

2009-2010 Grand Master's Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION NO. 1

Amend **Section 2-310 – DUTIES OF SECRETAIRES** deleting certain language, so that such section, as amended, will read as follows, with the deleted language struck out:

Sec. 2-310 – DUTIES OF SECRETARIES – The Secretary of each chartered subordinate lodge shall, in addition to the usual duties incident to such office, include in his minutes the reports of committees on petitions and a record of the names of all persons rejected, suspended and expelled. He shall make all proper certificates of the standing of a Brother of his lodge upon proper request made by the Brother himself, or by any Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star, or any regular Masonic body. Upon receipt of a petition for membership in his lodge, he shall at once pass the fee accompanying the same into the funds of the lodge as provided in Section 2-606. He shall obtain regular vouchers for, and report to the Treasurer, all sums appropriated for his own compensation or incidental expenses, and shall not retain them from funds received by him.

The Secretary shall also prepare monthly reports of statistical information of his lodge, on forms provided by the Grand Secretary, and shall forward such reports to the Grand Secretary not later than the 10th day of each following month. The Secretary shall also prepare an annual report giving additional information relative to his lodge on forms provided by the Grand Secretary and shall forward such annual report on or before the 10th day of February following the close of each year. ~~The Secretary shall also prepare an application for the Rock Maul Award, on forms provided by the Grand Secretary and shall forward such application to the Grand Secretary postmarked not later than the 31st day of December of each calendar year.~~

Rationale: For years, our Bylaws have required Secretaries to complete the Rock Maul Award as a means to ensure an adequate number of applications are received for judging. The current law has no means of enforcing compliance. Participation has rarely, if ever, been significant and the entries have continued a precipitous decline in recent years. It's the Master who should have the vested interest in completing the application and pursuing the award. Removal of this requirement on Secretaries leaves the responsibility up to the Master to decide who will fill out the application, whether it is the Secretary, Master or a brother appointed by the Master, or as specified on the Rock Maul Award application.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 2

Amend **Section 3-102 – ENUMERATED** by adding certain language, so that such section, as amended, will read as follows, with the new language italicized:

Sec. 3-102 – ENUMERATED – Masonic offenses shall consist of, but not be limited to:

(h) The dispensing, sale or consumption of any intoxicating liquors, including wine and beer, except in an official Masonic ceremony, in any portion of a dedicated lodge building where Masonic activities are held *before or* during a tyled meeting of any lodge or appendant body.

Rationale: The intent of this amendment is to prohibit the serving of alcohol in a lodge building before a tyled meeting. Its purpose is aimed at preserving the decorum and sanctity of our lodge rooms during a meeting and to remind members to always govern themselves accordingly.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 3

Amend **Section 1-406 – ALLOCATION OF FUNDS** by adding and deleting certain language, so that such section, as amended, will read as follows, with the new language italicized and the deleted language struck out:

Sec. 1-406 – ALLOCATION OF FUNDS – Commencing January 1, 2005, the per capita tax shall be divided as follows:

To the Masonic-Eastern Star Home for Children	\$.50	
To the George Washington Masonic Memorial	.50	<i>1.00</i>
To the Nebraska Masonic Home	2.00	
To the Masonic Education Newsletter	.50	
To the General Fund – January 2007	15.00	
commencing January 2008	17.00	
commencing January 2009	18.00	
commencing January 2010	19.00	
commencing January 2011	20.00	

The Initiation Fee shall be allocated to the General Fund.

If Recommendation No. 3 passes, the following Section must also be amended in the following ways to change references to the allocation of funds and to maintain consistency within the Bylaws.

Amend the third paragraph of **Section 2-601 – DUES AND ASSESSMENTS** by adding and deleting certain language, so that such section, as amended, will read as follows, with the new language italicized and the deleted language struck out:

Sec. 2-601 – DUES AND ASSESSMENTS –

Third paragraph:

Each Lodge shall pay annually to the Grand Lodge on or before the 10th day of April for each initiation during the preceding calendar year an initiation fee in the sum of Ten Dollars (\$10.00). The initiation fee shall increase to Fifteen Dollars (\$15.00) on January 1, 2007. In addition, each Lodge shall pay annually for each member the sum of Eighteen and 50/100 Dollars (\$18.50) as a per capita tax commencing on the 1st day of January 2005. The per capita tax shall increase at a rate of \$2.00 for the first year commencing on the first day of January, 2008, and one dollar per year for the next three years. The said per capita tax shall accrue as follows: ~~2008 – \$20.50, 2009 – \$21.50, 2010 – \$22.50, and 2011 – \$23.50~~ *2010 - \$23.00, and 2011 - \$24.00.* The Grand Lodge shall use \$.50 of the per capita tax for the publication and distribution of a Masonic education newsletter to each member. Before any subordinate lodge shall be consolidated with another lodge, the per capita tax for the year preceding the year of consolidation shall be determined and paid. In addition to the per capita tax as currently provided, commencing on January 1, 2006, each subordinate lodge shall pay to the Grand Lodge an assessment of \$1.00 per member to support the CHild Identification Program. Said assessment shall be due and payable in the same manner as the Grand Lodge per capita tax. The funds from this assessment shall be separate from the Grand Lodge per capita tax and shall be used for no other purpose than provided above.

Rationale: One hundred years ago, brothers across our nation came together to honor George Washington who set our country on its course with his strong democratic principles and Masonic values. The result is Freemasonry's gift to the world – the George Washington Masonic Memorial. Nebraska was the first jurisdiction to support the Memorial through a per member annual donation of 50 cents. Our forefathers in this fraternity built this magnificent building containing items owned by Washington which also informs visitors about the influence of Freemasonry on his life, and it brings honor to every Mason and our fraternity. Today, however, we are barely providing enough funding to maintain that same building our brothers constructed. The Memorial is asking every jurisdiction to provide only \$1 a year per member to support this monument which honors and perpetuates the memory, character and virtues of the man who best exemplifies what Freemasons are and ought to be. We weren't the first jurisdiction to step up to make the \$1/member pledge, but we can reassume our position as a leader by passing this amendment.

Proposed Amendments to the Constitution to be Presented at Grand Lodge

PROPOSED AMENDMENT NO. 1

Amend **ARTICLE II – MEMBERS** of the Constitution of the Grand Lodge A.:F.: & A.:M.: of Nebraska by adding and deleting certain language, so that such section, as amended, will read as follows, with the new language italicized and the deleted language struck out:

ARTICLE II. MEMBERS

The Grand Lodge shall consist of a Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, Grand Senior Warden, Grand Junior Warden, Grand Secretary, Grand Chaplain, Grand Orator, Grand Historian, Grand Custodian, Grand Marshal, Grand Senior Deacon, Grand Junior Deacon, Grand Senior Steward, Grand Junior Steward, and Grand Tyler, with such other officers as it may from time to time create; together with the Masters and Wardens and Secretaries or their *proxy proxies*, duly constituted, of the chartered subordinate lodges under its jurisdiction; *provided however, no member shall hold more than two proxies for any and all subordinate lodges of which he is a member*; and such Past Grand Masters and Past Deputy Grand Masters as are members of subordinate lodges.

Rationale: Brothers in lodge leadership positions need to be aware of what transpires at Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge so they are better prepared to serve as Master of their lodge, and so they can offer insight about how their Grand Lodge should address challenges and opportunities facing our fraternity. This applies to every Master no matter how many times he has served in office. Providing several proxies to one brother to represent one or several lodges and officers limits the exposure of lodge leaders to the programs and the direction of their Grand Lodge. This amendment to the Constitution requires a higher commitment from lodges and their leaders to represent their lodge at Annual Communication and exposing them to plans, information and ideas they will be able to apply in their lodge. The Grand Lodge is comprised of the leaders of our lodges, who should be committed to their obligation and be involved in their Grand Lodge.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT NO. 2

Amend **ARTICLE II – MEMBERS and ARTICLE V – OFFICERS** of the Constitution of the Grand Lodge A.:F.: & A.:M.: of Nebraska by adding and deleting certain language, so that such section, as amended, will read as follows, with the new language italicized and the deleted language struck out:

ARTICLE II. MEMBERS

The Grand Lodge shall consist of a Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, Grand Senior Warden, Grand Junior Warden, Grand Secretary, Grand Chaplain, Grand Orator, Grand Historian, Grand Custodian, Grand Marshal, Grand Senior Deacon, Grand Junior Deacon, Grand Senior Steward, Grand Junior Steward, ~~and~~ Grand Tyler, *and, if appointed, Grand Musician*, with such other officers as it may from time to time create; together with the Masters and Wardens and Secretaries or the proxies, duly constituted, of the chartered subordinate lodges under its jurisdiction; and such Past Grand Masters and Past Deputy Grand Masters as are members of subordinate lodges.

