

Response to comments provided by Grand Knight Jeremy Strohmeyer and Past Grand Knight Karl Hadley (PSD) about the proposed resolutions for consideration by delegates to the 119th Washington State Council Annual Meeting

Introduction

Resolutions 1 through 8 are traditional ceremonial resolutions committing to our Catholic beliefs and principles, honoring our founder Fr Michael J McGivney, our Church leaders, Clergy, and our immediate past and present Supreme Knight, and recognizing the longevity of members and a Council. The remaining resolutions have been submitted after reviewing the existing Washington State Council Bylaws, including all amendments approved by the Supreme Council through May, 2021, in an attempt to:

- Remove redundancies between Bylaw Articles relating to identical actions,
- Remove portions of Bylaws that mirror and in some cases override the, “Charter, Constitution and Laws of the Knights of Columbus,”
- Remove sections of Articles in the Bylaws that can be more efficiently managed as policies that can be changed as circumstances change, and
- Remove a Bylaw that is no longer relevant.

Proposed resolutions 9 through 14 are a work in progress. This is the first effort to significantly update the Washington State Council Bylaws in about twenty years.

The proposed resolutions will not change Article I of the Washington State Council Bylaws that has the title “Organization.” However, it is unclear whether changes of policies would be considered to be laws or regulations. The use of policies for governance rather than amendments to the Washington State Council Bylaws is an area that will probably have to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The use of policies will provide for greater flexibility in some instances. Section 4 of Article I specifies that, “The State Council shall make laws for its own government and for the government of subordinate Councils with the State, and make laws and rules for their enforcement. No law or regulation adopted by the State Council shall be effective until approved by the Supreme Council or the Supreme Board of Directors to whom such laws or regulations shall be transmitted by the State Secretary for their approval or disapproval. These Bylaws or any part thereof may be amended or repealed at any regular meeting of the State Council by a two-thirds of said body present and voting.”

No modifications were made to Article II of the Washington State Council Bylaws that has the title “Membership.” However, in retrospect, Article II Section 3 of the Washington State Bylaws should be amended in the future to account for the institution of Directors within the Faith in Action program. Article II specifies that the Washington State Council voting members include State Officers, the immediate Past State Deputy still residing in Washington State, Grand Knights and a Past Grand Knight from each of the Jurisdiction’s subordinate Councils. Past State Deputies, with the exception of the immediate Past State Deputy, and District Deputies are non-voting members of the Washington State Council and do not have the privilege of making nominations or presenting resolutions. Chairmen of standing committees (not to exceed 12) are

not members of the Washington State Council; however, Chairmen do have the privilege of “[speaking] on any question pertaining to the functions of their particular committees.”

Resolution 9

Significant changes were made to Article III. The requirement to schedule and have contracts for the Washington State Council Annual Meeting five years in advance of the meeting has proven to be unworkable for a number of reasons:

1. Hotels, convention centers and most other commercial facilities capable of hosting and providing for the number of meeting participants are limited to a few large metropolitan areas. Former Executive Director John Walker negotiated the cost for rooms based on a fixed number of rooms and number of meals served. While hotel costs may have been competitive for the Everett Seattle Tacoma Olympia metropolitan areas, the costs were high. A large percentage of the subordinate Councils are located along the I-5 corridor within an hour of driving time. Delegates from many local Councils have chosen to not stay in the hotel hosting the Washington State Council Annual Meeting because of the high room cost. In addition, a significant number of delegates from outside the Seattle metropolitan area chose to make separate hotel room reservations through various booking agencies where hotels sell their unused rooms for a significant discount over the room cost negotiated by the Washington State Council. The Washington State Council did not receive credit for subordinate Council delegates that used discount booking agencies. The Washington State Council exceeded the number of meal reservations; however, the hotels do not factor this into their contractual considerations. Another factor was the failure of Washington State Council contractual negotiators to include force majeure protection. Failure of subordinate Councils to purchase the number of rooms that were contracted for resulted in a \$25,000 penalty that was paid to Hilton Hotels after the 2019 Washington State Council Annual Meeting. We were able to avoid a similar situation during 2020 with the Red Lion Hotel in Yakima by negotiating a contract for the 2024 Annual Meeting and during 2021 with the Hilton Hotel in Bellevue by negotiating a contract for other meetings. Washington State Council Officers chose to pay a \$18,500 penalty to Hilton Hotel rather than commit to the 2022 Annual Meeting at that site because there was a time-trigger in the contract negotiated five years ago that would have resulted in a significantly higher penalty had we chosen to have the Washington State Council Annual Meeting at that location and because it was uncertain as to whether the Annual Meeting would occur because of Washington State, King County and local health authority edicts.
2. The cost for hotel rooms has increased significantly during the past five years. Consequently, a decision has been made to look for alternative sites that can host the Convention where the cost is not related to a room count commitment. The 2025 Washington State Council Annual Meeting will be held at St Martins University where there are a large number of hotels that can accommodate participants. Participants can negotiate the cost of their hotel rooms independently. It is anticipated that similar facilities at other Catholic Universities in Washington State will be used in the future.

