

For the guidance of Subordinate Lodge Officers in the proper conduct of the business of the lodges Grand Lodge of West Virginia Independent Order of Odd Fellows

Examination prior to opening lodge.

In conducting the examination, the Warden and Conductor takes a position in front of the Member to be examined, Beginning with the Noble Grand (if assisted by the conductor the Warden then returns to a position in front of the Noble Grand and receives the word from the Conductor.) That Member will then arise and communicate the password as instructed in the ritual, at the same time he will clasp the right hand of the Warden or Conductor. The one reaching the inner door first will proceed to the ante room and examine the Outside Guardian and others that may be t here. If there is a Member without the password, the examining officer will say, "**Noble Grand a Member without the password.**" If it be one of the Members of the lodge, the Noble Grand shall direct the examining officer to instruct the member; if correct (the member shall produce an official certificate or shall be properly vouched for by a proven member.) The password to be given to the Member privately, after the records has been checked to ascertain if his dues are paid. This method will save embarrassment to the lodge and the Member if his dues should be in arrears. All visiting Members must have the password or show his official receipt, to the examining officer. The Noble Grand at all times will communicate the passwords to Members entitled to receive them. All present having been examined in the pass words, the Warden and Conductor meet in front of the Vice Grand's station where the Conductor reports to the Warden the results of their examination. They then advances to the center of the floor and the Warden reports to the Noble Grand the results of the examination. (All present are Members.) The Warden and Conductor then assume their seats.

The Bible

The Bible shall be on the pedestal at the Chaplain's station, (Never in the center of the floor durin g lodge,) and opened just before the Opening Prayer.

The Flag

It is very necessary that we show respect to the Flag of our Country. It is desirable that the Flag of the United States be displayed in the Lodge room at all times during a meeting. If the lodge wishes to use the ceremony of bringing in and retiring the Flag, it shall do so in accordance with the ceremony given in the ritual, but whether this ceremony be observed or not, respect of our Flag may be shown by Pledge of Allegiance or by a Salute to the Flag. Members shall stand at attention with their right hand over their heart when the Flag is presented in either ceremony. The Flag shall be displayed in the floor holder just to the right of the Noble Grand's chair in front of the rostrum. After placement of the flag, the flag bearer shall return to the ranks with the escort and salute the flag. The Flag bearer should at all times make sure that if a flag staff is used with an eagle atop, that the eagle be displayed in a soaring position and that the eagle faces the lodge after placement.

Duties of Officers

The charges are required and should be memorized by the respective officers and given without the aid of the ritual. The charges shall be given in full by each officer present during the opening of the lodge.

Opening Ode

The opening ode should be sung by the members of the lodge, as this appears to add something to the meeting.

Opening Prayer

As the opening prayer is presented by the Chaplain it is suggested that all members stand erect and fold the arms across the chest, in reverence of this occasion.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. **ROLL CALL:** The Warden stands and answers either present or absent as the roll of officers is called, by the Secretary. It is suggested that the officer shall arise as his name is called. An officer's record of his attendance is very important and should at all times be kept correctly and recorded in the roll call book. If the officer should come in late, the records should be corrected to show him present. If an officer is serving pro-tem for an absent officer, the officers shall rise, state his name and report "*Pro-tem.*"

2. INTRODUCTION OF VISITING MEMBERS:

(A) *From Other Jurisdictions:* If the visitor presents his card before the lodge opens, the Noble Grand may then appoint a committee to examine the visitor before the lodge opens. If the visitor is found to be correct, the member shall be permitted to sit in lodge during the opening ceremony, and the committee will then present the member to the lodge. If the visitor presents a card after the lodge is opened, the Noble Grand will appoint a committee of three to examine the Member. The Vice Grand, Noble Grand, Or a Past Grand in possession of the Annual Traveling Password must be one of the committee which will retire to the anteroom and examine the visitor according to the Subordinate Lodge Ritual, If the member is found to be correct, the committee will conduct him into the lodge and present him.

The attitude of the examining committee should be one of friendliness and not one of suspicion. The chairman should greet the member and introduce himself, then introduce the other members of the committee. After the greeting, the committee will proceed with examination as provided in the ritual. It is important that the committee shall be satisfied beyond any doubt that the visitor is entitled to sit in the lodge. The committee should bear in mind that our regulations are intended to protect the Order against imposters, but not to work a hardship on a member and deprive him of his privilege of visiting lodges.

(b) *Reception of Grand Lodge Officers:* The Noble Grand should be informed before the lodge is open, of the presence of Grand Officers. The Noble Grand should personally greet them, and arrange also for the introducing officer to meet them, ascertain their names and titles, and arrange to have them presented to the lodge. Elected Officer" of the Sovereign Grand Lodge, of a Grand Lodge, a Grand Encampment, or the Department Commander of Patriarchs Militant, also a District Deputy Grand Master when installing officers, are entitled to the Honors of the Order. If there are more than one, the Noble Grand will find it convenient to make a list of their names and titles. In the order of seniority, the Elected Grand Officers are: the Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, Grand Warden, Grand Secretary, Grand Treasurer and two Grand Representatives to Sovereign Grand Lodge. Appointed officers of a Grand Lodge may be presented but are not entitled to the Honors of the Order. (Grand Officers may sit in the lodge if they choose during the opening ceremony; or they may remain in the anteroom until the lodge is ready to receive them.)

