

**ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF NEW
WESTMINSTER**

**REVIEW OF THE 2020
EPISCOPAL ELECTION**

**FARRIS LLP
Kevin Smith
Danielle Temple**

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CONTENTS

Part 1 – Executive Summary	2
A. Summary of Main Themes and Recommendations	3
Part 2 – Background and Methodology	5
A. Background	5
B. This Review.....	7
C. Methodology.....	7
Part 3 – The Episcopal Election Committee	9
A. Tools and Education	11
B. Role and Function of the EEC.....	13
Part 4 – The Candidate Experience	15
A. Attracting Applicants	15
B. Communication to Candidates and Potential Applicants.....	16
C. Vetting Process	19
D. Communication Guidelines	22
E. Getting to Know the Candidates.....	24
F. Pastoral Support for Candidates	29
G. Summary.....	31
Part 5 – Nominators	31
A. Overview	31
B. Appropriate Number of Nominators.....	32
C. Eligible Nominators	34
D. Proper Role of Nominators.....	36
E. Summary and Recommendations	38
Part 6 – The Election.....	40
A. Preparation in Advance of the Election	40
B. Communication to Synod Delegates	41
C. Returning Officers and Voting	41
D. The Electoral Synod.....	42
E. Ambiguity Regarding Automatic Elimination	45
F. Electoral Synod Rules of Order.....	48
G. Post-Election Follow-Up	49
Part 7 – Survey Responses.....	50
APPENDIX A.....	56

Review of the Anglican Diocese of New Westminster's 2020 Episcopal Election

PART 1 – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Diocese of New Westminster's 2020 Episcopal Election was unique in that it took place amidst a global pandemic and in a purely "virtual" way. Notwithstanding these logistical obstacles, candidates, others involved in organizing and delivering the election, and Synod delegates generally, reported a high degree of satisfaction with how the process unfolded.
2. This Review fulfils the requirements of Canon 2.34, which calls for a review to be conducted following each episcopal election.
3. This is a thematic review. Rather than summarizing the interviews conducted and the points made by each interviewee, we have attempted to draw out common issues which were raised, or where divergent opinions were offered, to identify these diverging views. A detailed explanation of the methodology adopted is set out below.
4. As the Review progressed, we considered that the issues raised in this Review could be best captured in two primary ways:
 - (a) **First**, by identifying general topics or areas which we believe Diocesan Council, the Episcopal Election Committee ("**EEC**"), and (if applicable) the incumbent Bishop at the time the next episcopal election is called ought to consider. In each of these areas, we consider that there might be a number of reasonable approaches taken. Although we may favour one or another particular approach (for reasons we explain), we consider that such matters are best addressed by the appropriate individuals or bodies, as and when relevant in the future. We have therefore not made specific recommendations in relation to them: our purpose in raising them is simply to identify them as areas to which attention ought to be given. We refer to these as **themes**.

- (b) **Second**, by identifying specific changes which we believe ought to be made, in order to improve the episcopal election process in the future. We refer to these as **recommendations**.

A. **SUMMARY OF MAIN THEMES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

5. Main **themes** identified in this Report are, in summary:

- (a) Incorporating the learnings and best practices from a “virtual Synod” into future Synods;
- (b) Clarifying the role and function of the EEC;
- (c) Considering how and from where the Diocese attracts candidates¹;
- (d) Communicating clearly around timelines, process, and expectations, with candidates or prospective candidates, nominators, participants in the Electoral Synod process, and delegates;
- (e) Rethinking the purpose and role of nominators; and
- (f) Ensuring adequate pastoral support for candidates.

6. **Recommendations** made in this Report are, in summary (with references to corresponding paragraphs below):

- (a) **Recommendation 1:** Canon 2.13 currently provides that the EEC shall make information available to Synod delegates. A new subsection (d) should be added to that provision to require that the EEC also make

¹ One of the challenges we encountered was being specific about what to call individuals discerning to become Bishop, at different stages of the process.

In this Report, we have tried to use “**prospective applicant**” to refer to someone considering applying to become a candidate for Bishop; “**applicant**” to refer to someone who has in fact applied; “**nominee**” to refer to someone who has been chosen by a nominator, prior to being announced as a candidate; “**candidate**” (lower case) to refer generically to an individual who has completed the vetting process and is on the ballot the election (without referring to any specific person or slate), and “**Candidate**” (upper case) to refer specifically to one of the five candidates in this election.

information available to prospective applicants and candidates about the election process and in order to aid their discernment generally (**Paragraph 52**).

- (b) **Recommendation 2:** As one of its initial tasks, and with a view to meeting the requirements of Paragraph 4.3 of Regulation 1-(5) (*or new Canon 2.13(d), as proposed above*), the EEC should create two “information packs”: a “Prospective Applicants’ Pack”, and a “Candidates’ Pack” (**Paragraphs 53-55**).
- (c) **Recommendation 3:** Scope, expectations and requirements should be clearly articulated regarding the candidate vetting process. The vetting process should be fully completed before candidates’ names are announced publicly (**Paragraph 59**).
- (d) **Recommendation 4:** The role of the “Diocesan Liaison” currently provided for in Regulation 1-(5), Paragraph 4.1 should be re-worked to provide for one “Candidates’ Chaplain” who is not a delegate to Synod, but agrees to be available to all candidates as a confidential spiritual support during the discernment and electoral process (**Paragraph 88**).
- (e) **Recommendation 5:** The “Candidates’ Packs” contemplated above should include guidelines to nominators, clarifying expectations around their role and function (**Paragraph 117**).
- (f) **Recommendation 6:** As part of its consideration of the mandate of the next EEC, Diocesan Council should discuss whether it is desirable to offer prospective applicants from outside the Diocese an opportunity to meet Synod delegates (**Paragraph 118**).
- (g) **Recommendation 7:** Canon 2.16 currently provides that each nominee must be nominated by “at least” four members of Synod, without specifying a maximum number. That provision should be amended to specify that each

nominee must be nominated by four members, i.e. removing the scope for more than four nominators (**Paragraph 119**).

- (h) **Recommendation 8:** Canon 2.20(d) should be amended to clarify the mechanism by which candidates may be automatically removed after a ballot (**Paragraph 149**).
- (i) **Recommendation 9:** The Constitution & Canons Committee should review the Electoral Synod Rules of Order to ensure that they are appropriately tailored for the unique context of an Electoral Synod, and do not inadvertently incorporate procedures from regular Diocesan Synods which do not in fact apply (**Paragraph 160**).

7. Various other issues are raised which Diocesan Council may elect to address by way of amendments to relevant Regulations in the future.

PART 2 – BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

A. BACKGROUND

8. On April 21, 2020, the Most Reverend Melissa M. Skelton, Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of British Columbia and the Yukon and Archbishop of New Westminster publicly announced her intention to call an Episcopal Electoral Synod for the purposes of electing a Coadjutor Bishop, in advance of her forthcoming retirement.

9. On April 28, 2020, pursuant to Canon 2.3, the Diocesan Council of the Diocese of New Westminster appointed the EEC. The EEC was chaired by the Venerable Richard G. Leggett, Archdeacon of Westminster.

10. Nominations were open from July 1, 2020 to July 31, 2020. Five nominations were received, and following a successful vetting process, the following nominees were confirmed as Candidates for election: the Ven. Allan Carson, the Rev. Philip Cochrane, the Rev. Philippa Segrave-Pride, the Rt. Rev. Riscylla Shaw, and the

Rev. John Stephens. To give the Diocese an opportunity to learn more about the Candidates, Candidates were asked to provide a written response to the Diocesan Profile (the “**Profile**”), submit a short video statement, and participate in a virtual Town Hall held via Zoom on September 17, 2020.

11. Conducting an episcopal election in a global pandemic brought unique challenges and opportunities for the EEC, the Candidates, and volunteers who assisted in the process. Those involved navigated fluctuating provincial health guidelines and social distancing requirements, which necessitated embracing new technology and a modified electoral process.

12. From the time Archbishop Skelton announced her intention to call the Episcopal Electoral Synod, until approximately mid-summer, those organizing the election still hoped that it would be possible for the election to occur in person. However, by August 2020, it became apparent to the EEC that this would not be possible, and that an entirely virtual election would be necessary. A few significant decisions followed:

- (a) The EEC, acting on behalf of the Diocese, engaged Data on the Spot, a company that specializes in facilitating virtual voting and online meetings, to facilitate a virtual election whereby Synod delegates voted remotely, with only a few individuals physically present at Christ Church Cathedral during the election.
- (b) Data on the Spot facilitated electronic balloting through a platform called SimplyVoting, which offers a web-based voting application.
- (c) ProShow, a company that specializes in audio/visual services for live events, was retained to manage all aspects of the livestreaming of the Synod, in conjunction with Randy Murray, Diocesan Communications Officer.

13. On October 3, 2020, Archbishop Skelton as Metropolitan presided at the Episcopal Electoral Synod, held at Christ Church Cathedral. The Returning Officers, who

coordinated the ballots with the assistance of Data On The Spot, oversaw the voting process for each ballot.

14. Although each of the Candidates was physically present in the Diocese during the election, they did not attend at the Cathedral. Candidates were notified simultaneously of the results of each ballot. After the third ballot, the Reverend John Stephens was duly elected Coadjutor Bishop of the Diocese of New Westminster.

B. THIS REVIEW

15. Canon 2.34 of the Canons of the Diocese of New Westminster (the “**Canons**”) provides that:

2.34 Within thirty days of its first regular meeting following the consecration and/or installation of the Diocesan Bishop, Diocesan Council shall establish an Electoral Process Review Task Force.

16. On October 28, 2020, Diocesan Council resolved that Diocesan Vice Chancellor Kevin Smith, and his law firm Farris LLP, be retained to conduct a review of the episcopal election and submit a report of findings and recommendations. The Review Team was comprised of Mr. Smith, and Ms. Danielle Temple, an articling student.

C. METHODOLOGY

17. The work of the Review was comprised of four principle components:

- (a) In-depth interviews (either in-person observing Covid-19 protocols, or by Zoom) of approximately one hour in length with 17 key contributors to the Election process, including all five Candidates, the Metropolitan and other Synod Office staff, the Chair and other Members of the Episcopal Election Committee; Diocesan Legal Officers, as well as the Electoral Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer. The Review Team is grateful to the

following individuals for their willingness to be interviewed as part of the Review²:

- (i) The Most Rev. Melissa Skelton, Archbishop and Metropolitan
 - (ii) The Rev. John Stephens, Candidate (and Bishop Coadjutor-Elect)
 - (iii) The Ven. Allan Carson, Candidate
 - (iv) The Rev. Philip Cochrane, Candidate
 - (v) The Rev. Philippa Segrave-Pride, Candidate
 - (vi) The Right Rev. Riscylla Shaw, Candidate
 - (vii) The Ven. Douglas Fenton, Executive Archdeacon
 - (viii) The Ven. Richard Leggett, EEC Chair
 - (ix) Ms. Alison Brookfield, EEC Member
 - (x) The Rev. Andrew Halladay, EEC Member
 - (xi) Mr. Brian Walks, EEC Member
 - (xii) Ms. Suzanne Stockdill, Returning Officer
 - (xiii) Mr. Ken Storozuk, Deputy Returning Officer
 - (xiv) Mr. George Cadman, Q.C., Chancellor
 - (xv) Ms. Jennifer Dezell, Legal Assessor
 - (xvi) Mr. Randy Murray, Diocesan Communications Officer
 - (xvii) Ms. Lauren Odile Pinkney, Diocesan Administrative Assistant
- (b) A detailed review of the applicable Canons, Regulations, and Rules of Order governing the episcopal election process; and
 - (c) A short anonymous survey, which was sent to all Synod delegates, and in response to which 174 responses as well as a number of follow-up emails

² Titles are as of the date of interview, and only an individual's role in the context of this election (as opposed to other Diocesan positions, for example) is listed.

were received. Survey responses are summarized in Part 7 of this Report, and comments from survey respondents are included at Appendix A.

18. We have deliberately not attributed comments which were made to us in interviews. This is partly because we considered that this would help encourage an environment in which interviewees would feel able to speak candidly about their experiences, and, in our view, it was preferable to focus on common themes and issues raised, rather than whom in particular was raising them.

19. The Review Team is grateful to all participants for their willingness to share their thoughtful, candid responses in interviews, survey responses and emails.

