



## STATUTES - DIOCESAN FINANCE COUNCIL

Diocese of Great Falls-Billings

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**ARTICLE I** The name of this body shall be the Diocesan Finance Council referred to sometimes as “DFC”

### **ARTICLE II** Purpose

Canon 492 of the Code of Canon Law mandates all dioceses to establish a Finance Council:

- Canon 492—§1. In every diocese a finance council is to be established, over which the diocesan bishop himself or his delegate presides and which consists of at least three members of the Christian faithful truly expert in financial affairs and civil law, outstanding in integrity, and appointed by the bishop.
- §2. Members of the finance council are to be appointed for five years, but at the end of this period they can be appointed for other five-year terms.
- §3. Persons who are related to the bishop up to the fourth degree of consanguinity or affinity are excluded from the finance council.

The Diocesan Finance Council is one of the three major councils of the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings. It is established by the Bishop for the purpose of advising and assisting him in financial matters.

- 1) The Finance Council must approve and recommend the annual Diocesan budget to the Bishop.
- 2) The Finance Council must examine the annual report of income and expenditures prepared by the Diocesan Finance Officer. Fulfilling the requirements of the Resolution on Diocesan Fiscal Reporting that became effective January 1, 2001.
- 3) The Finance Council must give or withhold consent to the Bishop on the following:
  - Performance of an act of extraordinary administration as defined by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) (c. 1277)
  - Leasing of ecclesiastical goods owned by the Diocese when the market value of the property to be leased exceeds \$1,000,000 or the lease is to be for three years or longer (c. 1297 and USCCB Complimentary Norms for Canon 1297)
  - Alienation of property at or above the amount established by the USCCB (c. 1292 § 1) and updated annually based on the consumer price index.
  - Alienation of property of other public juridic persons subject to the bishop at or above the amount established by the USCCB (c. 1292 § 1) and updated annually based on the consumer price index



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- In addition to alienation, the entering into any transaction that worsens the financial condition of the Diocese (c. 1295)
- 1) At minimum the DFC is to give counsel to the Bishop on the following:
- Appointment of a Diocesan Fiscal Officer (c. 494)
  - Removal of the Diocesan Fiscal Officer (c. 494)
  - Imposition of taxes, either ordinary or extraordinary (c. 1263)
  - Decisions relative to the more important acts of administration. (c. 1277)
  - Determination of the meaning of acts of extraordinary administration for institutes subject to his control if the statutes are not specific (c. 1281.2)
  - Review of annual reports submitted to him by clerical and lay administrators of any ecclesiastical goods (c. 1287.1)
  - Leasing of ecclesiastical goods owned by the Diocese when the market value of the property to be leased exceeds \$400,000 (c. 1297 and USCCB Complimentary Norms for Canon 1297)
  - Investment of tangible and intangible property assigned to an endowment (c. 1305)
  - Modification of the obligations imposed in executing last wills for pious causes if such obligations cannot be fulfilled (c. 1310.2)
- 2) In addition to the canon law requirements outlined above, the Diocesan Finance Council may also advise the Bishop with regard to the following:
- Appointment of auditors
  - Appointment of legal counsel
  - Oversight of financial management policies and the implementation thereof
  - Employee compensation and benefits
  - Insurance and risk management
  - Property management
  - Construction management
  - Investment policies
  - Internal controls
  - Development (fundraising)—See USCCB Complimentary Norms for Canon 1262 (effective August 15, 2007) and U.S. Catholic bishops, *Principles and*
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*Guidelines for Fund Raising in the United States by Arch/Dioceses, Arch/Diocesan Agencies and Religious Institutes (November 16, 1977), available from the USCCB Finance Office*

- Banking arrangements

**ARTICLE III Membership**

DFC shall be composed of not fewer than 3 persons,, but no more than 15 persons, including the Bishop of Great Falls-Billings, or the person who, in his stead, exercises ordinary jurisdiction over the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Diocese Great Falls-Billings, in accordance with legislation of the Roman Catholic Church.

- 1) One member of this Council shall be a priest serving the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings, elected by the Priests' Council of the Diocese.
- 2) Other members of this Council shall be appointed to at-large positions by the Bishop, from each of the five (5) vicariates throughout the diocese.
- 3) Members of this Council shall be elected by members of the DFC and approved by the Bishop as:
  - a) Chair of the Diocesan Finance Council
  - b) Vice-Chair of the Diocesan Finance Council
  - c) Chairs and or members of ad hoc committees as deemed necessary

The Vicar General and Chancellor shall be ex-officio, non-voting members of this Council.

The Diocesan Fiscal Officer shall serve as staff to the DFC.

As required, associate staff members and/or experts may be invited to attend DFC meetings to provide necessary information and expertise.

It shall be the responsibility of each of the elected members of the DFC to communicate the activities and recommendations of the DFC to the body which elected each such member and to encourage that body to exercise care in the election of its members to ensure its representatives have the interest and time to serve, and to communicate to the DFC its observations or recommendations in regards to matters being considered by the DFC.