At the proper time the Noble Grand will appoint a committee to receive and introduce the Grand Officers. It is well for the Noble Grand to notify before hand those whom is expected to appoint and give the chairman a list of the Grand Officers. The Committee will retire in form. Greet the Grand Officers, and arrange them in a column of single file according to seniority with the ranking officer last. The chairman of the committee will follow the senior officer. while the other members of the committee will lead the column and follow the shortest line of march, execut ing right turns, and form a line in the center of and across the hall, facing the Noble Grand, so that the chairman of the committee will be on the right of the line with the senior officers on their left and so on down the line with other members of the committee on the left of the line.

As the Grand Officers who are entitled to the Honors of the Order enter the hall the Noble Grand calls up the Lodge. When they have been presented by the Conductor or Chairman of the committee, the chairman and the other two members step back one pace out of line and join with the lodge in extending the Honors of the Order. The Noble Grand then welcomes the officers and directs the Conductor or Chairman to escort the Grand Master to a seat on his right. The lodge is seated after the other visiting officers are escorted to their seats.

The Honors of the Orders are extended in honor of the office, and no elected Grand Officer has the right to refuse or decline the Honors when visiting officially. If the Grand Marshall accompanies the Grand Master in his visitation, it is the Grand Marshall's right and prerogative to introduce the Grand Master. If Grand Officers of other jurisdictions are present, they should be introduced along with but after the Grand Officers of this jurisdiction.

(C) Reception of other Visitors: All visiting members should be acknowledged and welcomed by the Noble Grand, and all the members should join in making them feel at home. The Noble Grand can ask each to stand and give their name and Lodge: or he can ask a member to introduce them to the lodge; after which the Noble Grand should welcome them. It is the best of manners to see that all visitors are introduced, kindly welcomed and made to feel at home and that they have an opportunity to sign the visitor's register. If time permits, ask them to address the lodge, and see that they are asked to take part in games and recreation after the lodge is closed.

3. READING OF THE MINUTES OF THE LAST SESSION : The reading of the minutes of a meeting is for the purpose of informing the members present of the transactions of a previous meeting, and affords them an opportunity to correct any errors or omissions that may appear. Hence the reading of the minutes should be done in a manner that every member present may hear them. The members should exercise the right and privilege to see that the records are complete and correct, as even the best of Secretaries sometimes makes mistakes. A good Secretary will welcome the correction of mistakes or omissions. These minutes are the recorded history of the lodge and should show a complete record of the transactions. The Noble Grand: ***"You have heard the reading of the minutes of the last session, are there any corrections or additions to the minutes? If not the minutes are approved as read."*** If corrections are given to the minutes the Noble Grand shall say, ***"The minutes are approved as corrected."***

4.&5. SICKNESS OR DISTRESS: THE NOBLE GRAND SHOULD ASK: "Do we have Members sick or in distress?" It is the duty of every Odd Fellow who is sick or disabled to report to the Noble Grand or some other officer of the lodge. It is also the duty of every member to report any member that is ill, so the visiting committee and other members of the lodge may visit him as soon as possible, and render the required assistance.

Distress may be of many different varieties such as: The death of a member of the Family, serious illness of the family or other conditions that cause a member deep concern. Sometimes a word of encouragement may mean much to our Members. It is the duty of every member to report conditions that tend to depress the Member and render such assistance as soon as possible.

6. READING OF BILLS: All bills should be carefully checked and audited by the Finance Committee before being acted upon by the lodge. New bills should be read in open lodge and referred to the Finance Committee. The committee accepts the bills and proceeds to audit them. (No other action is necessary by the lodge at this time.)

7. COMMUNICATIONS: NOBLE GRAND SHOULD ASK: Are there any communications to be read. The Noble should have already been advised of the communications by the Secretary received prior to opening the lodge. The Noble Grand can then direct their disposition such as: (Post on bulletin board, answer the communication or file the communication for future reference, refer it to the proper committee. etc.) The Noble Grand shall direct the disposition of all communications. All

communications shall be read in entirety by the Secretary, if they are in order, that all members may hear and understand them.

All communications from the Grand Lodge or Grand Lodge Officers, Sovereign Grand Lodge or Sovereign Grand Lodge Officers **must** be read to the membership in its entirety. A communication circularizing Lodges or members is not a legitimate communication, and must not be read unless it has been authorized by the Grand Master. Letters from an authorized organization, such as districts to its members, when it pertains to work of the organization, is a legitimate communication. Also circular letters from recognized civic organizations, such as the Red Cross, which the Grand Lodge or Grand Master has endorsed co-operation, are considered legitimate communications. Any communication from the Grand Master should be received and considered with the highest respect. Any action he requests of the lodge, should be considered and disposed of at the time the communication is read, unless for some special reason it could be more advantageously considered at a later hour or date. Under no consideration should the lodge fail to act on the request within a reasonable time.