PART 3 – THE EPISCOPAL ELECTION COMMITTEE

20. Diocesan Council appointed an eleven-person Episcopal Election Committee in April 2020. The EEC met weekly via Zoom and consisted of the following individuals, who represented the regional archdeaconries of the Diocese:³

- Nii K'an Kwadins (Mr. Jerry Adams) - Burrard Archdeaconry
- Ms. Alison Brookfield - Capilano Archdeaconry
- The Rev. Andrew Halladay - Lougheed Archdeaconry
- The Rev. Lindsay Hills - Granville Archdeaconry
- The Rev. Vivian Lam - Westminster Archdeaconry
- The Ven. Richard Leggett - Westminster Archdeaconry (Chair)
- The Rev. Tim Morgan - Lougheed Archdeaconry
- Ms. Elizabeth Stoute - Granville Archdeaconry
- The Rev. Peggy Trendell-Jensen - Capilano Archdeaconry
- Mr. Brian Walks - Fraser Archdeaconry
- Mr. Casper Zusek - Burrard Archdeaconry

21. Canon 2.3 provides:

2.3 Upon the announcement of the intention of the Diocesan Bishop to resign or retire, or the death, permanent incapacity or removal of the Diocesan Bishop, the Diocesan

³ Biographies of EEC members can be found here: [https://churchos-uploads.s3.amazonaws.com/2020/11/14/22/45/41/1a17f340-2ceb-4731-a547-497005b52ab1/Episcopal%20Election%20Committee%20-%20FINAL%20\(3\).pdf](https://churchos-uploads.s3.amazonaws.com/2020/11/14/22/45/41/1a17f340-2ceb-4731-a547-497005b52ab1/Episcopal%20Election%20Committee%20-%20FINAL%20(3).pdf)

Council shall, within thirty days, appoint an Episcopal Election Committee ('the Committee') using the following criteria:

- (a) The Committee shall consist of eleven members:
 - (i) A Chair, either lay or ordained, chosen by the Diocesan Council;
 - (ii) Five clergy, drawn from the canonically resident bishops, priests and deacons of the Diocese, and
 - (iii) Five lay members who are qualified to be members of their Parish Vestry pursuant to Canon 9 or Canon 10 and have been so for at least two years.
- (b) The membership of the Committee shall reflect the diversity of the Diocese with particular attention to:
 - (i) gender identity,
 - (ii) age,
 - (iii) ethnic and cultural identity, and
 - (iv) theological perspectives.
- (c) The members of the Committee shall be drawn from all the regional archdeaconries of the Diocese.
- (d) The Committee shall be responsible for establishing an electoral process that is:
 - (i) transparent,
 - (ii) fair,
 - (iii) accountable,
 - (iv) committed to discernment, and
 - (v) guided by a pastoral concern for the nominees.
- (e) The Committee shall determine how electronic and social technology is to be used in the electoral process.

22. Interviewees involved in the formation and work of the EEC agreed that this objective was successfully achieved.

23. Paragraphs 1.1 and 1.2 of Regulation 1-(5) provides that the Chancellor shall serve as a resource for the EEC, but not be a member of the EEC itself. We agree with interviewees that this provision is appropriate and advisable.

24. As to day-to-day logistics, the EEC met weekly by Zoom and created two working groups which would report to the EEC as a whole: one to establish the interview process, and another to review the Diocesan Profile.

25. Overall, those interviewed expressed gratitude and appreciation for the work conducted by the EEC. The EEC had the unenviable task of coordinating the Diocese's first virtual election amidst a pandemic. Despite these challenges, the vast majority of survey respondents found the process to be well thought-out and well executed.

26. As we discuss below in relation to the role of nominators, questions around the tasks of the EEC led to a wide-ranging discussion with interviewees on the broader purpose of the EEC and what tools could be provided to assist the EEC in completing its duties. We believe those are important questions for Diocesan leadership to engage with, and therefore do not attempt to provide any conclusive answers herein; however, by raising them, we hope to provide a jumping-off point in a way that facilitates those future discussions, in due course.

A. TOOLS AND EDUCATION

27. A number of interviewees raised the point – and, to be clear, not necessarily with any value judgment attached – that the members of the EEC, while regionally represented and diverse in their personal identity characteristics, largely lacked experience in organizing or participating in an episcopal election. That, in turn, resulted in a heavy reliance on the Chair, the Venerable Richard Leggett, both administratively, but also at times in relation to substantive decisions or interpretations.

28. This had two principal consequences:

- (a) first, some interviewees pointed to an element of overreliance on the Chair from time to time, given his undoubted wealth of experience. It was suggested that the disparity in experience resulted in a tendency to defer to the views of the Chair;
- (b) second, this disparity in experience meant that this Chair, in the context of this EEC, ended up taking on a disproportionate work load. Ven. Leggett's dedication to the task was unquestioned and commended. However, it raises a concern that future Chairs may feel deterred by the perceived

amount of work associated with the role, or resigned to such an outcome being an inevitable feature of the role. A goal of any committee should be to make large tasks manageable by sharing work among members, and in doing so, leveraging their different perspectives and skillsets. Thought should be given to how to ensure that can happen effectively, within the EEC.

29. What the comments above point to is the possibility that, in addition to the criteria set out in the Canons, thought should be given to ensuring that the EEC includes a diversity of experience with Anglican governance and practices, including in relation to episcopal elections or elections generally.

30. Some interviewees suggested it would be beneficial either to recruit individuals who already have this experience, or provide an educational component to members at the initial meetings of the EEC, which could include meeting with Diocesan Council in the first meeting. Expectations regarding the EEC's duties, timelines, and the necessary tools available to help them accomplish those things could be discussed at the outset.

31. Another suggestion included having Diocesan staff or officers attend certain EEC meetings to provide technological and administrative input and expertise. The shift to a "virtual" election required technical staff to move very quickly and with short notice. Even in the absence of a pandemic, it was suggested that having technical and administrative staff or officers (including, for example, the Diocesan Communications Officer, the Diocesan Administrative Assistant, one or both Returning Officers, and potentially one or more of the Diocesan Legal Officers) attend some of the EEC's early-stage meetings would be advantageous. In this way, the EEC could understand (for example) the necessary logistical or technical requirements in order to have content posted on the Diocesan website, and Diocesan staff or officers could gain early insight into the EEC's thinking and expectations around what will be required of candidates (sound/video, town hall(s), etc.) and in relation to communication with Synod delegates.

It would ensure staff and officers have adequate time to prepare for the election and the events leading up to it.

B. ROLE AND FUNCTION OF THE EEC

32. Greater clarity should be provided regarding the mandate of the EEC. Most agreed that, in practice in this election, the EEC was largely an administrative or “facilitative” committee responsible for coordinating the logistics surrounding disseminating information, communicating with candidates, and arranging the process leading up to and on the day of the election.

33. Certain interviewees queried whether the EEC should play a more substantive role in recruiting and screening candidates. This dovetailed with conversations around the role of nominators (which we discuss below) and the fact that, in this election, the Diocese attracted relatively few external candidates. Some wondered whether the EEC could or should assist, or somehow do more, to recruit candidates from outside the Diocese.

34. The Canons outline the administrative functions of the EEC and do not envision, or at least are silent as to, it playing a more substantive role. Pursuant to Canon 2.13, the EEC receives the nominations, oversees the process of vetting the qualifications of those persons nominated, plans and execute a fair and transparent electoral process, and ensures that all necessary information regarding the nominees are available to the Electoral Synod.

35. To borrow the terminology of one interviewee, the EEC in this Diocese acts as an “election manager.” In certain dioceses, in the American Episcopalian church for example, the analogous committee actively vets, nominates and/or recruits candidates. By contrast, the traditional Canadian model is to “see where the flowers bloom” – without taking active steps to water them.

36. On the other hand, there were several interviewees who expressed a desire for a more proactive EEC, whereby the EEC would engage in active recruitment and not just screen candidates. The relative low number of Candidates generally, and the fact

that only one was “external” to the Diocese (albeit with family ties to the Lower Mainland), appears to have provoked consideration of whether there would be merit in a more active role for the EEC. Another Candidate said that they would have appreciated greater interaction with the EEC as a whole, noting that in other dioceses, candidates might meet with the Candidates over a series of days, in a manner akin to a retreat.

37. In general, we agree with the current approach. The Canons identify that the electoral process shall be reflect the key principles of transparency and fairness. For the EEC – which is charged with creating and delivering that process – to have an “interventionist” role in nominating or vetting candidates – would arguably be inconsistent with these principles. Furthermore, we note that the number of candidates in past elections (which featured a similar role for the EEC) was not considered to raise any concerns.

38. A number of factors were at play in this election which, individually or collectively, may have had the effect of reducing the number and geographic spread of Candidates. Those include, by way of examples only, concerns by potential applicants about relocating or commencing an episcopacy in a pandemic, inconvenient timing from a family or personal perspective which prevented potential applicants from allowing their names to stand, or the fact that the Diocese of British Columbia and the Diocese of New Westminster – which may have otherwise attracted similar pools of applicants – held elections a week apart.

39. The proper role of the EEC is an important issue for Diocesan Council, and the Diocese generally, to remain alive to. If a more “interventionist” or substantive role for the EEC is considered desirable in the future, corresponding revisions to the Canons would need to be made.

40. However, we consider that one way in which the EEC could assist in recruiting candidates, without compromising its current role or its independence, is to cast a wider net in terms of advertising and inviting applications for the episcopal vacancy. We discuss this further below.

PART 4 – THE CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE

A. ATTRACTING APPLICANTS

41. One of the comments raised by a number of interviewers is that this election attracted comparatively fewer Candidates “external” to the Diocese than in previous elections.

42. Some interviewees noted that the Diocese of British Columbia, for example, had more candidates overall, and more candidates external to the Diocese, than the Diocese of New Westminster. Many expressed surprise at not receiving more applications from other Canadian Dioceses.

43. We have noted above certain “one-off” factors which may have acted to deter prospective applicants from stepping forward during the unique circumstances of the past year. In addition, it is clear to us that there are a number of “macro” factors or trends at play, in this Diocese and in the Canadian church generally, which may act as a disincentive to potential applicants. In addition to the pandemic, those include, for example:

- (a) The high cost of living in Greater Vancouver; and
- (b) For potential applicants from the United States, the fact that the Episcopal Church Pension Fund does not offer members who leave the Episcopal Church to become Bishops reciprocal recognition with the Anglican Church of Canada’s pension fund. This is potentially a significant deterrent, as the effect is that clergy who have accrued pensions in the United States may have to accept the “capping” of their contributions there, and consequently, limiting their retirement income, in order to put their names forward to become a Bishop in Canada.

44. Clearly, both of these are complex, multifaceted issues, which are beyond the control of the Diocese. Nevertheless, we mention them as we believe it is important

for Diocesan Council to be aware of them as factors which intrinsically impact the pool of potential applicants.

45. The Diocese should consider, for example:

- (a) obtaining up-to-date information quantifying the cost of living in the Lower Mainland as part of ongoing updates to the Diocesan Profile, and considering whether and to what extent this may impact the compensation and other financial assistance it can offer to a new Bishop, particularly one relocating from outside the Diocese; and
- (b) exploring, in conjunction with the National Church and/or the Anglican Church of Canada's pension fund, whether there is scope to engage in discussions aimed at ensuring reciprocal recognition of pensions entitlements, thereby removing a disincentive to prospective applicants from the United States.

46. The EEC, as part of designing and implementing the election process, should give specific thought to where and by what means the vacancy should be advertised. For this election, the vacancy was advertised on the Anglican Church of Canada "Jobs Posting" web page and the Diocese of New Westminster website. One interviewee suggested that in addition to advertising the election in Anglican Church of Canada publications, it would be advisable to promote the election in the *Church Times*, the UK-based newspaper with a distribution throughout the Anglican Communion. In addition, consideration should be given to how to maximize effective promotion through social media and other online channels.

B. COMMUNICATION TO CANDIDATES AND POTENTIAL APPLICANTS

Paragraph 4.3 of Regulation 1-(5): Candidates will be provided with current information regarding salary, benefits and housing costs in order to aid them in their discernment.

47. The pandemic created logistical challenges not normally faced by an EEC, including having to pivot relatively quickly to a virtual format. Those interviewed acknowledged the exceptional nature of the election this year and that so many of the challenges faced were not foreseeable and outside the control of the EEC.

48. Acknowledging this context, there was still a general consensus among Candidates and others involved that the process would have benefitted from more communication, and communication earlier in the process.

49. Paragraph 4.3 of Regulation 1-(5), excerpted above, relates to the provision of information to “candidates”. However, many interviewees expressed the view that certain information would have been helpful at the time when they were discerning whether or not to put their names forward, prior to actually becoming candidates. In the context of other job applications, an interested person would typically have some awareness of the prospective salary and benefits associated with the role, and general information about the location (such as approximate housing costs or other costs of living), prior to applying.⁴

50. As noted by one Candidate, this would be particularly beneficial for candidates from outside the Canadian church, which (it was suggested) has a very different practice regarding episcopal elections, than the norm in other parts of the Anglican Communion. Candidates also said that it would have been very helpful to have received a timeline of events. Many felt that deadlines were in flux and it was difficult to plan accordingly, again acknowledging that this was in part due to the pandemic.

51. Further, Paragraph 4.3 of Regulation 1-(5), which relates to information to be provided to candidates, seems out of place with Paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2 of Regulation 1-(5), which relate to pastoral support offered to candidates. Regulation 4.3 (which relates to information to be provided to candidates) therefore seems out of place. We consider a

⁴ We note that housing and utilities were previously distinct elements of Diocesan clergy compensation but have since been consolidated into part of an overarching compensation package. We understand “housing” in Paragraph 4.3 to refer to information to be provided to prospective applicants unfamiliar with the Diocese about the cost of housing in the Diocese generally.

more appropriate place for this provision would be in Canon 2.13, which sets out key duties of the EEC.

