

Diocese of New Jersey
Report of the Committee on Rules of Order and Dispatch of Business 2018

The Committee on Rules of Order is governed by Diocese of New Jersey Canon 3, which provides (emphasis added):

A committee on Rules of Order composed of two members of the clergy and three lay persons, at least one of whom shall also be a member of the Balloting Committee, shall be appointed by the Bishop at the opening of each annual meeting of the Convention, who shall consider and report upon all proposed amendments to the Rules of Order and shall watch the dispatch of business at all sessions, and propose rules to prevent congestion. The present rules shall continue in force until amended or repealed.

This past year Bishop Stokes requested the Committee to make provision for a Consent Calendar to save time in Diocesan Convention by allowing noncontroversial resolutions to be voted on without debate or amendment. Bishop Stokes also asked that an Order for Special Debate be proposed to help organize the discussion and passage of the 2018 and 2019 budgets, similar to the Order in effect at last year's Convention.

Consent Calendar

The House of Bishops and the House of Deputies of the General Convention of The Episcopal Church each utilize a daily Consent Calendar to bypass debate and amendments to proposed resolutions that have come out of the House's Legislative Committees. If an originating Committee or other proponents of a given resolution feel that debate is needed, there are mechanisms for removing matters from the Consent Calendar, in which case they are considered separately.

The Committee on Rules of Order includes the following amendment to the Rule IV of the Rules of Order for 2018 (insertions shown by double-underline):

IV. Agenda

1. The Committee on Rules of Order and Dispatch of Business shall propose a form of Agenda to be adopted by the Convention. Once adopted, the Agenda may be modified or suspended upon a two-thirds vote.
2. Any request to place a matter on the agenda of the annual meeting of the Convention must be presented to the Chair of the Committee on Rules of Order and Dispatch of Business by January 15 in each year.
3. (a) The Committee on Rules of Order and Dispatch of Business may publish a Consent Calendar which shall contain all resolutions for action by the Convention other than (i) elections, (ii) budget approvals, (iii) a resolution from any diocesan body that the body votes to exclude from the Consent Calendar, or (iv) any resolution removed from the Consent Calendar by paragraph 3(b) of this Rule.
(b) At any time before a final vote on the Consent Calendar, any resolution may be removed from the Consent Calendar by written notice to the Secretary or by announcement on the floor of Convention by (i) the individual or diocesan body that proposed the resolution, (ii) any four voting members of the Convention, or (iii) the President of the Convention. Any resolution removed from the Consent Calendar shall be taken up for debate and consideration at a time to be determined by the President.
(c) When voting on the Consent Calendar, the Convention will vote on all items at once, by a majority vote. A vote to adopt the Consent Calendar is a vote to take the action, if any, recommended by the diocesan body proposing each resolution. If the vote to approve the Consent Calendar is not carried, then all items on the Consent Calendar shall be taken up for debate and consideration at a time to be determined by the President.

All formal resolutions for action will be placed on the Consent Calendar unless removed per the mechanisms in Rule IV.3(b). This will ensure debate for those who wish it yet will save time that would otherwise be taken in proposing, moving and voting on individual matters that are noncontroversial.

The Committee recommends that the Rules of Order as so amended be approved for 2018 and following years.

Order for Special Debate

Rule XI of the Rules of Order provides:

XI. 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.

The Committee proposes the following Order for Special Debate for consideration and voting on the 2018 and 2019 Budgets of the Diocese:

Be it Resolved, That this Convention set the following special order of debate at 2:00 p.m. (or following the completion of prior business) on Friday, March 2, 2018, for presentation and consideration of the Revised Preliminary Budget for 2018 and the Preliminary Diocesan Budget for 2019, and at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 3, 2018, for further consideration of and voting on the said Budgets.

1. Total time on March 2 for presentation and debate upon the Revised Preliminary Budget for 2018 and the Preliminary Diocesan Budget for 2019 shall be limited to forty-five minutes. This time limit can be extended by a three-fourths majority vote.
 - (a) The Revised Preliminary Budget for 2018 shall be moved by the Treasurer on behalf of the Finance and Budget Committee at the conclusion of his presentation. Debate on this and the Preliminary Diocesan Budget for 2019 shall follow the standard Rules of Order except that (i) no member may speak more than twice on the same subject or for a period longer than two minutes without leave of the Convention, (ii) no motion to table, postpone, call the question, or otherwise terminate debate on a main motion or any amendment shall be in order until at least two members have been heard in favor and in opposition to the amendment, or until there are no further members who desire to speak, whichever occurs first.
 - (b) Any amendments to either Budget may be moved and, if seconded, filed with the Secretary of Convention pursuant to the Rules of Order, and the movant may have up to three minutes to explain the intent of the amendment, notwithstanding the limitation on debate otherwise applicable per paragraph 1(a).
 - (c) At the conclusion of debate, the motion to adopt either budget, together with any amendments to it, shall be tabled until the Saturday session. If the time for presentation and debate on March 2 shall have expired prior to the Preliminary Diocesan Budget for 2019 being moved, the Treasurer shall move the adoption of such budget, but no further business relating to either budget shall take place on such date.
2. Total time on March 3 for consideration and voting on the Revised Preliminary Budget for 2018 and the Preliminary Diocesan Budget for 2019, together with any amendments thereto moved on March 2, shall be limited to fifteen minutes. Any amendments moved on March 2 shall be presented for vote in the order determined by the Chair, to be followed by any further amendments and the motion to adopt the budget in question.
3. The Chair may interrupt proceedings for purposes of balloting or other urgent business.

This is similar to last year's Order and allows for presentation of and amendments to the budgets to be received on Friday and considered overnight, with voting on them on Saturday. The Committee recommends the adoption of this implementing resolution. For reasons of orderliness, the Committee directs that this be voted on independently of the Consent Calendar.

Respectfully submitted,

Committee on Rules of Order and
Dispatch of Business
Canon Paul Ambos, Esq., Chair
Paul De Sarno, Esq.
Ms. Martha Lawless
The Rev'd Ronald N. Pollock