

## **J. Parish Bodies**

### **Canon J-1: VESTRIES**

#### *Composition:*

1. All persons shall be entitled to vote in the vestry of a congregation in the Diocese who:
  - a) are baptized; and
  - b) are of full age of 16 years; and
  - c) are habitual attendants at Divine Service in the congregation; and
  - d) have contributed during the year immediately preceding to the working expenses of the parish/congregation.

#### *Calling of a Vestry Meeting:*

2.
  - a) A vestry meeting may be called:
    - (i) by the incumbent;
    - (ii) by the churchwardens in the case of the incumbent's refusal or inability to act.
  - b) Any vestry meeting, including the regular annual vestry meeting, shall require notice to be given on the two Sundays on which services are held preceding the meeting.
  - c) A vestry meeting shall be called by the incumbent if at least four members of the vestry make such a request in writing.
  - d) If the incumbent or churchwardens refuse to call a meeting after a written request as outlined in c), one week later any four members of the vestry may call a meeting by posting a notice on the outer door or doors of the church at least one week prior to the intended meeting.
  - e) If none of the elected delegates or alternate delegates from a parish can attend Synod, then a special vestry meeting may be called with the sole agenda item to elect a new Synod delegate without the notice requirements contained in Canon J-1, Section 2. b), in a situation in which it would not otherwise be possible to hold a special vestry because of the notice requirement.

*Quorum at a Vestry Meeting:*

3. Three qualified lay persons constitute a quorum at a vestry meeting.

*Annual Vestry Meetings*

*When Held:*

4. a) There shall be an annual meeting of the parishioners in each congregation.

*Business:*

- b) At the annual meeting the parishioners shall:
  - (i) receive and approve the accounts for the past year;
  - (ii) approve the budget for the ensuing year; and
  - (iii) appoint and elect churchwardens, financial reviewers, and other officers for the ensuing year.
- c) Business conducted at the annual meeting should be guided by, and serve a clear vision for discipleship formation and mission. Beyond tending to the operational concerns of the parish, the annual meeting should consider its efforts in discipleship formation and mission by reviewing the aspirations, activities and outcomes of the previous year, and attending to the objectives and anticipated outcomes for the year ahead, including:
  - (i) Outward engagement with the surrounding community and with those not involved with the church;
  - (ii) Initiatives designed to help existing church members deepen their discipleship as members of the body of Christ;
  - (iii) Deliberate processes of welcome and follow-up with guests and newcomers, and of introducing and incorporating individuals into life in Christ.

*The Conduct of an Annual Meeting*

*Chair:*

5. a) The incumbent shall preside. In the incumbent's absence, the qualified voters present shall elect a chair.

*Agenda Items:*

b) The following items shall be dealt with:

- (i) Opening prayer.
- (ii) Announcement by the incumbent or chair of the Diocesan Canon governing the holding of vestry meetings, especially the part relating to the qualification of those entitled to participation.
- (iii) Election of a vestry clerk, where it is desirable to elect such an officer.
- (iv) Reading and confirmation of the minutes of the last annual and subsequent vestry meetings.
- (v) Unfinished business, if any.
- (vi) Review of Missional Objectives and Outcomes for previous year.
- (vii) Annual statistical report.
- (viii) Presentation and adoption of the churchwardens' financial report.
- (ix) Presentation and adoption of reports of parochial ministries and organizations, summarizing the aspirations, activities, and outcomes of the previous year, and sharing objectives and anticipated outcomes for the year ahead.
- (x) Presentation and adoption of the annual Screening In Faith Participation Report.
- (xi) Incumbent's Charge to Vestry.
- (xii) Announcement of appointment of incumbent's warden for ensuing year.
- (xiii) Approval of Parochial Lay Readers and Eucharistic Assistants.
- (xiv) Election of people's warden and other officers.
- (xv) Overview of Missional Objectives and outcomes for ensuing year.
- (xvi) Setting of operating budget for ensuing year.
- (xvii) New business and initiatives.
- (xviii) Closing prayers.