52. **Recommendation 1:** Paragraph 4.3 of Regulation 1-(5) should be incorporated as a new sub-paragraph in Canon 2.13, and revised as follows:

2.13 The Episcopal Election Committee shall

(...)

(d) make information available to Prospective Applicants and Candidates about the election process and in order to aid their discernment generally, including (for example) current information regarding salary and benefits associated with the role of Bishop, and information about the anticipated timelines and requirements of the process established;

(...)

53. **Recommendation 2:** As one of its initial tasks, and with a view to meeting the requirements of Paragraph 4.3 of Regulation 1-(5) (*or new Canon 2.13(d), as proposed above*), the EEC should create two “information packs”: a “**Prospective Applicants’ Pack**”, and a “**Candidates’ Pack**”.

54. The **Prospective Applicants’ Pack** might include, by way of examples only:

- (a) A welcome from and introduction to the EEC;
- (b) The Diocesan Profile;
- (c) To the extent not included in the Diocesan Profile, information about the Diocese’s general salary range and benefits package associated with the role of Bishop, and general information about housing and the cost of living in the Lower Mainland;

- (d) Candidate Forms (including nomination forms);
- (e) Guidance regarding the role of nominators (discussed further below);
- (f) Materials to be completed in order to initiate any external vetting process; and
- (g) Answers to any other frequently asked questions.

55. The **Candidates' Pack** might include, by way of examples only:

- (a) A more detailed timeline setting out deadlines and events up to and including the election;
- (b) Technical guidance about content to be provided by candidates: for example, recommended video or photo quality or resolution; platform specifics for “virtual” town halls;
- (c) Guidance regarding communications by and to candidates, including, for example, in relation to the use of social media; and
- (d) Information about pastoral support during the election process (discussed further below).

C. VETTING PROCESS

56. This election was the first occasion in this Diocese that an external party was used to screen or vet the Candidates. Oxford Document Management Company is a US-based company frequently used by American churches and organizations for background checks.⁵

⁵ <https://www.oxforddoc.com/>

57. The majority of those involved in the vetting process thought it was beneficial. It provided neutrality and avoided any suggestion of potential bias on the part of the EEC, many of whose members (inevitably) had some personal or professional connection to Candidates in the election.

58. Although the vetting process was generally viewed as positive, there were some procedural issues identified that ought to be fine-tuned if this process is to be used in a subsequent election:

- (a) First, those interviewed commented that the process felt rushed. Some Candidates had to take additional steps, such as obtaining fingerprints, due to the fact that they have a name and birthday similar to someone who is “flagged” by criminal records checks. As a possible remedy to this, the Prospective Applicants’ Pack could include all the information that the third party will require for the background check, allowing the candidates to begin compiling the information sooner.
- (b) Second, Oxford Documents would apparently not accept the required documentation by email, which meant that Candidates were required to fax materials, at some additional cost to Candidates who did not have a readily accessible fax machine. If for some reason Oxford Documents is unable to receive documents by email (which frankly seems incongruous, in 2021), the Diocese should consider what steps might be taken to ensure that any financial cost to prospective candidates from administrative requirements is minimized or eliminated.
- (c) Third, and most concerning for those involved, vetting had not yet been completed by the time the Candidates’ names were publicly announced. Fortunately, the vetting process did not raise any ‘red flags’ in this election, yet the possibility existed that something could have come to light after an individual had been publicly named as a Candidate. At best, this would have put the individual and the Diocese in an awkward and compromised position, and at worst, potentially caused reputational harm to the individual

or the Diocese, or even prompted legal action. It is essential that any vetting be completed prior to the public announcement of candidates, in order that the EEC and if necessary the Diocesan Legal Officers may consider and resolve any issues arising outside of that process.

- (d) Fourth, interviewees involved in the screening process noted that there was no set procedure as to how any issues flagged would have been dealt with, had they arisen. In this election, a potential issue was raised about the breadth and depth of the credit checks being conducted by Oxford Documents, and whether it was practicable or necessary to require the cooperation of certain individuals (for example, family members) who were not a candidate themselves, but were linked to a Candidate. This was raised with and ultimately resolved by Chancellor George Cadman, Q.C. Involving the Chancellor or other Legal Officers may be an adequate procedure to address such issues, but it would be wise to ensure that the EEC is aware of the legal resources available to it, and who should be contacted if Oxford Documents or a similar third party raises a potential concern. Finally, one interviewee noted the requirement in Canon 2.28 that no person shall be consecrated or installed as Diocesan Bishop until their election is confirmed by a majority of the House of Bishops of the Ecclesiastical Province of British Columbia and Yukon. It was suggested that, once the prospective candidates have been cleared by Oxford Documents, it is advisable for the Metropolitan (as Archbishop Skelton did, in this election) to present the full slate of potential candidates to the other provincial Bishops prior to the public announcement, to identify any concerns they may have with any individuals on the slate at as early a stage as possible.
- (e) Fifth, and finally, the EEC should consider the scope of Oxford Documents' review and what makes sense in this Diocese. It was suggested to us that Oxford Documents has a "standard" background check, but that users of their service may also fine-tune the parameters for the check. The standard check may be commonplace in the American context, but be considered

unduly intrusive in the Canadian context. While acknowledging the importance of background checks and due diligence generally, “more” is not necessarily “better”. The issue referred to in the paragraph above may be an example of the kind of thing which would have been avoided, with more specific consideration as to the types of searches required.

59. **Recommendation 3:** Summarizing the above, we recommend that:
- (a) the EEC, in consultation with Legal Officers or Diocesan Staff as appropriate, consider what scope of background checks are necessary to require of candidates;
 - (b) candidates should be given as much advance notice as possible regarding the requirements of the vetting process; and
 - (c) the vetting process should be fully completed prior to any public announcement of candidates’ names.

D. COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

60. Paragraphs 3.5 and 3.6 of Regulation 1-(5) were enacted by Diocesan Council on October 30, 2019. They read as follows:

Paragraph 3.5: Candidates shall not response to personal queries from members of the Electoral Synod external to the process established by the Committee

Paragraph 3.6: Members of the Electoral Synod shall respect the privacy of the candidates and shall abide by the process established by the Committee

61. These provisions were introduced partly in response to an issue highlighted during the lead-up to the previous episcopal election, namely that Synod delegates, or members of the Diocese generally, had contacted individual candidates with questions or personal communications regarding the election. The aim in introducing the provisions above was to ensure fairness and to protect candidates from potentially hostile or

unwelcome approaches. However, the provisions only address communications from members of the Diocese to candidates – and not vice versa.

62. Candidates, delegates, and other interviewees provided a range of views on “campaigning,” or what they believed constituted acceptable communications from candidates, particularly online, in the lead up to the election. Some felt that there should be (to the extent possible) a total embargo on individual candidate activity on social media between the announcement of candidate names and the election, making an exception for routine posts on a candidate’s parish Facebook account. Candidates who took this approach described a “self-denying ordinance” pursuant to which they intentionally removed or minimized their social media presence during the lead-up to the election. Others were more equivocal, recognizing the potential for unwelcome “campaigning-type” activity, while expressing concerns about unduly intrusive attempts to regulate “normal” communication. Others viewed social media as a natural and everyday part of many people’s modern ministry, and indeed, modern life generally, with any attempts to regulate it being intrusive, and somewhat arbitrary. They noted the challenge in prescribing the line of acceptable and unacceptable online activity: is it worth prohibiting personal Facebook use, if a candidate’s Parish can still post a video of a sermon by that candidate, or photos of a community event involving a candidate? And if “online” communications are restricted, what about in-person conversations (at coffee hour; in the receiving line following a service, and so on) which are entirely normal parts of church life, but also might simultaneously be construed as self-promotion?

63. While views as to the correct approach were mixed, there was general consensus that greater clarity or communication would have been valuable at the outset of the process regarding expectations around online and in-person communications from Candidates, whether to delegates or parishioners specifically, or “the world at large” via social media. To that end, we do not make any recommendation regarding where “the line” should be drawn on this issue, as the relevant context and matrix of considerations is bound to evolve between now and the next episcopal election. Today’s concern might be Facebook, Instagram or similar, but in years to come, the areas of potential concern may have moved on. Equally, attitudes as to what constitutes proper engagement by

candidates through those vehicles may evolve as well. We therefore consider it preferable not to be overly specific at this juncture; however, we do suggest that the future Diocesan Council and/or EEC should discuss, in due course, what it considers to be appropriate ‘rules of engagement’, and to summarize these for candidates as part of the Candidates’ Pack.

64. The goal in doing so, of course, is not to be intrusive or draconian but rather to ensure fairness by putting everyone in the same position. If Diocesan Council and/or the EEC felt that social medial activity should be limited, these expectations should be articulated to candidates and be communicated to delegates as well, in order that they are cautioned not to raise “election issues” with candidates directly, thereby helping ensure compliance with Paragraphs 3.5 and 3.6 of Regulation 1-(5).

E. GETTING TO KNOW THE CANDIDATES

65. Candidates were asked to provide information about themselves via three different avenues: a written statement, a submitted video, and a virtual town hall that took place on September 17, 2020 (the “**Town Hall**”).

Written Statement

Canon 2.33:

Diocesan Council shall maintain a Diocesan Profile that shall be reviewed annually and, if necessary, revised.

66. Candidates were asked to respond to the Diocesan Profile (the “**Profile**”) as part of their written submissions using these questions:

1. Which one or two of the five named Diocesan Mission Priorities do you feel particularly drawn to, and why? How would you as Bishop address these priorities?
2. Write a new paragraph for the Profile that reflects a ministry or vision you would like to see adopted in your first few years as Bishop.

3. What is the Bishop's role in encouraging and support all baptized people in their discipleship, across a spectrum of theology and diversity? How would you attract and foster excellence in our lay and clergy leaders?
4. As you discern your call to be Bishop of the Diocese of New Westminster, where do you sense an alignment with our Diocesan Profile? Where in the Profile do you see the strongest potential for matching your gifts with our needs?

67. A range of opinions were expressed regarding the Profile, its function and possible areas of improvement. It is clear that there is no consistent view on what the Profile really “is”. Is it a visioning document, to be used to guide Diocesan policy and decision-making? Is it a “here’s who we are” snapshot in time? Or is it simply a job advertisement, for (e.g.) prospective applicants for Bishop, or applicants for roles in the Synod Office, or for clergy considering relocating here from outside the Diocese? One Candidate queried whether the Profile was intended to be a “mirror” of the existing status of the Diocese, or whether it was an “inspirational” document of where the Diocese wanted to be.

68. In our assessment, “internal” Candidates from within the Diocese appear to have considered the Profile relatively low down the list of items they took into account when embarking on the discernment process. They saw the Profile as more of an “outward-facing” document with a purpose of assisting candidates from outside the Diocese get a sense of the region and its needs. Nevertheless, some internal Candidates saw the questions as helpful launching off point, compelling them to “really engage” with the Profile, in a way that they had not had to as clergy in the Diocese, while providing a measure of consistency by which to evaluate Candidates.

69. At least one Candidate noted that the word limit for the responses changed during the course of the process. Setting out the requirements at the outset, for example in the Prospective Applicants’ Pack, would avoid shifting expectations.

70. Others felt that the Profile was a weak point in this election. It was felt it could be more substantive, describing the goals, objectives, and needs of the Diocese in

addition to outlining quantitative features of the Diocese, such as the number of parishes or worshipping communities and its geographic area. Candidates noted that this quantitative information is important, particularly for external candidates who may be unfamiliar with the area, but having more qualitative content may provide for richer submissions from future candidates. Examples of such content might include current issues in the Diocese, or its priorities for the next five years. One Candidate observed that it seemed unusual that the Profile did not include a summary of the type of qualities the Diocese was seeking in its new Bishop. Another suggested that a visioning exercise prior to the announcement of the election (a practice in other Dioceses), may have been helpful.

Candidate Videos

71. Candidates were asked to provide video statements in response to the question, “What do you want us to know about you?”⁶

72. This was framed as an opportunity for Candidates to share something about themselves, not only as priests or bishops, but as people.

73. In general, Candidates felt the videos were a useful exercise, but some identified a lack of clarity regarding what the video should contain. Because of the pandemic, Candidates were required to record the video themselves; this, and the absence of guidance around technical and logistical requirements, made it difficult for Diocesan staff to ensure consistent quality.

74. We consider that the challenges in creating videos may be a unique feature of a “pandemic election”. For example, in future years, technical staff could assist Candidates in creating a video, or have a “filming day” in the same location, if this mode of getting to know candidates is used again. However, in the event that candidates are required to create video content themselves, guidance (as part of the Candidates’ Packs, for example) would be of assistance.

⁶ The videos can be found here: <https://www.vancouver.anglican.ca/news/episcopal-election-candidate-videos>

Town Hall

75. Regulation 1-(5), Paragraph 3.3 provides that “[e]ach candidate shall be interviewed by the [EEC] prior to the Electoral Synod,” and goes on to include further requirements for such interviews.

76. In this election process, the EEC chose to present those interviews in the form of a virtual Town Hall, which took place over Zoom. Candidates were given most or all of the questions in advance, which were drafted by the EEC.⁷

77. The response to this format was mixed. Some saw the approach of giving questions in advance as providing a fair process for all the Candidates, because they were asked the same questions and given an equal amount to prepare and think of their responses prior to the Town Hall.