ARTICLE V.

OFFICERS

The officers of the Grand Lodge shall be styled and take rank as follows:

The Most Worshipful Grand Master
The Right Worshipful Deputy Grand Master
The Right Worshipful Grand Senior Warden
The Right Worshipful Grand Junior Warden
The Right Worshipful Grand Secretary
The Very Worshipful Grand Chaplain
The Worshipful Grand Orator
The Worshipful Grand Historian
The Worshipful Grand Custodian
The Worshipful Grand Marshal
The Worshipful Grand Senior Deacon
The Worshipful Grand Junior Deacon
The Worshipful Grand Senior Steward
The Worshipful Grand Junior Steward
The Grand Tyler

The office of Grand Musician may also be appointed, if desired.

Rationale: We have talented brothers who can add much to the quality of Grand Lodge activities during the year and Annual Communication due to their musical abilities. This amendment would not require the appointment of a Grand Musician, but leaves the decision up to the Grand Master.

PROCEDURES FOR AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION:

ARTICLE XIII.

AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be altered or amended in the following manner only: The proposed alteration or amendment must be in writing and signed by five members, as defined in Article II herein, and presented at an Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge. It shall thereupon be entered upon the minutes of the Annual Communication, and submitted to the several chartered subordinate lodges for their approval or rejection. If a majority of the subordinate lodges approve thereof, by certificate over their respective seals, at the next succeeding Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge, the Grand Master shall put the question upon its adoption, and if concurred in by a majority of the members present and voting, it shall henceforth be considered as a part of this constitution.

Proposed Amendments will be handled in the following manner: Following Annual Communication in February 2010, separate questions for each proposed amendment will be emailed to all subordinate lodges (or mailed by first class mail to lodges without an email contact). Lodges will be required to vote on the questions separately at a regular monthly communication. If the vote is favorable, the question should be sealed and returned to the Grand Lodge office by first class mail. If the vote fails, the question will not be returned to the Grand Lodge office. Questions not returned to the Grand Lodge office by any lodge will be considered an unfavorable vote from that lodge.

Resolutions Presented by Members at the Annual Communication in February 2009 and deemed by the Jurisprudence Committee in proper form to be voted upon

RESOLUTION NO. 1

Amend **Section 1-404 – ALLOCATION OF FUNDS** – by adding and deleting certain language, so that such section, as amended, will read as follows, with the new language italicized and the deleted language stricken.

Sec. 1-404 – ALLOCATION OF FUNDS – Commencing January 1, 2011, the per capita tax shall be divided as follows:

To the Masonic-Eastern Star Home for Children	\$.50	<i>1.00</i>
To the George Washington Masonic National Memorial	.50	
To the Nebraska Masonic Home	2.00	<i>3.00</i>
To the Masonic Education Newsletter	.50	
To the General Fund – January 2007	15.00	
commencing January 2008	17.00	
commencing January 2009	18.00	
commencing January 2010	19.00	
<i>commencing January 2011</i>	20.00	<i>28.50</i>
<i>commencing January 2012</i>		<i>33.50</i>
<i>commencing January 2013</i>		<i>38.50</i>

The Initiation Fee shall be allocated to the General Fund.

Amend **Sec. 2-601 – PER CAPTITA TAX**

And accordingly amend Section 2-601 to reflect that per capita tax shall accrue as follows:

2011	<i>\$33.50</i>
<i>2012</i>	<i>\$38.50</i>
<i>2013</i>	<i>\$43.50</i>

Note: In February 2009, Recommendation No. 1 passed, but did not become effective until January 2010. That recommendation changed the number of the bylaws section entitled **Allocation of Funds** from Section 1-406 to Section 1-404. The section amended by this Resolution has been named accordingly.

Rationale: The Grand Lodge must currently withdraw from the endowment fund each year to cover day to day operating expenses (in 2009 it is projected to withdraw approximately \$60,000). In order for the Grand Lodge to be proactive and effective in achieving its stated Mission and Vision, it must be solvent and able to pay its operating expenses from dues alone, thereby reserving the proceeds of the endowment fund for charitable, fraternal and other activities and programs devised to advance Freemasonry in the state of Nebraska.