

**Resolution 205.6**  
**On Voting in Vestry Elections at Mission Annual Meetings**

The 205th Annual Convention enacts:

Canon 20, Section 3(a) is amended by rewriting subsection (5) and adding subsections (6) and (7) as follows:

“(5) *Voting*. Motions, resolutions, elections and all other matters presented to a mission meeting for vote shall be decided by a majority of the qualified members present and voting; provided however the voting in vestry elections shall include any votes cast pursuant to a mission bylaw adopted pursuant to the following subsection (6).

(6) *Other Voting Methods*. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this Canon 20, a mission may provide in its bylaws, subject to approval by the Ecclesiastical Authority acting with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee, provisions for conducting vestry elections by paper absentee ballots, electronic survey technology, or other reliable and secure means that allow participation in the election by qualified voters who are not physically present at the annual meeting; provided that proxy voting shall not be permitted. Missions may define circumstances in which absentee ballots are made available.

(7) *Initial Adoption*. Until the earlier to occur of December 31, 2022 and the elimination of restrictions on the permissible size of any parish meeting, a bylaw provision described in Section 3(a)(6) of this Canon as well as any bylaw to implement the provisions of Canon 33, Section 1 may, by action of the vestry, be submitted by mail ballot to qualified members of the mission pursuant to guidelines promulgated by the Diocesan Chancellor and adopted by the affirmative vote of a majority of the mail ballots completed by persons qualified to vote and returned to the mission by the deadline stated therein. Any such bylaws approved by the mail ballot shall be submitted to the Ecclesiastical Authority for approval as provided in Section 3(a)(4) of this Canon.”

*Submitted by the Commission on Constitution and Canons*

Comment re new subsections (5), (6) and (7):

(5). Subsection (5) of Canon 20.3(a) is rewritten to allow for any votes received pursuant to a bylaw adopted pursuant to the new subsection (6). These two changes would apply to “traditional” in-person mission meetings.

(6). Canon 22.2(g)(4) currently allows parishes to adopt bylaws providing for the use of absentee ballots and other “remote voting” techniques at vestry elections at parish annual meetings. There is no similar authority in Canon 20 for missions to adopt such a bylaw. The new subsection (6)

incorporates the operative language of Canon 22.2(g)(4) into the appropriate section of Canon 20. This new subsection is permissive. It does not require the mission to use absentee ballots or any other alternative voting methods.

(7) Since new Subsection 6 deals with bylaws concerning election of members of the vestry, Canon 20.3(a)(4) requires that any such bylaw be adopted “by any mission meeting.” However, currently mission meetings are in-person events as the current Section 4 of Canon 33 states that virtual annual meetings of parishes and missions are not permitted. A separate resolution being presented to this Convention is proposing the elimination of that Section 4 and allowing conduct of annual and other meetings of missions to be conducted by remote technology. Passage of that resolution would give missions permission to adopt a bylaw authorizing conducting meetings by remote technology but would not require them to choose that method of meeting. However, if missions wanted to adopt a bylaw authorized by either subsection (6) above or permitted by the new Canon 33, a traditional in-person mission meeting would have to be held. Since that’s not likely to be possible for several months, subsection (7) gives the mission an alternate method for adopting bylaws concerning mission meetings without having a traditional in-person meeting. That opportunity, though, will be short-lived.