78. More interviewees were of the view that, while Town Halls could be a beneficial aspect of the electoral process, this particular structure was limiting and unhelpful. Some Candidates found the structure constraining, and felt that they could not express who they really were. Delegates reported that they did not have an opportunity to learn about the Candidates or raise questions that were important to them. Some felt the process was like a scripted webinar which was “repetitive,” “flat,” or “canned,” in which Candidates did not have the opportunity to show the best of themselves. It was suggested that unprepared answers would have afforded an opportunity to better understand the Candidates, their personalities, and their perspectives.

79. One interviewee noted that answering unscripted questions “is what the role of Bishop is all about.” Eliminating these unprepared moments was felt to be artificial, particularly in light of the Canonical prohibition against delegates contacting candidates directly.

⁷ One Candidate reported that they did not know the fourth question in advance; however, others did not mention this. We note that Paragraph 3.3.1 of Regulation 1-(5) specifies that questions shall be provided to Candidates in advance.

80. Interviewees offered several suggestions for how future Town Halls (including virtual Town Halls) might be improved:

- (a) Some proposed a hybrid approach featuring a combination of scripted questions and spontaneous questions. For scripted questions, all candidates would be asked the same question(s), which they would know in advance. This would provide a balanced, unbiased process for evaluating candidates. For spontaneous questions, candidates would know in advance that a number of these questions would be asked, but would not be told the questions in advance.
- (b) Opinions varied on how these spontaneous questions could be asked:
 - (i) Some suggested the Chair of the EEC could request that Synod delegates submit their questions in advance. The EEC could then filter for repetition and group them thematically, distilling a “synthesized” question for subjects where many variations on the same theme were submitted, and decide the order in which to ask them at the Town Hall.
 - (ii) Another suggestion was an ‘open mic’ system where attendees could ask questions without prior screening from the EEC related to the theme of questions currently being asked;
 - (iii) Another suggestion was that the EEC need not feel obliged to ask every candidate all the same questions. The canonical requirement is that the process be fair, not that it treat every candidate identically.
- (c) Another suggestion relating to future ‘virtual’ Town Halls was that all participants – attendees and candidates – should be visible on video, rather than just the candidates, in order to create a more personal experience. Multiple Candidates noted that they would have found the Town Hall more engaging if they had been able to see those asking the questions or see individuals’ reactions.

- (d) Finally, while many expressed a desire and preference for in-person Town Hall meetings, if future virtual Town Halls are to be held, some suggested it would be helpful to have more than one, and to continue the practice that was used in this Town Hall of recording and uploading them, so that individuals could watch them if they could not attend or re-watch them if they so desired.

F. PASTORAL SUPPORT FOR CANDIDATES

Paragraph 4.1 of Regulation 1-(5): The Committee shall offer each candidate a Diocesan Liaison who will accompany the candidate through the electoral process

Paragraph 4.2 of Regulation 1-(5): A Diocesan Liaison may be an ordained or a lay person but shall not be a member of the Electoral Synod.

81. All interviewees acknowledged that participating as a candidate in an episcopal election is in many ways a trying process. It is a highly public “job interview”, conducted in full view of parishioners, colleagues, and friends.

82. In an attempt to mitigate some of the inevitable pressures of the process, the Diocesan Regulations quoted above provide for pastoral support for candidates.

83. The Candidates’ response to the idea of a Diocesan Liaison was mixed. In this election, we understand that Candidates were not offered a “Liaison” until relatively late in the process; one interviewee reported that it would have been helpful to have known someone was available in this capacity from the outset. Some saw it as important support system to have in place, acknowledging the challenges inherent in participating in an episcopal election, as noted above.

84. Others saw the Diocesan Liaison as a helpful option, but underscored that candidates should not feel obligated to speak to that person. Many Candidates noted that they (and, some suggested, perhaps anyone who was in a position in their ministry to be discerning to become a bishop) already had their own support networks to provide

support and guidance during the election. While they suggested that knowing the support was there was perhaps a comfort, they did not feel the need to reach out to the Diocesan Liaison.

85. The current model is also “resource-heavy”, if a separate Diocesan Liaison who is not a Synod delegate is to be made available for each candidate. Asking five such individuals (in this election) – or potentially more, if there were more candidates in the future – to serve in this capacity could require a significant number of willing volunteers for what should be viewed as a serious and important commitment.

86. Finally, it appears to us that there may be ambiguity around the function of a Diocesan Liaison: the regulations refer to that person “accompanying” the candidate through the process, but it is not clear whether that role is solely a pastoral support, or a spiritual counsellor, or intended (for example) to extend to being a “sounding board” or offering counsel on the day of the election itself.

87. One person interviewed pointed to the model used elsewhere, including in the Diocese of B.C., of having one “Candidate’s Chaplain”, and suggested this might be a more functional way of supporting candidates. We agree.

88. **Recommendation 4:** We recommend replacing the “Diocesan Liaison” with a “Candidates’ Chaplain”, and deleting Paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2 of Regulation 1-(5), above, and replacing them with the following:

Candidates’ Chaplain

- 4 The Committee shall appoint a “Candidates’ Chaplain” who shall be available to provide confidential pastoral support to Candidates throughout the electoral process. The Chaplain shall be an ordained person but shall not be a member of the Electoral Synod.

G. SUMMARY

89. Candidates were generally comfortable with the election process and how it unfolded. Everyone acknowledged that the unique circumstances of this election created uncertainty and some unusual aspects.

90. To the extent there were complaints about the candidate experience, they tended to be not about substantive matters, but about process. More planning, more advance notice, more consistency, and more communication generally would all have been appreciated – including to ensure that all participants are aware of what the expectations are, in areas where there are multiple reasonable interpretations.

91. Further, a desire for “fairness” often translated to a requirement of identical treatment, with the result that Candidates and delegates alike found the process, at times, to be overly sanitized and prescriptive. Both groups indicated that they would have valued opportunities for more personal, unscripted content – even if that meant that not every Candidate was asked all of the same questions as every other Candidate.

PART 5 – NOMINATORS

A. OVERVIEW

92. Everyone interviewed agreed nominations were a necessary component of the application process. However, opinions differed as to:

- (a) the appropriate number of nominators to require;
- (b) whether only Synod delegates should be permitted to nominate individuals to stand for election or whether the pool of potential nominators should be broader; and
- (c) the proper role and function of nominators.

93. We address each of these issues in more detail below but note from the outset that, in relation to each of these issues, we heard a range of well thought-out and reasonable perspectives – even if some of those views contradicted others.

B. APPROPRIATE NUMBER OF NOMINATORS

94. As to the appropriate number of nominators, two general themes emerged in our discussions. Firstly, whether the current Canonical requirement of at least four nominators was the “right” number and secondly, whether the number of nominators ought to be capped, so that whatever the number of nominators required, candidates cannot submit more or less than the proscribed amount.

Canon 2.16 states:

Each nominee must be nominated by at least four members of Synod, at least two of whom shall be ordained members and at least two of whom shall be lay members. The names of the nominators shall be made public and no nominator may nominate more than one candidate. The Nominee must give their consent to their nomination to the Chair of the Episcopal Election Committee.

95. As to the whether four nominators was the right number, on the one hand, some interviewees noted that requiring a lower number of nominators might encourage more applications, thereby giving Synod delegates a wider and more diverse slate of candidates to consider. It was noted that in some American dioceses, would-be candidates can nominate themselves without any other named supporters. Additionally, a lower number of nominators might reduce a barrier to entry for qualified candidates external to the Diocese to apply.

96. We heard arguments in favour of requiring as few as two nominators. Some interviewees suggested that requiring a higher number of nominators might put otherwise qualified candidates from outside the Diocese at a disadvantage, or discourage such candidates from applying. In this election, only one Candidate was from outside the

Diocese. Some interviewees acknowledged that this could be, in part, a consequence of the pandemic, but questioned whether the nomination process may have also been a factor for the lack of applications from external candidates. Others felt this was a “feature”, not a “bug”: if the requirement of having nominators is to serve any meaningful function in the process, it cannot be too low a hurdle – otherwise, the requirement becomes essentially meaningless. If the requirement is going to be watered down to the point where anyone can easily satisfy it, what does meeting that requirement actually demonstrate? And why require it at all?

97. On the other hand, others noted that requiring a higher number of nominators would tend to demonstrate that a candidate (whether internal or external) has an existing level of support from the people they would be working with as Bishop, in a way that might be beneficial. Additionally, requiring a higher number of nominators might ensure that only “serious” candidates – i.e. candidates with a realistic chance of being elected – are included on the ballot

98. As to whether the proscribed amount of nominators should be capped, there was a general agreement among interviewees that the number of nominations should be both a “floor” as well as a “ceiling.” That is, if the Canons require a minimum of four nominations, candidates should be able to submit no more than four.

99. There is a risk that leaving the number of nominators “uncapped” has unintended negative consequences. In this election, the number of nominators listed by nominees in this election on their candidate forms ranged from four to twelve. A view expressed by multiple interviewees was that the variation in number of nominators permitted had the effect of creating a kind of “pre-election popularity contest” or “early show of strength”, where the number of nominators might be perceived as reflective of a candidate’s standing.

100. At least one Candidate who had limited themselves to four nominators felt in hindsight that this made them look “weak,” compared to the larger slate of nominators put forward by other candidates. Similarly, a Candidate who provided more than four nominators explained that they had not intended to send any message by doing so – but

had been encouraged by members in the Diocese to get more than the required four, and felt a certain pressure to do so, perceiving that “only” four would look like the “bare minimum.”

101. We agree that the Canon should be prescriptive about the number of nominators. **In our view, four strikes the right balance:** enough to show that a candidate has some degree of support from both clergy and lay delegates, but not so many that external candidates would be materially disadvantaged.

C. ELIGIBLE NOMINATORS

102. As to whom ought to be allowed to nominate individuals to stand, ideas expressed included that:

- (a) as the new Bishop will be serving in this Diocese, there is value in requiring that person to demonstrate support from Synod delegates, in order to be put on the ballot;
- (b) requiring nominators to be Synod delegates represents a barrier to entry for otherwise qualified individuals with no pre-existing ties to the Diocese of New Westminster;
- (c) permitting nominations from other individuals or groups – for example, as an alternative to four Synod delegates, perhaps a candidate might be nominated by two external bishops from elsewhere in the National Church or the worldwide Communion – might lower a barrier to entry for qualified individuals from outside the Diocese;
- (d) the EEC could be given the ability to nominate an otherwise qualified candidate; or
- (e) the EEC, if not acting as a nominator itself, could be given the ability to act as a liaison or facilitator to connect qualified prospective candidates from outside the Diocese with Synod delegates who have expressed an openness to meeting individuals thinking about standing for election, with a

view to potentially nominating them if they believe the individual would be a good candidate.

103. We see merit in requiring some level of local support, in the form of requiring nominators to be Synod delegates. In our view, it would sit uncomfortably with the Diocese's traditional episcopal electoral process and the fundamental importance of the Synod to the Diocese's governance framework generally, for an individual to be able to become a candidate for Diocesan Bishop without demonstrating any degree of local support; even with, for example, the endorsement of two Bishops from outside the Canadian church.

104. In the most recent election, the role of the EEC was largely facilitative: that is, it designed and implemented a process, but was not an active or substantive player in that process. As one interviewee explained, that is by design: the EEC is not BACA.⁸ It is not presently conceived as a search committee. Episcopal vacancies are filled by a democratic election, which makes them different from parish vacancies. Giving the EEC (some of whom may not necessarily be Synod delegates) the power to determine whether or not an individual is on the ballot is arguably inconsistent with that democratic element.

105. That said, we do perceive that it may enhance fairness and encourage a stronger slate of candidates if there is a mechanism for interested individuals from outside the Diocese to request to be introduced to Synod delegates who have expressed an openness to hearing from new prospective applicants, and potentially agreeing to be a nominator. This undoubtedly already occurs, to the extent external prospective applicants may ask local connections to facilitate an introduction to Synod delegates. Other external prospective applicants might be equally qualified for the role, but lack those local connections. We see this kind of facilitating role as consistent with the current role and mandate of the EEC. Whether or not that is actually desirable will depend on the unique circumstances at the time of the next episcopal election.

⁸ The Bishop's Advisory Committee on Appointments, which often serves a "shortlisting" function in respect of Parish vacancies.

106. While we therefore do not recommend entrenching such a mechanism by (for example) Canon or Regulation, **we do recommend that Diocesan Council should consider**, prior to the next episcopal election, whether the EEC should invite Synod delegates to indicate whether they would be open to being introduced to prospective candidates from outside the Diocese, and to offer that opportunity to such individuals.