There will be nothing in the Bylaws that prevents negotiating a contract that is advantageous for the Washington State Council five years prior to an Annual Meeting; however, eliminating the five year requirement provides some flexibility and also some leverage. While the deadline for significantly altering the date restriction in the proposed resolutions for consideration during the 2022 Washington State Council Annual Meeting has passed, it would be advantageous to simply eliminate the date restriction from the Washington State Council Bylaws and, by default, accept the time interval for the Annual Meeting specified in Section 13 of Chapter II with the title, "State Council," of the Charter, Constitution and Laws of the Knights of Columbus. This would enable scheduling the Annual Meeting on or after 1st day of April and before the 1st day of June.

3. Good Catch! The Resolutions Committee has the authority per the Officers' Desk Reference (Officers Online) under Council and Assembly Issues to submit a modified resolution to make the resolution more clear. There was initially a Section 2 under Article III relating to the Supreme Council's direction to the Washington State Council to conduct two training meetings for District Deputies. This is covered under duties of the State Deputy in Article VI "Duties of Elective Officers," Section 1h. The reference to Section 1h is therefore removed. This is considered in the amendment to Article 6, Section 1h.
4. It is not believed that changing words or phrasing had a significant impact on the meaning of the various sections in Article III of the Washington State Council Bylaws. Should there be questions relating to specific words or phrases the Washington State Council will rely on definitions provided in the most recent edition of Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary. Furthermore, the Washington State Council can meet more often than once in any year if there is an urgent necessity to conduct Washington State Council business.
5. The requirement for the Resolutions Committee to prepare an estimate of costs and financial risk should be made during the deliberative consideration of a resolution that involves expenditure of Washington State Council financial resources. This will be done with the advice of the State Secretary and State Treasurer. Both cost and risk are critical factors when determining where financial resources will come from and how certain the Washington State Council is that financial resources will be available.
6. The requirement to publish all resolutions is listed under Article III, Section I.E.2, which states, "All resolutions or proposed amendments to the Washington State Council Bylaws submitted for consideration at a Washington State Council Meeting including all resolutions requiring an increase in per capita shall be printed and published electronically in a format accessible to subordinate Councils." The requirement to prepare an estimate of costs and financial risk summarized in response 5, above, is intended to address the issue of cost and financial resources to cover the cost of a resolution involving the expenditure of funds.
7. The phrasing of the Resolutions Committee decision as it relates to the report by the Chairman of the Resolutions Committee is not specified in the "Charter, Constitution and Laws of the Knights of Columbus" in Section 56, "State Councils." The word "reject" can be replaced by the word "decline" since these two words are considered to be

synonymous. Adding the phrase, “Refer to the State Executive Committee” will be considered by the Resolutions Committee; however, the current State Bylaws Article III, Section 5, includes the statement, “To protect the integrity of the resolution process, resolutions may not be amended at the State Council’s Annual Meeting.” Since the addition of the phrase, “Refer to the State Executive Committee” would not affect the integrity of the resolution process, this phrase should be added.

