

By-Laws of the Pastoral Council of Cluster 22

Including the Parishes of St. Bartholomew (Cape Elizabeth),
St. John/Holy Cross (South Portland), and St. Maximilian Kolbe (Scarborough)

I. Mission:

The mission of the Pastoral Council is to “examine and consider all that relates to pastoral work and to offer practical conclusions on these matters, so that the life and activity of the People of God be brought into greater conformity with the Gospel” –Pope Paul VI

II. Purpose:

- A. The purpose of the Pastoral Council is to promote community, to be a sign and witness of unity, and to assist the pastor in pastoral planning. The Council provides a forum for church members to work with the pastoral staff (including the priests, deacons, pastoral life coordinator) to develop a plan to meet the pastoral needs of the Cluster. The Council consults with the pastor by reason of their knowledge, competence, and/or interest in the Cluster. The Council is a consultative body to the pastor. Its recommendations are directed to the pastor and become effective only after he acts upon them. It is not part of the Council’s work to implement the recommendations.
- B. The Pastoral Council members gather together the visions, hopes, and needs of the community, reflect upon them and pray how to meet the needs, and translate this consensus into cluster planning through the establishment of goals and objectives. Because one of the Council’s responsibilities is to evaluate how well recommendations have been implemented, the council needs to stay informed of parish activities and developments in the cluster. This is accomplished through frequent and ongoing communication with the Standing Committees and groups responsible for implementation of the pastoral plan.
- C. The Pastoral Council is asked to review the annual parish and school budget approved by the finance council of each parish because of the serious impact they may have on the life and mission of the cluster and to ensure that they are sufficient to support that mission. The roles of the two councils are distinct though collaborative. The pastoral council assists the pastor in determining the mission while the finance council assists the pastor in soliciting funds and managing the budget and facilities in order to carry out the mission.

III. Membership

- A. The Pastor is the President of the Pastoral Council. Priests and deacons assigned to the Cluster are ex-officio members.
- B. The Council will be comprised of 9 registered parishioners, three members from each of the three parishes in Cluster 22 (St. Bartholomew, St. John & Holy Cross, St. Maximilian Kolbe); members are appointed by the Pastor.
- C. At large members of the Pastoral Council can be appointed by the Pastor. The Cluster Pastoral Life Coordinator or other staff person designated in the absence of a PLC is staff for the council, not a member. Other paid staff of the cluster are not members of the council and generally do not attend meetings unless invited for their particular expertise. Voting members are the parish representatives and a quorum would be 50% plus one of the voting members.
- D. Per norms from the diocese, Council members should designate, with the approval of the Pastor, a member to serve as chair, another as vice-chair, and a third to serve as secretary. Term for these positions are at least one year and renewable. The agenda is prepared by the Council Chair and secretary and approved by the Pastor. The Chairperson moderates the meetings of the pastoral council. The Vice-Chairperson assumes the duties of the

- chairperson in his/her absence. The Secretary records and publishes the minutes of each pastoral council meeting.
1. Election of officers will be held in at the first meeting of a new council or for an existing council no more than 12 months after the preceding election.
- E. Members who resign from the Council need to notify the Council Chair in writing.
- F. Members representing a particular parish become the nominating committee to suggest names of possible replacements for their particular parish to the Chair for approval by the Pastor.
- G. Members who will miss a meeting need to notify the Council Secretary. Members are expected to attend at least four meetings per year. Members who miss four consecutive meetings will be contacted by the Pastor or his delegate to be asked if they wish to continue on the Council
- H. Orientation for new members should include:
1. Personal contact with Cluster Council member and President to discuss the purpose of the council and required commitment
 2. Review of documents:
 - a. Cluster 22 Council Policies
 - b. Cluster 22 Council membership list
 - c. Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland Pastoral Council Policies and Norms
 - d. Updated Cluster 22 Formation Recommendations
- I. The Council goes out of existence upon the transfer, retirement, resignation, or death of the pastor. A new pastor must constitute a new council as soon as possible but at least within one year of taking office.
- J. When establishing a new council, 3 members should be appointed to a 3 year term, 3 members should be appointed to a 2 year term, and 3 members should be appointed to a 1 year term in order to establish the pattern of staggered terms which allows for consistency and continuity.
- K. Council members are limited to two successive three-year terms. Upon completion of the two terms, members must go off the Council for a full year before being considered for membership again.

IV. Meetings:

- A. Council meetings shall be ordinarily scheduled on the fourth Mondays of September, November, January, March, and the first Monday of June. The minimum number of times to meet is four meetings per year. While most meetings are open to all parishioners for observation, there can be times when the pastor may need to call for an executive session.
- B. Meetings are called by the pastor. Notifications of meetings shall be published in the church bulletin on the two Sundays immediately preceding the meeting.
- C. Meeting minutes will be sent out to all council members for review and a vote for approval made at the next meeting. Approved minutes should be posted on the Pastoral Council website and copies made available at each parish.
- D. The council is not to meet in the absence of the pastor. In an emergency, he can designate one of the priests or deacons to serve as his delegate.
- E. The pastor may call one or more work sessions, in addition to the regular meetings, that may take place in his absence.

V. Committees of the Council:

- A. Standing Committees
 - a. Because the council does not implement recommendations, there shall be four Standing Committees which shall include
 - i. Lifelong Faith Formation
 - ii. Worship and Spirituality
 - iii. Social Service
 - iv. Stewardship (time, talent & treasure)
 - b. Standing Committees are Cluster wide and comprised of representatives from all three parishes. Within each Standing Committee, members should designate, with the approval of the Pastor, a member to serve as chair, another as vice-chair, and a third to serve as secretary. Term for these positions are at least one year and renewable.
 - c. Standing Committees may have one or more subcommittees.
 - d. Each Standing Committee should have 1 (or more) Pastoral Council members as ex officio members.
- B. Subcommittees
 - a. From time to time as determined by the Council, there may be additional subcommittees or ad-hoc committees to handle special projects.

VI. Amendments:

- A. Any member of the Council may propose amendments to the bylaws.
- B. Proposed amendments shall be sent to all members of the Council at least 14 days prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting of the council.
- C. A two-thirds majority of the council must approve amendments in order for them to be recommended to the Pastor.
- D. The Pastor must approve changes to the bylaws in order for them to take effect.

VII. Oversight by Diocese:

The bylaws and membership roster must be updated annually and submitted to the Diocesan Office of Parish Planning

*Policy created 2011;
Revised 8/2012;
Revised 6/3/2019*