D. PROPER ROLE OF NOMINATORS

107. All interviewees considered that nominators were a useful part of the application process. However, there were varying views expressed as to the proper role of nominators:

- (a) Some viewed nominators as almost akin to “campaign surrogates.” Their role is to actively support a candidate. As individuals who are declaring publicly their support for the candidate, they are lending their own name and reputation in the Diocese to positively attest to the candidate’s character and are committing to vote for that candidate until they withdrew or were removed from the list of candidates. If someone is not willing to publicly back a candidate, that person should not agree to put their name forward as a nominator. In this vein, some nominators actively ‘campaigned’ for their candidate.
- (b) Others consider nominators to be public backers of a candidate, but not “active” supporters. The episcopal electoral process is a not a “campaign”: apart from having their name associated with a candidate, nothing is expected (or, arguably, appropriate) from nominators.
- (c) Finally, others saw the role of a nominator as not necessarily even being to support a candidate, but to ensure that Synod has a broad slate of strong candidates to choose from. It is therefore entirely proper for someone to offer to stand as a nominator, not because they are necessarily committing to support that person, but because they feel that person brings something

unique to the election, and having that person on the ballot would be a good thing, as it would give Synod a wider range of choices.

108. As to whether nominating a candidate committed the nominator to vote for that candidate, views ranged from “yes, until the candidate withdraws or is eliminated” to “yes, at least on the first ballot” to “no, there’s no obligation.”

109. In our view, which was shared by a majority of interviewees – if nominator names are made public (*see further below*), it must be the case that a nominator is more than simply an agent for the process: they are a public supporter of a particular candidate. While we do not propose that a nominator’s support for their candidate be a Canonical requirement – and indeed, it is doubtful that the same could be legislated, in a secret ballot election – we consider there is at least a strong expectation that a candidate’s nominators support that candidate through the first ballot.

110. We agree with the current Canonical requirement that a nominator may only nominate one candidate.

111. One Candidate queried whether it was necessary for the names of the nominators to be made public at all. One aspect of public nominations, it was suggested, is that candidates may be judged by their nominators. Currently, this is formalized in Canon 2.16, which states that: “The names of the nominators shall be made public”. Whether or not that is desirable depends on whether one views the purpose of nominators as being simply a threshold “qualifying” requirement, or also having a quality of “endorsement” associated with it.

112. If the answer is the former, the names of the nominators could be disclosed to the EEC but would not need to be shared more broadly. In this way, the necessary threshold for nominations would be met, but it would permit the candidates to speak for themselves and be judged on their own merits, rather than by their proxies (actual or perceived). The view currently implied by the Canons appears to be that there is value to Synod delegates in knowing whom a candidate counts among their public supporters.

113. Finally, it was suggested by one interviewee that at least one nominator in the past electoral process may have not understood that they were being asked to commit formally to nominating an applicant, instead thinking that they were offering that person positive encouragement about the idea of standing for election, without any promise of public or formal support. Neither the nominee nor the nominator were identified and we have not confirmed that suggestion: however, to avoid the possibility of any uncertainty in this regard, we recommend that nominators be asked to confirm their willingness to nominate a prospective candidate in writing.

E. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

114. There is room for reasonable disagreement about whether there ought to be a “high barrier to entry” or a “low barrier to entry”, in relation to becoming a candidate, as well as whether and to what extent a requirement of local nominators adversely impacts prospective candidates “external” to the Diocese.

115. We are sympathetic to many of the views outlined above. The answers to those questions ultimately depends on what kind of election, and what kind of Bishop, the Diocese wishes to have.

116. However, the range of responses received in the interviews, some of which were at odds with each other, suggests that the role of the nominator should be clarified and communicated to both candidates and nominators, at the outset of the process in advance of the next election. Candidates and nominators wanted to follow the necessary requirements, but often felt that they did not have sufficient information as to how best to do so.

117. **Recommendation 5:** We therefore recommend that Guidelines to Nominators be distributed as part of the “Candidates’ Packs” contemplated above. The particular guidelines given will depend on the circumstances at the time of the next election, but should clarify (for example):

- (a) whether and to what extent nominators may (or should) “promote” a candidate publicly, including via social media; and
- (b) whether the role of nominator is limited to getting a candidate on the ballot, or (for example) comes with an expectation that a person will provide continuing support up to and during the election.

118. **Recommendation 6:** As part of its consideration of the mandate of the next EEC, Diocesan Council should discuss whether it is desirable to offer prospective candidates from outside the Diocese an opportunity to meet Synod delegates, who have expressed willingness to have those conversations with a view to potentially agreeing to nominate the individual.

119. **Recommendation 7:** To clarify expectations around numbers of nominators, and to formalize nominators agreeing to put their names forward, Canon 2.16 should be amended as follows:

Each nominee must be nominated by ~~at least~~ four members of Synod, ~~at least~~ two of whom shall be ordained members and ~~at least~~ two of whom shall be lay members. The names of the nominators shall be made public and no nominator may nominate more than one candidate. Each nominator shall confirm in writing to the Chair of the Episcopal Election Committee their willingness to act as a nominator for a particular candidate. To become a candidate, in addition to meeting the criteria set out above, a The nominee must give their consent to their nomination to the Chair of the Episcopal Election Committee.

PART 6 – THE ELECTION

A. PREPARATION IN ADVANCE OF THE ELECTION

120. Survey responses indicated that an overwhelming majority of Synod delegates (84%) were aware of the upcoming election at least three months in advance.

121. Notwithstanding the high degree of awareness about the election, there were a number of challenges arising from inaccurate contact information and corresponding communicating different milestones within the process to delegates.

122. A number of steps could make the process run more smoothly from a logistical standpoint:

- (a) as soon as possible after the election is announced, parishes should be asked to confirm the identities and contact information (including email addresses) for their Synod delegates and Alternates. Because most communication was sent to delegates by email, and voting was conducted through email, it is imperative that the Synod Office have correct spellings for each delegate. This was not always the case, in the past election.
- (b) in the event that there are changes to a parish's Synod delegates or Alternates, Priests-in-Charge must update the Synod Office as soon as possible;
- (c) early in the election process, it would be advantageous for the EEC, via the Synod Office, to send the Notice of Synod and perhaps an introductory communication to delegates. This would help ensure the accuracy of the delegate distribution list for example, by identifying errors in email addresses via "bounceback" messages and it would also give delegates an indication as to the timeline, including anticipated dates for candidate materials to be posted, town hall meeting(s), and the election itself.

B. COMMUNICATION TO SYNOD DELEGATES

123. One Synod delegate noted that he found the communication regarding the election confusing and often hard to find. Election notifications were added to the 14Ten, the weekly newsletter from the Synod Office, but otherwise not consolidated in one place, which made it difficult for the Synod delegate to gather all the relevant information together. This delegate suggested that the election have its own communication stream or bespoke newsletter, so the information would be organized and readily available. The stream might include, for example, a schedule of anticipated events and communications which would help priests-in-charge keep their delegates informed. Other suggested content included a teaching series of short video clips providing context and information for delegates who might be unfamiliar with (for example) the episcopal election process, symbols, titles, the role and relevancy of the Canons, and office holders, as well as videos explaining the voting process, particularly if “virtual” or electronic voting is to be used in the future.

124. Another suggestion was to provide an on-the-day reminder to delegates of where they can find their online voting link. This email could also include important contact information for delegates in the event of technical difficulties. As noted by one Priest-in-Charge, asking parish clergy to act as technical support for their delegates was unhelpful and counter-productive. It was suggested that it would have been more appropriate for this support to be offered from Diocese staff.

C. RETURNING OFFICERS AND VOTING

125. Canon 2.17 requires that a Returning Officer and a Deputy Returning Officer be appointed at least 30 days prior to the election to oversee the balloting process. The Returning Officers were appointed by Diocesan Council on July 24, 2020, but both felt that it would have been helpful to have been appointed and brought into the preparation process even earlier. In their view, although the election went well, they would have benefitted from better orientation and clearer expectations around their roles. For example, having an additional month would have helped the Returning Officers

understand their role, including by allowing them to attend an EEC meeting in order to better understand the broader picture and process.

126. The Returning Officers acknowledged that some of the “last-minute” feeling experienced may have been exacerbated through the shift to a virtual election. In addition, and as discussed further below, they agreed that additional clarity around the interpretation of the automatic elimination provisions in the Canons would have been helpful. However, the Returning Officers were grateful for the “dry run” meetings, and discussions with Archbishop Skelton prior to the election, to review procedures and confirm expectations.

127. Those interviewed expressed strong appreciation for Data on the Spot and SimplyVoting, the service provider (and online mechanism) which facilitated the “virtual” Synod and voting therein. These providers ensured the necessary support for the interface, helped ‘troubleshoot’ the few issues that arose, and ensured the vote was verifiable, objective, and accurate.

128. While there were no issues regarding disputed ballots, in the event that a ruling was necessary as to whether a ballot was properly cast, Data on the Spot would have brought a valuable third-party objectivity and removed any potential for perceived bias.

129. The ease of electronic voting was widely appreciated. In our view, Diocesan Council should strongly consider using this for future episcopal elections, whether or not they take place in person or virtually. We note that there is already authority for this, in Canon 2.3(e) and Electoral Synod Rule of Order 1.3(c).

D. THE ELECTORAL SYNOD

130. The pandemic necessitated a shift in format unlike any previous election. It occurred online, was live streamed, and delegates voted remotely via an electronic balloting system. A majority of Synod delegates found the electronic balloting process to be “very positive” (52%), and a further 40% found it to be a “positive” experience.

131. All interviewees expressed an overwhelmingly positive review of the electronic voting system. Those who worked closely with Data on the Spot found the company to be prepared and highly competent. They provided the necessary support, objectivity, and ensured that the election both was, and was seen to be, fair and transparent. Providing opportunities to vote across multiple portals (including online or by telephone) effectively addressed different levels of technological literacy and needs among Synod delegates.

132. While no one would have anticipated the current pandemic, the changes in venue provided an opportunity to reflect on the electoral process in a different way. Many interviewees expressed an interest in using an electronic balloting system and an external provider (such as Data on the Spot) in future elections, even if an election could occur in person, suggesting a hybrid approach of using the technology while still meeting in person.

133. While acknowledging that the pandemic required this particular election to be online, most interviewees underscored the importance of an in-person component to electoral synods. The usual opportunities for fellowship, communal discernment, and the sense of belonging and coming together was substantially impeded by a virtual process, but was something that nearly all interviewees recognized as an important part of the process in “non-pandemic” times.

134. Many Candidates independently expressed the view that it would have been permissible, under the prevailing provincial health regulations at the time, for them to be physically present at the Cathedral during the election – in one person’s suggestion, even to receive the Eucharist from the Archbishop, prior to the first ballot – and expressed regret that they were not given the opportunity to do so.

135. In the event that future elections are to be conducted online, one survey respondent suggested providing delegates opportunities to communicate with each other as part of the online “experience”. For example, this could be as an alternative to the live-streaming of the election; or in “breakout rooms” at different points. Election results from

each round of voting could be posted online and delegates could connect virtually between rounds of voting.

136. In terms of the actual logistics of the voting itself, the electronic format allowed for near-instantaneous voting results. With that in mind, a number of survey respondents queried why there was a considerable delay between rounds of voting. This confusion could be remedied with greater advance communication. On this occasion, the reason for the delay was in order to provide Candidates advance notice of the results by email and an opportunity to consider them, ahead of them being posted online. In addition, there a question in this election about the application of the canonical provision by which candidates are automatically removed, the clarification of which (as discussed below) is likely to avoid similar delay occurring again in the future.

137. Notwithstanding any delays arising due to circumstances unique to this election, we note that a certain amount of “delay” is built into to the process: Rule 7.4 of the Episcopal Electoral Rules of Order currently provides for at least 20 minutes between the results of one ballot having been received, and the start of the next ballot. For “in person” elections, this is partly due to the need to count and verify the votes; nevertheless, even in an election with electronic voting, we see value in retaining this “enforced pause.” An episcopal election is a process of discernment for delegates as well as candidates. Some Candidates reported feeling grateful for this additional time, as it provided them the time and space needed to reflect, pray, and discuss with their families and other confidants whether to continue to let their names appear on subsequent ballots.

138. As to the mechanics of voting: we agree with the Returning Officers that even if (as expected) the next episcopal election is held fully or partly in person, there is value in retaining an electronic balloting system, and not going back to a paper balloting system in the future.

139. Serious considerations should be given to whether or not delegates are required to attend in person, or whether a “virtual” attendance option is incorporated as part of a hybrid model of future Synods, whereby some delegates can attend in person, and others can attend virtually. The online system proved to be effective and removed

the potentially high barrier for some delegates to participate because of their personal circumstances, or the difficulty or inconvenience of travelling from outside of Vancouver. While interviewees acknowledged the value of the in-person interactions that occur during an episcopal election, and noted that some thought would need to be given as to whether a hybrid model would mean that “virtual” attendees were excluded from these, the great advantage would be enhancing participation by individuals whose personal or geographic circumstances may otherwise make that difficult.

E. AMBIGUITY REGARDING AUTOMATIC ELIMINATION

140. The Canons in this Diocese, as in other Dioceses, contain a mechanism by which candidates may be automatically removed from further ballots if, following a round of voting, they have failed to attain a certain threshold of support.

141. The rationale for such provisions is that they narrow the choices for remaining voters by eliminating candidates who have no realistic prospect of being elected, and in doing so, help avoid the possibility of stalemate.