8. The Washington State Bylaws currently in force include a statement at the end of Article III, Section 5, “To protect the integrity of the resolution process, resolutions may not be amended at the State Council’s Annual Meeting.” The resolution to include this phrase was voted on and added to the Washington State Bylaws at the 2019 Washington State Council Annual Meeting while under the leadership of PSD Robert Baemmert. The Supreme Council accepted the resulting amendment to the Washington State Bylaws. The phrase has therefore been included in the proposed resolution amending Article III of the Washington State Bylaws. Article III.E.9 stands as written.
9. Any voting member of the Washington State Council is eligible to submit resolutions for consideration at the Washington State Council Annual Meeting. Elected Officers of the Washington State Council are voting members and as such are eligible to submit resolutions for consideration at the Annual Meeting.
10. Clearly it has become very difficult if not impossible to predict the number of attendees that will reserve rooms at the host hotel through the Washington State Council reservation website as evinced by the significant deficit in the number of recorded reservations at the 2019 Washington State Council Annual Meeting. A number of factors contributed to the deficit in the number of delegates that registered for room reservations through the Washington State Council reservation website. Some of these factors included, among others:
 - Proximity of Councils to the site of the 2019 Washington State Council Annual Meeting. Local Council delegates chose to sleep at home rather than pay the high hotel rates negotiated during 2014.
 - A number of delegates chose to make their reservations through discount reservations sites like Hotels.com, etc.
 - Delegates representing small rural Councils chose to remain home and commit Council financial resources to charitable causes rather than pay the high cost for hotels and meals in Bellevue.

It might have been possible to use Member Management to assess the financial resources of the subordinate Councils and then predict whether a Council would participate, keeping in mind there would be a five year lag between the assessment and the actual Annual Meeting. However, even State Officers do not have access to individual Council records through Member Management.

Resolution 10

The “Charter, Constitution and Laws of the Knights of Columbus” state in Chapter IX, “State Deputies,” Section 60, “Powers and Duties” Part 5 that the State Deputy is responsible for

supervising District Deputies that he has appointed. There is nothing in the “Charter, Constitution and Laws of the Knights of Columbus that prohibits the State Deputy from delegating supervisory responsibility for District Deputies. In fact, best practices in management advise delegation when possible so that a manager, the State Deputy in this case, can focus on high priority issues. There is nothing in delegation that would prevent the State Deputy from taking direct supervisory control of District Deputies should the “District Deputy Director” fail to adequately perform his delegated responsibilities. As a footnote, I have spoken with Brother Joe Niglio in the Legal Department about this amendment. The advice I was given is that as long as the State Deputy is not required but given the authority to delegate supervision of District Deputies, the proposed amendment will probably be accepted by the Supreme Board of Directors.

Resolution 11

1. While the Summer Leadership Meeting that included State Officers, District Deputies, Grand Knights, Past State Deputies and State Chairmen provided an opportunity to become acquainted and learn from predecessors and those involved in programs, the program has become unsustainable because the Washington State Council had to provide support for a significant portion of the cost for the meeting, subsidizing the cost of meals, providing materials, etc. In addition, the increasing cost for hotel rooms and meals has become an unsustainable burden for the subordinate Councils.
 - a. The Supreme Council requires that the Washington State Council schedule two meetings where District Deputies receive training that will enable them to proficiently exercise their duties and responsibilities. The Supreme Council pays for the portion of the meeting that specifically provides training for District Deputies.
 - b. The Washington State Council made a decision to provide support for Financial Secretary training because of the role that the Financial Secretary provides with record keeping and Council administration. The Councils provide a portion of the support (meals, lodging and transportation) for training Financial Secretaries; however, support for Financial Secretary trainers and training activities is paid by the State Council.
 - c. Program Directors and Committee Chairman as well as others may be invited at the discretion of the State Deputy to participate in training activities when these individuals provide information that is necessary for District Deputy and Financial Secretary training.
2. The 14 June date was a misprint and will be changed to 15 June.
3. The Washington State Council has, in the past, subsidized meal costs and paid the costs for materials, expenses for participating trainers and subsidies for Past State Deputies, as well as other costs.
4. The Washington State Council Officers believe that Regional Meeting are a more effective way to provide training for Council Grand Knights, Council Program Directors and Council Chairmen. Regional meetings are provided to the Councils with stipends for

