resolution to approve and ratify this resolution of Diocesan Council as a special rule of order, to include the use of the specific procedures and technology to be identified and recommended in accordance with this resolution, to hold the 151st Annual Convention.

**APPENDIX “A”
TO RESOLUTION OF COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES
IMPLEMENTING VIRTUAL CONVENTION
DIOCESE OF CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA**

Provisional Convention Rules of Order for Electronic Meetings

1. **General.** These Provisional Rules shall go into effect on the convening of a “virtual” Convention of the Diocese, held by electronic means. The regular canonical Rules of Order shall nevertheless apply to any virtual meeting, to the extent not inconsistent with these Provisional Rules.
2. **Notice; Login Information.** The Diocese shall notify Members of Convention, at least sixty (60) days before each meeting, of the date and the time of a virtual meeting of Convention, and, as soon as possible thereafter, but not later than forty-eight (48) hours before the commencement of such meeting), the URL and codes necessary to connect to the Zoom meeting platform. The Secretary shall also include a copy of, or a link to, these rules.
3. **Login time.** The Secretary shall schedule Internet meeting service availability to begin at least 30 minutes before the start of each meeting.
4. **Signing in and out.** Members and alternates shall identify themselves as required to sign into the meeting service, and each member shall maintain individual Internet and audio access throughout the meeting whenever present, but Members shall sign out upon any departure before adjournment.
5. **Quorum calls.** The presence of a quorum shall be established by the Secretary based on the count of members who have signed in. Thereafter, the continued presence of a quorum shall be presumed, unless any member demands a quorum count by audible roll call. Such a demand may be made following any vote for which the announced totals add to less than a quorum.
6. **Technical requirements and malfunctions.** Each member shall be 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.
7. **Forced disconnections.** The Chair may cause or direct the disconnection or muting of a member’s connection if it is causing undue interference with the meeting. The Chair’s decision to do so, which is not subject to appeal, shall be announced during the meeting and recorded in the minutes.
8. **Assignment of the floor; Procedural motions.** To seek recognition by the Chair, a member shall request recognition by clicking on the designated button on the screen display whereupon the Chair shall recognize requests in the order submitted, except for privileged or incidental motions, as defined in Robert’s Rules of Order, and as set forth herein. To introduce a privileged or incidental motion, a Member shall use the text box on the display screen to post the text of the motion in full, along with the Member’s name and congregational affiliation, and shall thereafter wait a reasonable time for the Chair’s ruling (which shall not be subject to appeal) and instructions before attempting to seek recognition. An audio-only attendee shall press the pound/hashtag button on the Member’s phone, and wait for recognition, after which the Member shall state the Member’s motion in full, along with the Member’s name and parish affiliation.

9. **Display of motions.** The Secretary shall show, by an on-screen display, 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 the Secretary 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.

10. **Voting.** Votes shall be taken by the voting feature of the Internet meeting service, unless a different method is ordered by the Chair. The Chair's announcement of the voting result during the meeting shall include the percentage of members voting on each side of the question and the percentage, if any, who explicitly respond to acknowledge their presence without casting a vote. Numerical totals will be available after the conclusion of the meeting. Business may also be conducted by unanimous consent, with the Chair announcing the Chair's understanding of such consent, which shall be subject to objection, whereupon another method of voting shall be used.

11. **Video display.** The Chair, the Secretary, or their respective assistants shall cause a video of the Chair (as well as such other members of the dais as shall be designated by the Chair) to be displayed throughout the meeting, and shall also cause display of the video of the member currently recognized to speak or report.