142. In this Diocese, that mechanism is set out in Canon 2.20(d). It reads:

- (d) If the balloting does not result in an election, balloting shall continue pursuant to sub-paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) above with the exception that the names of the following candidates shall be removed from the list of candidates for election:
 - (i) any candidate who has received no votes in either or both orders,
 - (ii) any candidate who has (or, in the case of a tie, the candidates who have) received the lowest number of lay and clerical votes in aggregate, unless the number of votes received, although the lowest of all candidates, is at least one-fifth of the votes in either order, and
 - (iii) any candidate who has given or caused to be given signed written notice to the Chair stating that the candidate wishes to withdraw from the election.

143. Regrettably, there was some confusion after the 1st Ballot was cast about the application of this provision.

144. The three Candidates receiving the fewest votes in the first round of voting placed as follows:

Name	Clergy	% Clergy	Lay	% Lay	Total Votes
Philippa Segrave-Pride	19	13.67	22	13.01	41
Philip Cochrane	14	10.07	28	16.57	42
Allan Carson	22	15.83	21	12.43	43

145. No Candidate received zero votes in any order, and therefore Canon 2.20(d)(i) did not apply. No Candidate voluntarily withdrew, meaning that Canon 2.20(d)(iii) therefore also did not apply.

146. The nub of the confusion lay in whether (A) only one, or (B) more than one, candidate could be automatically eliminated via the mechanism in Canon 2.20(d)(ii). It was suggested in interviews conducted as part of the Review that at least one person read the provision and believed (B) was correct; that is, all three of the Candidates above should have been eliminated.

147. However, (A) is the correct reading of the provision, which requires a two-step process:

- (a) First, the lowest aggregate vote-getter is identified. Only that person (or in the case of a tie, those people) may be eliminated.
- (b) Second, the question is whether that person received one-fifth (20%) of the votes cast in either order. If yes, that person is eliminated.

148. Rev. Segrave-Pride obtained the lowest aggregate of votes. She also, in each order, received less than 20% of the votes cast in that order, and was therefore removed from the second ballot.

149. **Recommendation 8:** While the correct interpretation was applied in this election, a revision to the Canon would reduce the likelihood of future confusion or uncertainty. Canon 2.20(d) should be amended as follows:

- (i) any candidate who has given or caused to be given signed written notice to the Chair stating that the candidate wishes to withdraw from the election; and, as applicable, either:
- (ii) any candidate who has received no votes in either or both orders; or
- (iii) the any candidate who has (or, in the case of a tie, the candidates who have) received the lowest number of total votes cast; unless such candidate(s) received ~~lay and clerical votes in aggregate, unless the number of votes received, although the lowest of all candidates, is~~ at least one-fifth of the votes cast in either order.

150. It was noted that other Dioceses calibrate their automatic elimination mechanisms differently. Interviewees who also followed the election in the Diocese of British Columbia, which took place a week before the Diocese of New Westminster's election, noted that the lower threshold for automatic removal in that election meant that candidates were able to remain on the ballot despite receiving close to zero votes, in the early rounds of voting.

151. The Diocese of British Columbia's Canon 1.2(o) sets out the following procedure:

If there has been no election after the third ballot and there are more than five nominees, the number of names appearing on the fourth ballot shall be reduced to those five nominees who on the preceding ballot received the largest vote, estimated on the basis of the percentage of the members of the clergy added to the percentage of the lay members who voted for each nominee. For each succeeding ballot after the fourth and until a nominee has been elected or until two names remain, the nominee who received the least number of votes on the immediately preceding ballot counted on the said percentage basis shall not appear (...)

152. A view expressed by many interviewees was that this led to some candidates in that election remaining on the ballot well after it was apparent that they

would not be elected, which (it was suggested) had the effect of unduly prolonging the election.

153. There was consensus among interviewees that (a) some automatic elimination mechanism is necessary; and (b) the threshold set out above - i.e. at most one candidate automatically eliminated per round, with a 'saving' provision if that person receives one-fifth of the votes cast in either order – more or less strikes the right balance.

F. ELECTORAL SYNOD RULES OF ORDER

Canon 2.32(b) provides that Diocesan Council may “make Rules of Order for the Electoral Synod consistent with this Canon and any relevant Regulations.”

154. Pursuant to the above, Diocesan Council has adopted Electoral Synod Rules of Order (the “**ESRO**”). However, in our view, certain elements of the ESRO are incongruous in the context of an Electoral Synod, as opposed to a 'regular' Diocesan Synod.

155. For example, Article 1.1 of the ESRO states that the regular Rules of Order shall apply to an Electoral Synod. It reads:

1.1 The Rules of Order of the Synod shall prevail except to the extent that they contradict these rules.

156. However, an Electoral Synod is very unlike a regular Synod. The Electoral Synod has (as examples only) no motions (substantive or procedural), no opportunity to “add” motions “from the floor”, no debate, a specific agenda which is not susceptible to amendment, apart from the Credentials Committee, none of the regular “sessional committees” of Synod, and no right of members to speak to matters before the Synod.

157. It therefore seems to us that, as a matter of fact, the regular Rules of Order do not generally apply, and should not (contrary to Article 1.1) “prevail”.

158. To the extent any Electoral Synod member wishes to raise (for example) a point of Order, we suggest this would properly be done by directing it to the Chair, or the Chancellor.

159. During this election, a question arose as to whether, if the Rules of Synod applied to the Episcopal Electoral Synod, a motion to adjourn was required.⁹ It may be useful to specify that one is not required: even in the unlikely scenario where there is no election after ten ballots and Synod is directed to adjourn and reconvene, that outcome will be the product of a vote of Synod on a question put to Synod by the Chair, namely whether to adjourn and reconvene, or continue balloting.

160. **Recommendation 9:** the Standing Committee on Constitution & Canons should review the Electoral Synod Rules of Order to ensure that they are appropriately tailored for the unique context of an Electoral Synod, and do not inadvertently incorporate procedures from regular Diocesan Synods which do not in fact apply.

G. POST-ELECTION FOLLOW-UP

161. Many Candidates expressed appreciation for the follow-up they received following the election from different individuals who were involved in the process, although one Candidate who was not elected noted that they would have appreciated follow-up or someone “checking in” on how they were doing sooner than they ultimately experienced.

162. While we do not consider there is any value in requiring such contact (through the Canons or a Regulation, for example), we consider it a salutary practice for the Metropolitan, the Chair of the EEC, and the new Bishop-elect to reach out to all candidates following the election, and all Candidates indicated to us that they appreciated this kind of pastoral “check-in”.

⁹ Ultimately, the Legal Officers agreed that one was not necessary: the Synod had been convened for a specific, special purpose; and the purpose having been attained, namely the election of a Bishop Coadjutor, the convening purpose of the Synod was discharged.

163. Further, if our recommendation regarding a Candidates' Chaplain is adopted, we consider that a post-election courtesy call to candidates could be a helpful thing for this person to do as well.

PART 7 – SURVEY RESPONSES

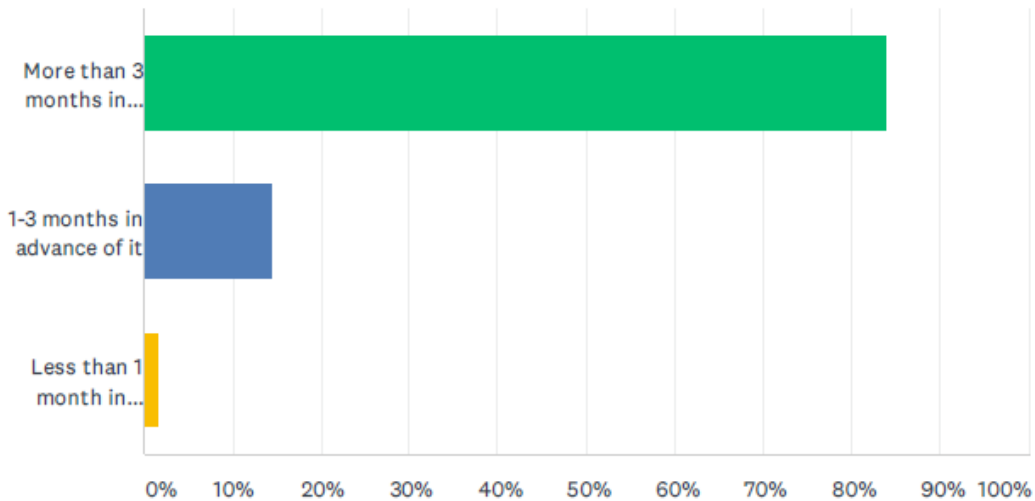
164. As noted above, as part of this Review, a short survey was sent to all 397 of the Synod delegates. We received 174 responses. This section summarizes the results of the survey. Where specific comments received engaged themes pertinent to other matters discussed herein, they have been incorporated in the preceding sections of this report; however, they have also been included verbatim for reference at Appendix A hereto.

165. By way of general summary, delegates were aware of the election well in advance of election date. In terms of material most useful for their discernment, delegates found the video statements to be the most helpful, followed by the written responses, and lastly the Town Hall.

166. Synod delegates were asked seven questions and also given an opportunity to provide general comments. The results were as follows:

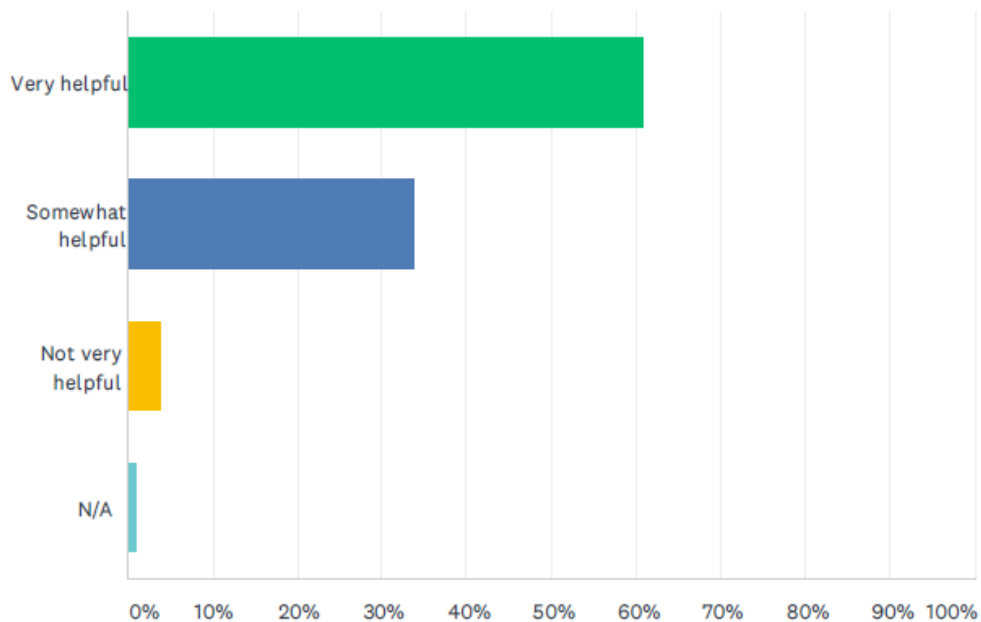
Question 1: When did you become aware that there was an Episcopal Electoral Synod taking place?

167. From the responses received from the delegates, an overwhelming majority (84%) were aware of the election at least three months before it took place. Fourteen percent were aware one to three months prior to the election, and less than two percent knew less than one month before the election.



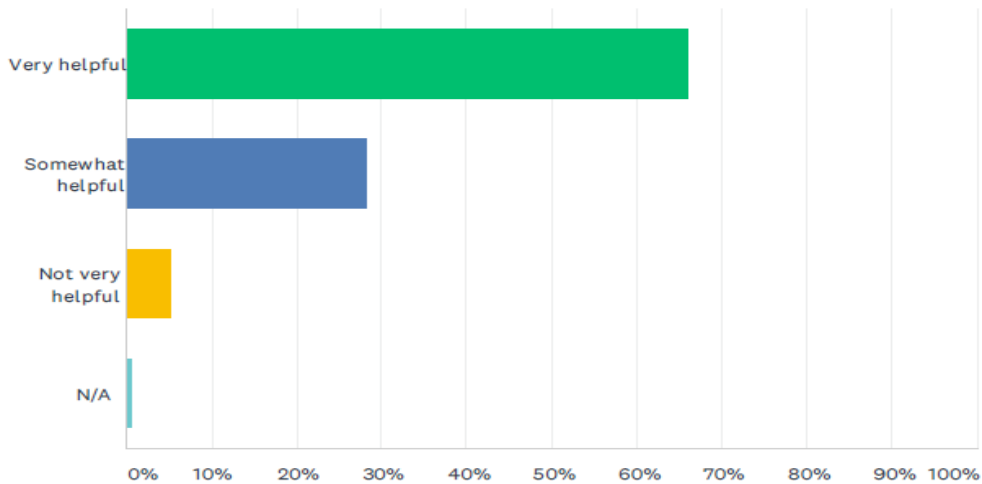
Question 2: Please indicate how helpful you found the Written Responses when considering the Candidates

168. A majority of respondents found the Candidates' written responses very helpful (61%). Approximately a third found them somewhat helpful and under 5% found them unhelpful or that they did not consider the written statement.