travel in excess of 50 miles thus significantly reducing the costs that would be incurred were Councils to send individuals to a Summer Meeting. In addition the training can be made available to all members of Councils without imposing a significant cost on the individuals Councils.

Resolution 12

1. The annual income has decreased significantly for a number of reasons'
 - a. There are an increasing number of honorary members for whom there is no per capita charge,
 - b. Membership is declining because Councils are not actively recruiting new members as older members die,
 - c. Uncertain impact of the affiliate member initiative. Current estimate is an 11% drop in billable members.
2. Specific details on decreased expenses are available from the State Secretary and State Treasurer. Please contact those individuals to obtain specific information.
3. Please contact the State Deputy for specific information concerning budget deficits.
4. Enclosure 1 is posted on the website, kofc-wa.org
5. Enclosure 2 is posted on the website, kofc-wa.org
6. Article VII, Section 3 will be changed as follows:

Article VII, SECTION 3. For the purpose of defraying expenses and obligations of the State Council there shall be levied against and collected from all subordinate councils, annually, a per capita assessment, based on the number of members of the respective councils as of the last day of December of the current year, as shown by the records of the Supreme Secretary. The State Secretary shall obtain from the Supreme Secretary and present to the State Council meeting a certificate showing the number of members of each council as of said date not including honorary life members, inactive insurance members and members that have qualified for special disability in accordance with Section 118(e) of the Charter, Constitution and Laws of the Knights of Columbus. The amount of the per capita assessment shall be \$11.00 on the last day of December, 2023 and shall increase by \$0.50 each year thereafter through 2029 when the per capita shall be \$15 and shall not be further modified unless by affirmative vote of two thirds majority of voting delegates in attendance at the State Council Meeting.

7. The current budget is posted on the state website for review. There is at least one issue with a budget being presented at the Annual Meeting for approval. Presentation of a proposed budget for the Washington State Council is a good idea; however, it would be difficult to prepare the budget prior to and present the budget at the Washington State Council Annual Meeting because the State Officers for the upcoming fraternal year should have input while the budget is being prepared. While it is common practice to elect State Officers to higher positions through the chairs during each sequential alternate year, there is no guarantee that this will always occur. It might be prudent to convene a second Washington State Council Meeting in order to approve or reject a budget. Experience with virtual meetings might make this practical.
8. The \$2.00 per capita increase is proposed for the last day of 2023 because the proposed amendments to the Bylaws will not take effect until the 2023 – 2024 fraternal year due to Supremes' 2022 August BOD meeting where these amendments will be considered.

Resolution 13

The phrase, “Two annual visits to each subordinate council in his District.” Will be changed to “Make at least two visits each fraternal year to each subordinate council in his District. Annual implies a calendar year. Thus the change will make it clear that the visits will be made within the fraternal year. Thank you for catching the oversight on the part of the State Advocate.

Resolution 14

The Sections within Article VIII will be renumbered to reflect the removal of Section 5. The new Section 5 of Article VIII of the Washington State Council Bylaws will be as follows:

“Section 5. The following Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of our Country shall be recited, aloud and in unison, at each regular and/or special meeting of State Officers, Washington State Council and subordinate Councils in the Washington State Jurisdiction.

“I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”

Thank you for catching this omission.

Resolution 15

This resolution has been submitted at least twice during the past two years in essentially the same form and has been repeatedly rejected. Supreme Advocate John Marrella has previously advised now State Treasurer Tom Williams that this resolution has previously been rejected by the Washington State Council. The Resolution Committee will consider the proposed resolution and decide whether this resolution is to be considered.

