

Standing Commission on Structure, Governance, Constitution and Canons
Minutes of March 20, 2019 Video Conference

Members present: Molly James (Chair), Sean Rowe (Vice Chair), Sharon Alexander (Assistant Secretary), Valerie Balling, ~~-Annette Buchanan~~, Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows, Nancy Cohen, ~~Valerie Balling~~, Carmen Figueroa, Wendell Gibbs, Michael Glass, Christopher Hayes, Ryan Kusumoto, Luz Montes, Jake Owensby, Bill Powel, Adam Trambley, Sally Johnson (representative of President of House of Deputies), Mary Kostel (representative of the Presiding Bishop), Jane Cislucyis (Executive Council liaison representative)

Not in attendance: Mike Klusmeyer, Tom Little (Secretary), Jamal Smith, Marisa Tabizon Thompson

The Chair called the meeting to order at 2 pm Eastern Time.

Opening Prayer

Adam Trambley opened the meeting in prayer.

Co-Chairs' Report

The first item discussed was the implications for SCSGCC relating to Title IV and the 3-year window for making claims for Sexual Misconduct. There is a difference of opinion as to whether the amendment to Title IV creating a new IV.19.4(c) includes claims for Sexual Misconduct that occurred prior to January 1, 1996. Sean Rowe reported that the House of Bishops discussed the issue and agreed that all claims for Sexual Misconduct will receive a robust pastoral response. There is no canonical mechanism for interpreting the amended Canon and any “fix” will need to come at the next General Convention. This is a discussion that should happen this triennium in the SCSGCC.

The General Convention Office has given Molly and Sean a list of “cleanup” items that they will refer to subcommittees.

A website or blog has been created but is not yet live. This site is contemplated to be a platform for sharing resources, setting forth best practices and other ways to let people know about the work of the SCSGCC. Input on the website is welcome. The site is here:

<https://sites.google.com/view/cc-resources>

Items from Subcommittees

Bishops & Dioceses – The Bishops and Dioceses Subcommittee has been discussing a number of issues, including background checks, mutual ministry reviews for dioceses and diocesan vitality issues. Sharon Alexander gave an update on 2018-A113, which proposed changing the provisions in Article V.4 requiring that when dioceses merge the Constitution and Canons of the

merged diocese be from the diocese with the greater number of clergy and similar concepts. The proposed amendments were referred to the SCSGCC by the Legislative Committee. Rather than trying to “fix” A113 the current thinking is to remove the specifics from Article V.4 and state that the process of forming the new diocese will be as set forth in the Canons. Amendments in 2018 to Canon I.10 are helpful and Canon I.10 should be reviewed to see if more specificity is warranted. The proposed revision to Article V.4 is on the Extranet and is also here <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0BxtTrHpyfM-7LVVJbEd1VVNnS2s>

Item Received for Consideration

The SCSGCC has received a proposal from a priest to modify the Canons regarding the current retirement age of 72 to allow more flexibility in hiring clergy who are more than 72 years old. The proposal is here: [Proposal to change Retirement Age](#)

The SCSGCC considered the proposal and determined that the subject matter of the proposal is outside its mandate and scope of business. The person who submitted the proposal will be notified of this determination.

For Discussion

The next order of business was a discussion about potential changes to General Convention. Adam Trambley has prepared a proposal, which is set forth here: [Proposed Changes to General Convention from Adam](#)

Michael Glass discussed the proposed changes he has been working on with the General Convention Dispatch of Business Committee, the General Convention Parliamentarian and the GCO staff. He discussed the challenges that occurred with the implementation of changes proposed by TREC in 2015. He recommends doing research and analysis of goals and assumptions that people have about General Convention. For example, what does it mean to make the General Convention more effective? Some of the things Adam has proposed are addressed by the proposals this group has been working on.

The members of the SCSGCC discussed many issues, including

- A hope that General Convention can address priority issues, such as Creation Care, more thoroughly, including budget; how to set priorities that drive the budget
- Role of Joint Standing Committee on Planning and Arrangements in setting the GC agenda
- Need to better communicate with non-English speakers
- Desire to have a broader, more diverse body vs. issues relating to length and cost of General Convention
- Length of days, number of resolutions, redundancies (can other groups do some of the work GC does?)
- The large number of Task Forces created by General Convention, some of which look at issues that dovetail with SCSGCC but as to which SCSGCC does not have sufficient time to review their work. Having liaisons with these Task Forces would be helpful.

There are at least two levels of issues: (1) the big picture of what General Convention should do and how (adaptive and systemic issues) and (2) the technical issues for making General Convention work better or more efficiently. The work of many groups, including the General Convention Office, Joint Standing Committee on Planning and Arrangements, Dispatch [of Business](#), Resolution Review [Committee](#), Parliamentarian, SCSGCC, other Interim Bodies and others intersects these issues.

Work on these issues can be done in stages:

1. Things that can be done before General Convention 2021 and which do not need committee or legislative approval, such as improvements to the software.
2. Things to be addressed at General Convention in 2021 via resolution.
3. Look beyond 2021 at what should be done to be proactive instead of reactive, looking toward long-term, big picture issues. These issues include how canons might be impediments to ministry, etc.

Michael Glass made a motion requesting that the SCSGCC approve the following:

That the General Convention and Rules of Order Subcommittee review ~~with~~ the proposal submitted by Adam Trambley and the items being worked on by Michael Glass and the post General Convention working group in order to bring a comprehensive proposal to the SCSGCC for its consideration in order to provide support for the GCO when it goes before the Executive Council.

Christopher Hayes seconded the motion. The SCSGCC approved the resolution unanimously.

Sean Rowe encouraged the SCSGCC to continue to try to have a high-level conversation about General Convention.

Scheduling of upcoming meetings

The next Zoom Conference for the SCSGCC is set for May 29 at 2 pm Eastern. A doodle poll will be sent out to determine if there is a better time to have the meeting since a number of people will not be able to attend on May 29.

The next in-person meeting will be September 29-October 2, 2019 at Maritime Institute in Maryland.

The recommendation for the SCSGCC's 2020 meeting is April 21-24~~5~~, 2020. The hope is that this meeting will overlap with other Interim Bodies so liaisons can help with structural and canonical issues these groups may have.

Other New Business

Sean congratulated Molly on her new position as the Deputy Executive Officer of the General Convention Officer. She will need to resign as Chair of the SCSGCC but will be serving as the GCO staff liaison to the SCGSCC.

Christopher is working on a report from the Title IV Subcommittee.

Closing Prayer & Adjournment

Adam closed the meeting in prayer. The meeting adjourned at 3:15 pm Eastern.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon Alexander
Assistant Secretary