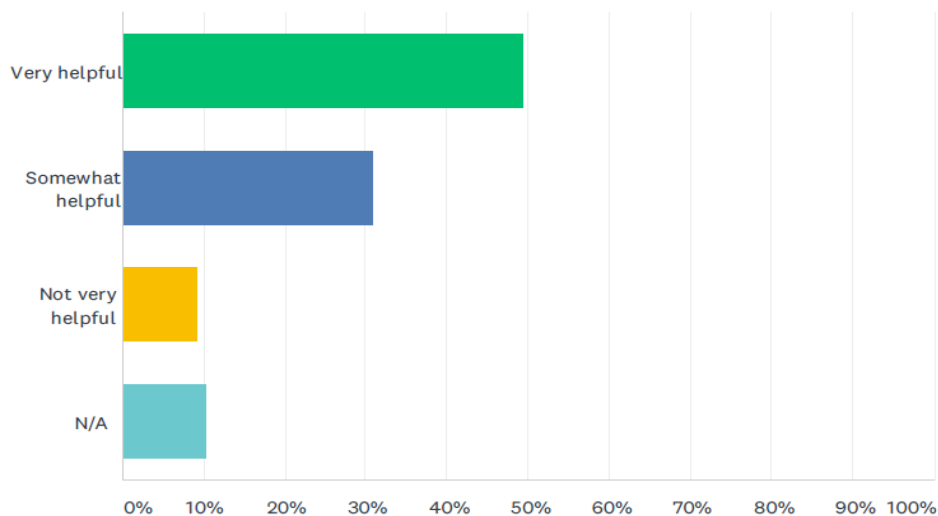
Question 3: Please indicate how helpful you found the Video Statements when considering the Candidates

169. Two-thirds of respondents found the video statements very helpful. 28% found them somewhat helpful and just under 6% found them not very helpful or not applicable.



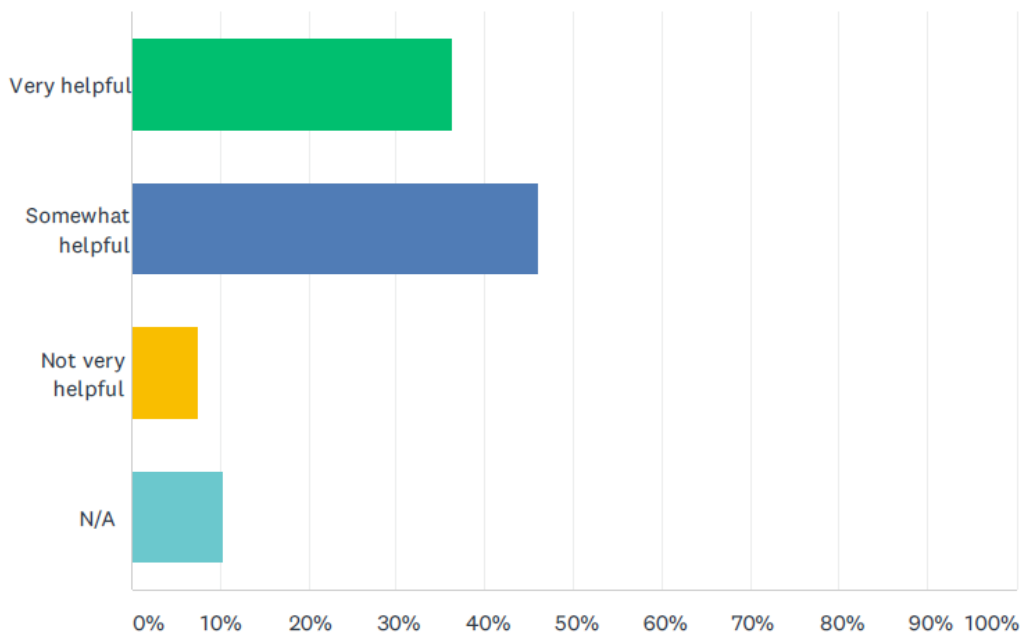
Question 4: Please indicate how helpful you found the Town Hall when considering the Candidates

170. Less than fifty percent (49%) found the Town Hall very helpful. 31% found it somewhat helpful. 9% found it unhelpful and 10% responded that it was inapplicable.



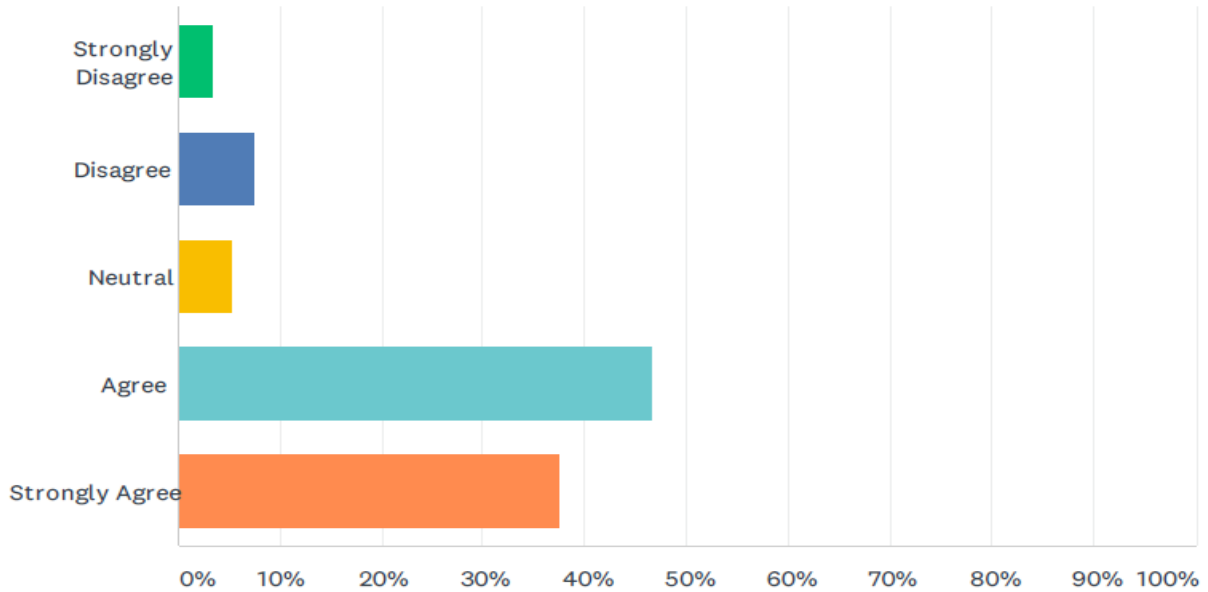
Question 5: Please indicate how helpful you found Other Information Channels when considering the Candidates (e.g. your own online research, discussions with others or any other ways you learned about the Candidates)

171. Of those who responded, approximately 10% did not utilize other information channels. 81% found this type of information very or somewhat useful. 7% found it not very helpful.



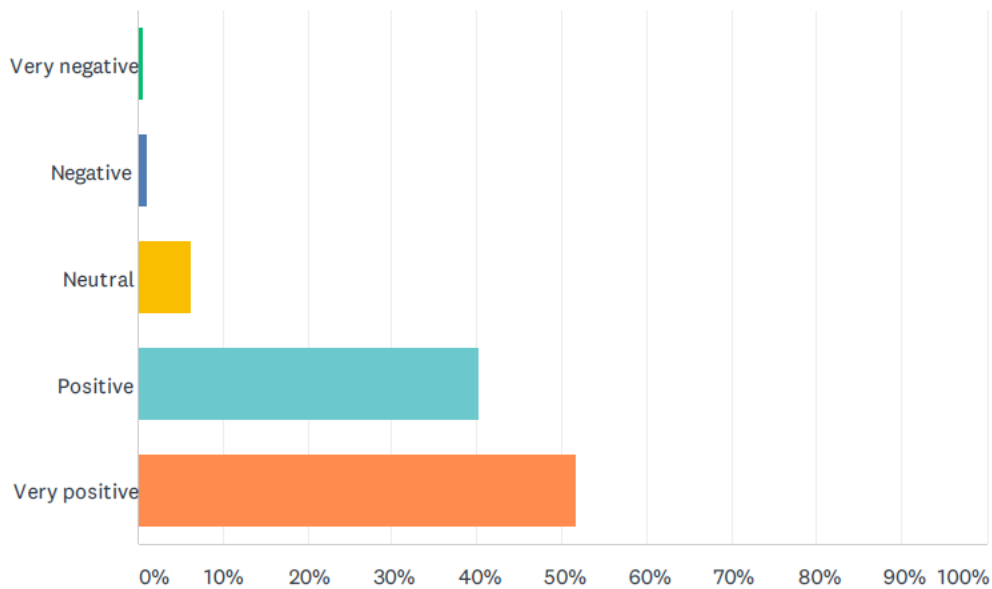
Question 6: Please respond to the following statement: “I had enough information to make an informed decision about who to vote for.”

172. An overwhelming majority (83%) agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. Approximately 11% disagreed or strongly disagreed. 5% were neutral.



Question 7: Because of the pandemic, it was necessary that ballots be cast electronically in this election. How was your experience with the electronic voting system?

173. Again, an overwhelming majority (92%) found the experience positive or very positive. Less than 2% had a negative or very negative experience. 6% were neutral.



Comments: Summary

174. Several commented that it would have been helpful to be able to ask questions of the candidates in the Town Hall either spontaneously or as part of a process where they could submit their questions in advance to the EEC.

175. Of those who responded to the survey, 83% answered that they strongly agreed or agreed that they had enough information to make an informed decision about who to vote for. 10% strongly disagreed or disagreed. With respect to the day of the election, an overwhelming majority found the electronic voting system to be a positive or very positive experience (92%).

176. A full list of the comments received in the survey are included in **Appendix A**.

APPENDIX A

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	None	1/17/2021 2:36 PM
2	I appreciated your efforts in providing 3 different avenues for the candidates to express themselves. The more information we have, the better! Thank you.	1/15/2021 3:47 PM
3	a little difficulty with the first vote, but were given the needed assistance by Richard Leggett	1/15/2021 11:33 AM
4	This is the second Episcopal election that I have been involved in and I think that this time I was able to be better informed as to the candidates' character, education, experience etc.	1/15/2021 11:08 AM
5	Great election. Well run. Thank you	1/12/2021 8:34 PM
6	It was good to be able to discuss the candidates with the other members of our churches voting delegates.	1/12/2021 11:22 AM
7	The Town Hall would have been more helpful if delegates could have asked the candidates questions. A live, responsive experience would have given the candidates a better way to show us who they are.	1/11/2021 4:47 PM
8	While waiting for the results after a round of voting, at first there was no video feed, etc. and it was unclear whether the system had frozen or not. It would be helpful to go back to the live stream/play a video or slide show so we know the system is working. There was a very long time between votes, so this would help.	1/11/2021 3:33 PM
9	The opportunity to meet the candidates in person and ask questions in response to their answers to other questions was taken away by COVID. I believe the election was extremely well done!	1/10/2021 8:05 AM
10	I missed being with others as it has been before, the excitement & joy or sorrow was definitely not part of this process.	1/9/2021 8:17 PM
11	Everything was done very efficiently	1/8/2021 4:09 PM
12	I found the experience very interesting. I found the on-line meetings a bit daunting at first, but David helped me with this until I felt more comfortable.	1/8/2021 1:27 PM
13	Too many hymns, prayers etc. between each ballot.	1/8/2021 12:12 PM
14	Regular updates from the Episcopal Search Committee would have been helpful. Info from the committee as to timelines, step-by-step how to guide, a hard copy of info (like a Synod Package) would have been helpful.	1/8/2021 10:54 AM
15	Excellent	1/7/2021 4:54 PM
16	Very difficult to make an informed decision without having worked with any of the candidates. But am pleased with the results.	1/6/2021 6:54 PM
17	The timing of the videos and written reports allowed for time to think about each candidates comments and thus get a stronger feeling as to who one would think would be the best choice. On the other hand, some of us including me were not familiar with the candidates. However, through proper thought, I was able to choose a candidate who I believe will represent God and us appropriately	1/6/2021 6:26 PM
18	I think it went well under the circumstances.	1/5/2021 11:48 PM
19	Before the election discussion should have occurred about the future of the Diocese and what kind of candidate we should be looking for to lead us into the future. We were in the middle of a pandemic and many Parishes were having financial issues. The current environment could have been perfect for a short term candidate to make some tough decisions for the Diocese laying the foundation for new Bishop in 5 years time after the hard decisions on mergers and/or Parish shutdowns had been made. Not enough discussion about where we are and where are we going before choosing a new Bishop.	1/5/2021 5:11 PM
20	It was helpful to have a side group from my own parish as some of the directions were quite confusing.	1/5/2021 4:53 PM
21	I thought the whole process was well thought out and well executed.	1/5/2021 3:59 PM
22	Very impressed at the planning, organization and troubleshooting that went into making this a	1/5/2021 3:51 PM