Any individual member with an unexcused absence, and unable to attend or participate in two (2) or more meetings per year or two (2) consecutive meetings shall be assumed to have resigned their appointment to the DFC and the position shall be deemed vacant and filled accordingly. Members shall submit their request for an excused absence to the Bishop not less than 2 days before any regularly scheduled meeting. Members shall state their need to be excused from a meeting outside the regularly scheduled



meeting when the meeting request is received, if possible, or state the reason for their absence as soon as possible after receiving the meeting request. Absences are not considered excused from the meeting until they receive confirmation from the Bishop's office.

**ARTICLE IV** Term of Office

- 1) The regular term of office of the elected or appointed at-large members of the DFC shall be five years.
- 2) The Chair of the DFC shall be elected by members of the DFC and approved by the Bishop for a one-year term and, may be reappointed for additional one-year terms, but shall serve no more than three consecutive one-year terms.
- 3) The Vice-Chair of the DFC shall be elected by members of the DFC and approved by the Bishop for a one-year term and may be reappointed for additional one-year terms but shall serve no more than three consecutive one-year terms.
- 4) Chairs and or members of ad hoc committees shall be appointed terms by the Chair as needed to fulfill the purpose of the committee.

**ARTICLE V** Vacancies

Vacancies on the DFC by reason of resignation, death, disability, termination of office, or otherwise, shall be filled by the same constituency or person which originally selected the member whose position has become vacant.

**ARTICLE VI** Officers and Duties

A. The officers of the DFC shall be a Chair and a Vice-Chair.

- 1) The Chair shall be elected by members of the DFC and approved by the Bishop from among the membership of the Council for a one-year term.
- 2) The Chair of this Council shall conduct all meetings of the DFC and its Executive Committee.
- 3) The Vice-Chair shall be elected by members of the DFC and approved by the Bishop from among the membership of the Council for a one-year term.
- 4) The Vice-Chair of the Council shall act in the place of the Chair when the Chair is absent or unable to attend a meeting of the DFC or the Executive Committee and shall assist the Chair in the performance of the Chair' duties.

B. One member of the DFC shall be appointed by the Bishop to serve as liaison between the Diocesan Finance Council and the Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC).



**C. Diocesan Juridic Persons Support Corporations Board of Directors.**

- 1) Four members, from the members of this Council, appointed to the at-large positions by the Bishop, shall be eligible for election, by the DFC voting members, to serve on the Board of Directors for The Diocese of Great Falls-Billings Parish Juridic Persons Capital Assets Support Corporation (CASC), and The Diocese of Great Falls-Billings Parish Juridic Persons Real Property Support Corporation (RPSP).
- 2) The terms of DFC members elected to serve on the Board or Directors of the CASC and RPSC shall be congruent with DFC term of the elected member.
- 3) Participation and activities of members of the DFC and RPSC/CASC are exclusive.

**ARTICLE VII Meetings**

Meetings of the DFC shall be held four (4) times a year or at the request of either the Bishop, the Chair, or by a majority of the full membership of the DFC.

All meetings of the DFC will be attended by the Diocesan Fiscal Officer and supporting staff as necessary.

Regularly scheduled meetings shall be held at intervals which will allow quarterly reporting of the finances by the Diocesan Fiscal Officer.

Meetings may be held either in person, via teleconference, video conferencing or mediums of communication that will allow members living in remote geographic areas to readily participate in the meeting.

At least one (1) meeting per year must be held with a majority of all participating members present in the same location. Individual members may request to participate through readily available mediums of communication if they are unable to attend in person with the permission of the Bishop.

Meeting material shall be provided to the DFC members at least 10 days prior to each regularly scheduled meeting. Members will be expected to provide any questions and or comments on said material within 5 days of the meeting to allow sufficient time for answers to be formulated by the Diocesan Fiscal Officer.

**ARTICLE VIII Committees**

There shall be an Executive Committee and ad hoc committees as deemed necessary by the DFC.



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There shall be an Executive Committee composed of the Bishop or his delegate, the Chair of the DFC (who shall be the Chair of the Executive Committee), the Vice-Chair of the DFC, and two members of the DFC elected by the DFC, to the Executive Committee for one-year terms

The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the affairs of the Council between meetings, adoption of a yearly schedule of DFC meetings, preparing agendas for the DFC meetings, assigning DFC members to the committees, approving the annual plans and schedules of ad hoc committees, recommending policies and procedures guiding the budget process and the operations of the DFC, and for determining the purpose, membership and term of each ad hoc committee. It shall report all of its activities and actions to the DFC at the next meeting of the DFC for ratification.

All DFC members are eligible serve on the Executive Committee and or ad hoc committees. Members may indicate their committee preference prior to appointment.

### **ARTICLE IX** Quorum and Voting

A majority of the full membership shall be necessary and sufficient to constitute a quorum for the transactions of business at all meetings of DFC and its committees so long as all the members of the council and its committees were properly notified of the meeting in accordance with canon 127. The act of the members present at any meeting at which there is a quorum shall be the act of the DFC or its committees.

### **ARTICLE X** Amendments

Amendments to these statutes shall be proposed at any meeting of the DFC, following a two-week notice, upon a two-thirds vote of the full membership of the DFC. They would be effective upon the approval by the Bishop.

Effective October 11, 2013  
Re-constituted & Approved April 12, 2019  
Michael W. Warfel  
Bishop of Great Falls-Billings

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