

**CHURCH OF THE HOLY FAMILY**

**Parish Council Bylaws**

**Approved March 5, 1998**

**Amended December 27, 2002**

**Amended November 3, 2009**

**Amended December 6, 2011**

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## **Article 1: Name**

The name of this body shall be The Church of the Holy Family Parish Council of Hebron, CT, in the Diocese of Norwich, CT, hereafter referred to as the “Council”.

## **Article 2: Purposes and Function**

1. To supply guidance, advice and information to the Pastor on all matters concerning the Parish.
2. To provide an open forum of communication and dialogue among all members of the Parish.
3. To maintain awareness of the spiritual and temporal needs of the Parish community.
4. To provide service, guidance, direction, resources and encouragement in fulfilling the mission and goals of the Parish.
5. To be the active visionary force of the Parish, looking to future needs and setting policies which enable the Parish to achieve its goals and objectives.
6. To serve as the coordinating body for the ministries and committees of the Parish.

## **Article 3: Membership, Eligibility and Attendance**

### Section 1 – Membership

The Council shall be comprised of members as follows:

1. Pastoral Team: Including Pastor, Deacon and Pastoral Associate(s)
2. Committees: A representative from each standing committee shall be designated by the committee as its representative to the Parish Council. No one shall serve simultaneously as a committee member representative to the Council and a selected or appointed member from the Parish at large. The standing committees include Finance, Education, Planning, Liturgy, Social Outreach, Youth Ministry and the Knights of Columbus. Each member shall serve at the discretion of the committee.
3. Selected Members: Six (6) members will be selected from the Parish at large. Each selected member will serve for three (3) years. Members will be selected per Article 4, Section 4.
4. Appointed Members: Up to six (6) members will be appointed by the Pastor. The appointed member’s term is at the discretion of the Pastor for up to three (3) years. Appointments are made after the selection process has been completed. Appointments are not limited to

candidates from the selection process. The appointments are designed for the Pastor to create a balance within the Council from all facets of parish life.

5. Voting Members: In any matters that require a parish council vote, the voting members are: the pastoral team, the representative from each standing committee, the six selected members and the up to six appointed members, as outlined above.

Section 2 – Length of Service: To maintain a blend of fresh enthusiasm with seasoned experience, service on the Council is limited to a three (3) year term. The term of service for any member of the laity (either selected or appointed) is limited to one (1) term in any capacity. Any member of the Council may, after a one (1) year break, be eligible for another term.

Section 3 – Terms of Office: All terms will commence on the first day of September and will be run annually from commencement date.

Section 4 – Eligibility: Any registered parishioner over 16 years of age, who has expressed a commitment to the Church through reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation and regularly worships with the community. No paid employee of the Church of the Holy Family, except as stated in Section 1- item 1, may be a member of the Parish Council in any capacity or a regular attendee. Should a member of the Parish Council subsequently become an employee of the Parish, they will be expected to step down from the Council and are replaced as outlined in the bylaws.

Section 5 – Attendance: Any member (including standing committee members) who misses three (or more) meetings during the year without the permission of the Council president or Pastor will forfeit membership on the Council and a vacancy will be declared by the president. All other Church committees/ministries should send their meeting minutes to the Parish Council vice president after each meeting.

#### **Article 4: Annual Nomination/Selection Process**

##### Section 1 – Nomination Process

By the middle of each April, an ad hoc nomination committee will be created. The nomination process may include: making announcements in the bulletin and website and placing a ballot box in Narthex. Nominees may be self-nominated or nominated by others.

##### Section 2 – Selection of Selected Members

The names of all eligible nominees are placed on the altar for prayerful guidance and direction from the Holy Spirit. The names of the selected member candidates are randomly drawn by parishioners during a mass on Pentecost. All names not selected will remain on record for one (1) year and will be used to fill member vacancies.

### Section 3 – Selection of Standing Committee Members

Standing committees will select one (1) member to serve from that committee for a one year term on the Council (to a maximum of 3 years). That member must meet eligibility requirements. No one shall serve simultaneously as a committee member representative to the Council and a selected or appointed member from the Parish at large.

### Section 4 – Selection of Appointed Members

Appointed members are selected by the Pastor after the chosen members have been identified. (See Article 3, Section 1-3)

### Section 5 – Filling Vacancies

Vacancies of chosen members are filled by random selection of persons who were eligible nominees but whose names were not drawn from earlier selection process. (See section 2) The vacancies of appointed members are filled by a new appointment by the Pastor for the remainder of the term vacated. Vacancies of standing committee members will be filled by that standing committee for the remainder of the term vacated.

## **Article 5: Officers**

### Section 1 – General

Upon seating the new Council, the first order of business will be to elect a president, vice-president and secretary from the Council members. They shall hold office for one (1) year but can be reelected in subsequent years.