	very smooth and successful election!!	
23	I would have liked to have the opportunity to ask questions in the town hall.	1/5/2021 2:51 PM
24	Well done! Kudos to all those involved!	1/5/2021 2:36 PM
25	I found it awkward not having a priest in charge to talk to. I found it awkward not having a priest in charge to talk to. But I did do at my own spreadsheet, And try to speak to as many in the church as I could.	1/5/2021 2:07 PM
26	Did the best we could under the circumstances	1/5/2021 1:44 PM
27	I found the electronic voting to be very user friendly and simple to use which was a great relief. Speakers such as Rev.Leggatt were good. I thought the whole event was well organized from beginning to end.	1/5/2021 1:23 PM
28	It was very good...	1/5/2021 12:26 PM
29	A little rocky at first but through the voting help it went well. One video did not represent the candidate well and that was a let down	1/5/2021 11:41 AM
30	I was glad to be a part of it.	1/5/2021 11:22 AM
31	1. There was no opportunity to submit questions for the candidates. This should have been facilitated, especially given the very restricted access we had to the candidates. 2. Some candidates listed many more nominators than were required on the nomination form. This was an unanticipated outcome of the changes made to the nominations process. It gave an advantage to local candidates who could solicit 'extra' nominators. 3. A rumour was spread about a candidate who was caught "cheating". This had something to do with a social media posting which I was unaware of. I was contacted by someone ahead of the election who shared this allegation. If I heard it I can assume others did as well. I don't know if there was any substance to the allegation and it was disturbing to hear about it.	1/5/2021 11:09 AM
32	Encourage Constitution & Canons Committee to consider whether there are any changes to the Canon that need to be made for clarity	1/5/2021 10:58 AM
33	Follow-up regarding what role the Coadjutor plays in the current administration. Is he paid? what exactly is his job description?	1/5/2021 10:52 AM
34	This new experience was good and positive.	1/5/2021 10:25 AM
35	The process felt strangely micromanaged and inconsistent. Delegates' inability to ask questions of the candidates was strange and unhelpful, particularly in the single town hall meeting. Alternatively, it would have been helpful to be able to submit a question to the committee, who if receiving several similar questions, could then forward that question to all the candidates who then could respond in writing (or something like that). The impression was also given that we were not able to talk with one another about candidates or do our own research online (looking and sharing about what the candidates have done in the past) - very bizarre. Thank you for the work you did.	1/5/2021 9:50 AM
36	I missed the ability to discuss the candidates in person with others that might know them better. Maybe an online discussion would have worked? Overall i felt the election was well done.	1/5/2021 8:17 AM
37	miss the opportunity for inter-action with fellow delegates	1/5/2021 8:16 AM
38	The process was exceptionally well done.	1/5/2021 7:59 AM
39	Surprisingly satisfying process.	1/4/2021 10:08 PM
40	The town hall would have been more helpful if it had been possible to pose questions to the candidates for them to answer without advance preparation. All-candidates meetings typically have much opportunity for unrehearsed, unresearched answers to questions. I experienced a glitch on the second ballot, so that my vote wasn't counted. It didn't, however, affect the outcome of the election.	1/4/2021 9:39 PM
41	No	1/4/2021 9:35 PM
42	Nope	1/4/2021 9:31 PM
43	No	1/4/2021 9:31 PM

44	Simply to say how thankful I am for all the effort put in by so many considering all the issues we faced with the pandemic	1/4/2021 9:24 PM
45	No	1/4/2021 9:11 PM
46	I watched the Dioces of BC Synod the week before so I found that helpful regarding what to expect at ours.	1/4/2021 9:03 PM
47	Online was not as satisfying (naturally) as gathering together. The energy was missing and the process was slow so it was more difficult to stay engaged.	1/4/2021 8:59 PM
48	Sadly, and despite my trying to avoid it, I know my, and I suspect other's choices were influenced by things like videography, camera angles, backgrounds etc. more than we'd like to admit, and I don't think those should be important considerations when electing a bishop. The overall experience was very isolating - instead of a sense of the will of the Spirit in the discernment of the gathered, it felt more like an individual process. Flitting back and forth between the archbishop and the chancellor was distracting, and the prayer and worship offerings were like watching TV. There were missed opportunities to make the process more engaging without compromising the business at hand, but efficiency (which is critical in a normal, in-person electoral synod) seems to have overlooked the community-building possibilities of the pandemic mandated media.	1/4/2021 8:50 PM
49	I am very disappointed we were not allowed to speak with the candidates directly, the whole affair seemed very managed. I have spent my entire business life in sales and marketing and feel I have developed a keen ear and eye to read body language and speech nuances. The election prevented me from making a well educated decision. me	1/4/2021 8:28 PM
50	I felt the whole process was very professional. I was impressed by how the voting was handled. From my end, it went without a hitch. I found the whole process a very positive experience.	1/4/2021 8:20 PM
51	Thank you for all the work involved in making it go so smoothly	1/4/2021 8:04 PM
52	No. It was well done!	1/4/2021 7:50 PM
53	All good.	1/4/2021 7:34 PM
54	n/a	1/4/2021 7:32 PM
55	While I appreciate that the pandemic made this more difficult, there was no opportunity to see the candidates react spontaneously to questions. Nor a way for delegates to submit questions for the town hall (even if those questions were vetted and prepared by the Committee). Both of those felt like significant gaps in the information available to delegates.	1/4/2021 7:16 PM
56	No	1/4/2021 7:01 PM
57	my understanding is that the canons allow for all clergy in good standing/licensed to vote even if they are retired. I do wonder if this process serves us well, as I heard about the retired clergy caucusing to vote as a block. I don't know how many of them there are, but they are not the future of the diocese.....and I have concerns about their power in swaying the clergy vote. in the same way melissa as a retired bishop in the church won't be able to vote at general synod, why don't we place the same restriction on retired clergy. Obvi they will hate this idea because power/privilidge but I think it is a necessary next step in dismantling some of the old boys networks that are still so strongly at play.	1/4/2021 6:41 PM
58	The overall experience was prayerful and conducted with such dignity and respect. Archbishop Melissa did an outstanding job of keep the whole event afloat . The use of the technology allowed us to view the entire process and engage in from our own homes. Thanks for the whole process. Blessings.	1/4/2021 5:55 PM
59	I felt the process was extremely well thought out. I would like to see clergy and lay delegates invited by the electoral committee to share candidate info through their own social media channels (neutral share, not necessarily to boost a particular candidate). Thank you!	1/4/2021 5:50 PM
60	I did find it to be a very long and draining day! However, I think we did get the right person for the position, and that's what counts.	1/4/2021 5:50 PM
61	It was difficult to elect when we were not able to ask deep questions on important topics in our Diocese and the church universal. An open mic townhall is essential	1/4/2021 5:41 PM

62	i thought the process went well .	1/4/2021 5:27 PM
63	Good job in difficult times	1/4/2021 5:12 PM
64	I should have appreciated the opportunity to ask the candidates questions, either at the Town Hall or by contacting them individually. I think the electoral process was short-circuited by the lack of this opportunity.	1/4/2021 5:03 PM
65	In the final vote the electronic results were out before the announcement. One of the votes was out electronically before the vote was open by the Bishop	1/4/2021 4:45 PM
66	No	1/4/2021 4:43 PM
67	I will write a separate comment directly to Vice Chancellor Smith on a subject of concern about the process.	1/4/2021 4:41 PM
68	we did the right method and elected the Bishop	1/4/2021 4:39 PM
69	Many thanks for the work of the election committee and synod staff in moving everything online	1/4/2021 4:33 PM
70	Congratulations for a job well done!	1/4/2021 4:16 PM
71	I learned a lot more info from a conversation with another delegate than the info provided online. If I didn't by chance talk to him I wouldn't have learned so much. I wish there was a chance for us to talk online in groups prior to the vote.	1/4/2021 4:16 PM
72	Was surprised at how long the ballot counting process took considering that it was an electronic vote. I hope it could be faster in the future.	1/4/2021 3:44 PM
73	resumes should include accomplishments-track record, rather than just positions held	1/4/2021 3:41 PM
74	I thought the whole process was well done. The only negative I would like to add is the music/hymns were very disappointing at the am service. Some of the new music would have been very welcome. I really feel the presence of the Lord when I worship Him through that music.	1/4/2021 3:41 PM
75	I felt honored to be part of the process, have always wanted to be a synod delegate.	1/4/2021 3:37 PM
76	No	1/4/2021 3:32 PM
77	Considering the unusual circumstances (Covid 19), I thought the whole process was handled extremely well. Quick thinking, innovative, all round very impressive indeed. Kudos to all who put in the hard work and helped to make this happen.	1/4/2021 3:31 PM
78	The process was creatively adapted to meet the needs of on-line delivery and participation.	1/4/2021 3:25 PM
79	For you to organize and successfully complete the election online was truly impressive and kudos to all involved in that incredible accomplishment. I was pleased and honored to participate in the election.	1/4/2021 3:22 PM
80	Comparing this with the previous 'in person' electoral synods, personally I far preferred this. Kudos to all involved in making it run so smoothly.	1/4/2021 3:19 PM
81	No comment	1/4/2021 3:19 PM
82	Thanks to all who worked on the success of the online episcopal election	1/4/2021 3:17 PM
83	My first one. I enjoyed the process	1/4/2021 3:12 PM
84	NA	1/4/2021 3:12 PM
85	No	1/4/2021 3:11 PM
86	I was very impressed with Archbishop Melissa repeatedly appealing to the Holy Spirit to direct the election process. The organizers of the election did a very thorough job of making the necessary preparations. I believe that the organization that facilitated the electronic voting process should have provided the participants with a fresh email message providing a link to their website. When the trigger to the process was pulled, I had to scramble to locate their earlier email message with the link to be able to hook up at practically the last minute. For several minutes I feared that after all I would miss the voting process.	1/4/2021 3:10 PM

87	I would have preferred a clearer messaging/agreement/understanding with respect to use of social media by candidates. Some believed they should be off social media completely while others thought it was completely appropriate to use it frequently giving the impression they were self-promoting. This was also an issue for 'supporter's of candidates not knowing what they could/should not be saying on social media and beyond.	1/4/2021 3:05 PM
88	The vote counting process took way too long.	1/4/2021 3:02 PM
89	A Comment about the Survey:- It has been some time since the Episcopal Election, so my memories of this event are somewhat faded. I would anticipate that initiating this survey much closer to the event would probably yield more useful information. In a secular event that I help arrange, - The survey is prepared in advance and sent to the registered attendees during the evening of the last day of the event. Doing this, we enjoy a High response rate more than 70%.FWIW Wishing you good health and God's blessings in the coming years. Yours Faithfully, [REDACTED]	1/4/2021 3:02 PM
90	I was very disappointed by the small number of candidates. I wish that we had kept the ability to nominate further candidates after the first round we're announced. We will have an excellent Bishop in John Stephens. However, it would have been better to have a stronger, bigger field to choose from.	1/4/2021 2:58 PM
91	The process was very well thought out and organized.	1/4/2021 2:55 PM
92	1. I felt the attempt to influence delegates to vote for the candidate from Ontario to be distasteful and not in the spirit of fairness normally expected in this Diocese. 2. A number of candidates did not answer the questions posed by the Synod and yet it did not seem to matter in regard to final results.	1/4/2021 2:54 PM
93	I appreciated the opportunity to join in prayer; and the music during votes was quite lovely - and thank you for the words so we could sing along if we were inclined to do so.	1/4/2021 2:54 PM
94	I didn't always feel like I knew what was going on on the day of the synod. The LiveStream process was not interactive enough for me... maybe Zoom would have been better. I still am not sure why there was so much time between ballots. I thought the interview questions and the TownHall were too structured and didn't give the candidates a chance to be spontaneous or interactive.	1/4/2021 2:54 PM
95	Hi Kevin, what I missed most was being with other delegates during the synod; no matter how you slice it, discussions, questions etc. matter a lot. Nothing to be done really. You guys did a fab job under the circumstances. Best, [REDACTED]	1/4/2021 2:53 PM
96	I think a statement by the Nominators for each Candidate, telling us what they saw in the candidate that qualified them for the position, would have been helpful, and also after an initial town hall, a period when questions from delegates could be submitted and addressed in a second town hall.	1/4/2021 2:52 PM
97	It was difficult to participate virtually, but it seemed to work as well as possible.	1/4/2021 2:51 PM
98	my congratulations to all involved for a reasonably smooth and engaging process	1/4/2021 2:50 PM
99	I was surprised at how few names before us. Would be interesting to know if any nominees were screened out of the process.	1/4/2021 2:50 PM
100	Without the benefit of seeing the candidates at an in person meeting, I found it difficult to reach a decision.	1/4/2021 2:49 PM
101	NO	1/4/2021 2:48 PM
102	Guidelines would have been helpful in advance of Synod as to what kind of communication was allowed and what wasn't. As a presenter at a prayer gathering the week before Synod, I received an email "reminding" me of the requirement not to be campaigning on behalf of any one candidate. Needless to say, this communication was unnecessary so guidelines in advance would have been helpful. In addition, information as to who comprised the Election Committee would have been helpful in advance of Synod.	1/4/2021 2:46 PM
103	No, thank you for your work in this ministry	1/4/2021 2:43 PM
104	It was a good process given the pandemic restrictions. Thanks for asking.	1/4/2021 2:43 PM