DIOCESE OF HONOLULU

Template for Statutes of a Parish Pastoral Council

[Note: This Template is offered to parishes as a tool for their use in forming or re-forming a parish pastoral council. The parts in brackets […] indicate where a decision needs to be made for each particular situation.]

(11/16/18)

STATUTES OF THE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL OF

[NAME OF PARISH], [PLACE OF PARISH.]

Article I – Name

These statutes govern the parish pastoral council of [name of parish], [place of parish].

Article II - Date of implementation

These statutes were approved on [date].

Article III – Purpose

The purpose of the parish pastoral council is pastoral planning and creating a vision for the future of the parish. The council is consultative and advisory to the pastor. Members prayerfully investigate and discern issues of concern to the whole parish and make recommendations to the pastor for goals and actions. Areas of concern include matters important to the whole parish: evangelization, faith formation, stewardship, leadership, worship, social ministry, youth and young adults, marriage and family life, and community life. They regularly assess the progress and issues relating to the implementation of the parish pastoral plan. They identify obstacles to implementation and identify ways to address and overcome the obstacles. Strong emphasis and support for the parish’s stewardship efforts is vital.

Article IV - Membership

Section 1 – Qualifications

1. Members must be registered and concerned members of the parish willing to listen to various opinions and to work collaboratively for the good of the parish.
2. Members are responsible for coming prepared to discuss each agenda item. They are responsible for bringing issues to the pastor and council they identify through discussions with parishioners. Once a decision is made, they have the responsibility to support that decision and to help the parishioners understand it.

Section 2 – Number of members

1. The pastor is the president of the parish pastoral council, and the council serves as an advisor to him.
2. *Ex officio* members of the council are the parochial vicar(s), deacon(s) assigned to the parish, [the school principal], [other].
3. A minimum of five and a maximum of [number] parishioners, not including the *ex officio* members, will serve on the pastoral council.
4. [*If the parish has one or more mission churches:* The parish Mission of \_\_\_\_ shall be represented by \_\_\_ member(s).]

Section 3 – Method of selection

All members who are not *ex officio* shall be [appointed by the pastor] [selected by the pastor after a discernment process with parishioners – here spell out the discernment process] [elected by the parishioners].

Section 4 – Terms of office

1. All members who are not *ex officio* will serve a term of three years [renewable once] [not renewable] [and may be reelected only after a hiatus of \_\_\_ years].
2. The members will be selected in such manner that one-third of the members will be replaced each year in order to keep ideas fresh and to provide the opportunity for more people to participate.
3. Any member of the council who is not *ex officio* may resign by submitting a letter of resignation to the pastor.
4. In the case of resignation of a member, [the pastor will appoint] [the council will select] a replacement to complete the term of the resigned member. This new member may be elected to a subsequent full term on the council.

Article V - Meetings

Section 1 - The council will meet [at least once per quarter] [monthly].

Section 2 - A quorum shall be a [a simple majority of council members] [two-thirds of the members of the council]. Since the council is advisory to the pastor, the council will only meet when he is present.

Section 3 - The meeting time and place will be determined in advance and shared with all the members by the recorder [and published in the bulletin].

Section 4 - Special meetings may be called, if needed, with the consent of the pastor, and notice shall be given to all members at least 24 hours in advance.

Section 5 - The council should discern by way of consensus in making its recommendations to the pastor. A consensus exists when there is a clear alternative that most members can support.

Article VI - Officers and Executive Committee

Section 1 – The pastor is the president of the council, listens attentively to the council, and values the council as his close advisors in the pastoral care of the parish and its mission. The council does not meet without the presence of the pastor.

Section 2 – The chair of the council is delegated by the pastor to conduct the meeting, keeping it focused on the agenda topics and ensuring that everyone has the chance to speak. The chair also assigns a member to lead the council in prayer and faith sharing before each meeting. The chair is elected by the members for a one-year term [which may be renewed].

Section 3 – The vice chair is elected by the members of the council for a one-year term [which may be renewed]. The vice chair fills in for the chair as appropriate and assists the chair in his/her duties.

Section 4 – The recorder [secretary] is elected by the members of the council for a one-year term [which may be renewed].

The recorder maintains a record of all council discussions and recommendations and sends the agenda and minutes of the last meeting to all members a week before the next meeting.

The recorder keeps a roster of all current members with their contact information. The roster should indicate when each member’s term begins and ends [and whether the member is serving a second term].

The recorder also files a copy of the approved minutes in the permanent parish archives.

Section 5 – The executive committee consists of the pastor, chair, vice chair, and recorder. Their responsibility is to set the agenda for each meeting and for the general direction of the council, always focusing it on pastoral issues and on the development and implementation of the parish pastoral plan.

Article VII - Committees

Section 1 - The council or its executive committee may form *ad hoc* committees from time to time to study particular issues on behalf of the council and make recommendations to it.

Section 2 - Each *ad hoc* committee should be given a clear charge by the council and a timeline for accomplishing its work.

Section 3 - The chair of each *ad hoc* committee should be a member of the pastoral council, but other members of the *ad hoc* committee need not be on the pastoral council.

Article VIII - Communication

Section 1 – Although the pastoral council should not do the work proper to other committees in the parish (e.g. liturgy committee, planning and building committee, finance council), it should have a regular mechanism for communicating with these committees so that the parish can work together as one body.

Section 2 – The parish pastoral council should have a plan for regular communication with the parishioners, informing them of council deliberations and providing means for the input of parishioners.

Article IX – Dissolution of the Council

Section 1 – For serious reasons the pastor may dissolve a parish pastoral council, but only after he has consulted with the bishop. He is then to form a new pastoral council as soon as possible.

Section 2 – When the parish experiences a transition of pastors, the council already in existence continues to function after the arrival of the new pastor. Only with the bishop’s permission may a new pastor dissolve a council within his first year, but he is then to form a new pastoral council as soon as possible.

Article X – Amendments

Section 1 - These statutes may be amended after a two-thirds vote of the council and at the meeting after the amendment has been proposed in writing. Any amendment must have the consent of the pastor.

Section 2 – After an amendment is made, the recorder is to prepare a copy of the newly amended statutes, indicating the date of the amendment, and is to provide each council member a copy of the amended statutes and to file a copy in the permanent parish archives.