### Section 2 – Duties

The duties of the president shall be as follows:

- Preside at all meetings of the Council
- Prepare an agenda, in conjunction with the Pastor for each meeting
- Receive requests from parishioners for items to be discussed and dispositioned by the Council and place them on the agenda
- Perform all other duties pertinent to the office
- Setup and coordinate training of new members (selected, appointed and committee representatives) as needed
- Establish agenda and preside at the annual meeting

The vice-president shall perform the duties of the president in the absence of the president and shall be responsible for:

- Preparing and distributing notices and agendas for all Council meetings
- Maintaining contact and communications with other committees and ministries

- Forwarding minutes from other committees and ministries to parish council membership
- Updating and distributing the parish council 101 handbook by the October meeting

The secretary shall be responsible for the following duties:

- Recording minutes of all regular and special meetings and distribution of these minutes to parish council members and to chairpersons of other Church of the Holy Family committees and ministries.
- Maintaining records pertaining to council communications and membership including term of office and type of membership.
- Submitting meeting notices for publication in the Parish bulletin
- Maintaining a hard copy of all Council correspondence including but not limited to Council minutes, announcements, agendas, 101 handbook and such other items as deemed appropriate by the Council.

## **Article 6: Meetings of the Council**

### Section 1 – Regular meetings

- Regular meetings of the Council shall be held quarterly, and at the discretion of the council. This shall be decided upon at the first council meeting of the year. No meetings will be held during the months of July and August or unless otherwise determined by the Pastor.
- Each regular meeting shall have components of prayer and spiritual reflection in addition to the regular items on the agenda.

### Section 2 – Special meetings

Special meetings of the Council may be called by the Pastor or the Council president.

### Section 3 – Notice and Agenda

- Notice and agenda of all regular meetings of the Council shall be provided to members by the vice-president at least one week in advance of the regularly scheduled Council meeting.
- Notice of regular meetings and agenda topics may be submitted by the secretary for publication in the parish bulletin
- Notice and agenda of all special meetings of the Council shall be provided to members by the vice-president at least one week in advance of the special Council meeting.

### Section 4 – Quorum and the Decision Process

- A simple majority of the Council members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business of the Council.
- All decisions shall be reached by consensus of the Council members. When consensus cannot be achieved, decisions shall be made by a two-thirds majority vote of Council members present and voting.

## Section 5 – Parish Participation

All members of the Parish may attend any regular or special meeting of the Council and may be recognized by the presiding officer to speak before the Council.

Where special circumstances warrant, the Council, by a two-thirds majority vote, may designate any meeting, or any portion of a meeting, to be in “closed session”. Only Council members and persons specifically invited by the Council may attend a meeting in “closed session”.

## **Article 7 – Committees**

### Section 1 – General

The Parish shall have various committees as designated and approved by the Pastor and/or Parish Council. Each committee is responsible for planning, coordinating and implementing specific ministries and activities of the Parish. The standing committees for the Parish Council are: Finance, Education, Planning, Liturgy, Social Outreach, Youth Ministry and the Knights of Columbus.

### Section 2 – Committee Functions

Each committee shall be responsible for preparing and maintaining a description of its purposes and functions, and provide them to the Council for information.

### Section 3 – Structure and Operation of Standing Committees

- Members – Each committee shall establish the process for selecting its members and determining its membership
- Officers and Council representatives – Each committee, when appropriate, shall select at least two (2) officers consisting of a chairperson and a vice-chairperson who are members of the Parish. In addition, a representative shall represent the committee on the Parish Council for a one year term (for a maximum of three years). This representative may or may not be one of the officers.
- Term of office – Committee officers shall have a term of office for one (1) year. Rules for self succession may be established by the committee.
- Meetings – Each committee shall hold meetings as necessary for effective operation of the committee, with a minimum of at least one (1) per quarter. Written minutes of each meeting shall be recorded and a copy maintained at the Parish office.

## **Article 8 – Parish Annual Meeting**

The Council shall establish an annual Parish meeting. The purpose of the annual meeting is to present to the Parish community the status of Parish programs, along with plans and objectives for the coming year. This meeting will serve as an opportunity for comments and feedback from the Parish.

## **Article 9 – Amendment and Ratification of Bylaws**

### Section 1 – Amendment notice

Proposed bylaw amendments shall be available to all parishioners so that if they wish to voice an opinion regarding the amendment, they will have had the opportunity to read it and can attend the Council meeting at which the vote will be taken.

### Section 2 – Ratification of Bylaw Amendments

Ratification on amendments shall be a two-thirds majority of the total Council membership. Absentee ballots may be used for Council members unable to attend the meeting.

### Section 3 – Review

At the beginning of each Council term, the newly elected officers (president, vice-president, and secretary) shall review the current Council bylaws. If changes or updates are deemed necessary, the president shall appoint a bylaws subcommittee to propose such changes or updates.