All communications from Subordinate lodges and all branches of the Order, when bearing the seal of said organizations, are legitimate communications and should be answered promptly. Communications from persons should be received and accorded courteous and proper consideration when they treat of matters specifically concerning the lodge or community.

8. READING OF APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP: All applications for membership in the lodge, whether by initiation, by reinstatement, by transfer or by card, are to be read. All applications for membership whether by initiation or any form of card or certificate, must be presented on the form furnished by the lodge, signed by the applicant, and accompanied by the required fee. After the application is read, the motion to accept the application is made and voted up by the members present. The Noble Grand then appoints two members of the investigating committee, and the Vice Grand appoints one member, who will interview the applicant. The interviewing committee should be prepared to answer questions from the applicant, and inform him of the working of the order. If possible the spouse of the applicant should also be made aware of the requirements of membership.

9. REPORTS OF INTERVIEWING COMMITTEE:

In making its report, the committee should always be candid and impartial. Good moral character and integrity are fundamental qualifications of a true Odd Fellow and the committee should have the moral courage to be true to its trust. The report of the committee should be made in the space provided for it on the back of the application blank, and should be signed by at least two members of the committee and preferably by all. The committee is not obliged to make a report on the application at the next meeting after the application is read, but should do so at its earliest convenience after making an interview.

10. BALLOTING ON APPLICATIONS: If there are applications to be balloted upon, the Noble Grand directs the Warden to prepare the ballot. Voting on an application for membership must be by secret ball ballot. The Noble Grand is charged with the supervision of the ballot and must see that its secrecy is maintained. The Warden secures the ballot box, examines it to see that all the balls and cubes are in the proper compartment and then takes the ballot box to the Vice Grand for inspection. The Warden then takes the ballot box to the Noble Grand who will also inspect it to see that the ballot is properly prepared; The Noble Grand shall then cast their ballot from the station, and returns it to the Warden. The Warden then places the ballot box on a pedestal in the center of the room, and proceeds about three paces toward the Vice Grand's station. The Noble Grand then announces, "Brothers and Sisters, we are about to ballot on the application of (Name) for admission to membership by (there state whether by initiation, transfer, reinstatement, etc.) The report of the committee is favorable (or unfavorable as the case may be.) **Remember the white balls elect and the black cubes reject. Let your decision be free from prejudice or personal bias and vote for the good of your lodge**

and Order. You will now proceed to ballot.” The Noble Grand then calls up the lodge (The Noble Grand may permit visitors to remain seated during the voting.) The members led by the Right and Left Supporters of the Noble Grand will proceed to the rear of the lodge room and then form single columns toward the ballot box. The Right Support of the Vice Grand shall take the Vice Grand Chair and the Vice Grand shall move forward and Ballot. The Warden who stands near the ballot box will allow only one member at a time to advance to the ballot box. The member shall select his ballot, and look to the Noble Grand as he deposits it into the slot. As soon as a member has cast his ballot the member will return to their seat. When all the members in the lines have balloted the Noble Grand will say, **“Have all balloted that are eligible to vote?”** The Warden shall report: “All present eligible have balloted.” The Noble Grand will then instruct the Warden to cast their ballot. After the Warden votes the Noble Grand shall say **"I declare the ballot closed"** The Noble Grand then seats the lodge. The Warden then closes the ballot box and carries it to the Vice Grand who inspects the ballot and closes the ballot box. The Warden then takes the ballot box to the Noble Grand's station. The Noble Grand then asks, **"Vice Grand how do you find the ballot?"** The Vice Grand answers, **”Favorable"** if he finds it so; if he finds it otherwise, he answers **"Unfavorable."** No other report shall be made by the Vice Grand, The Noble Grand then inspects the ballot and says, **"I too find the ballot favorable"** if he finds it so and **"I declare (Name). or Member elected to membership by initiation, transfer, reinstatement or deposit of card, etc)"** If he finds the ballot **unfavorable**, he announces, **"I declare the application of (Name). (or Member) rejected."** No other report is made. He then destroys the ballot and gives it to the Warden who returns the ballot box to a convenient place and takes his seat. (It is the duty of the Noble Grand to destroy the ballot.) If there is more than one application for consideration, a collective ballot may be taken. In case the collective ballot is unfavorable the lodge will then proceed to ballot on the applications singly as provided by law. At no time shall the results of a ballot be divulged other than favorable or unfavorable. If an applicant is considered “Unfavorable,” they must be notified under the Seal of the Lodge, in writing by the Secretary, signed by the Secretary and Noble Grand and be advised that they may re-apply for membership after the time limit established by the Code of Gebneral law shall have expired.

11. **BALLOT OF DEGREES:** Since we no longer ballot on application for degrees in our lodges it is suggested that this order of business be dispensed with and a substitute of **PROPOSALS OF MEMBERSHIP AND IDEAS**, be substituted and under this heading a discussion of prospective members be discussed, their names, qualifications, standing in the community, church, etc., and then be able to decide if the proposed application would be acceptable if present ed, and also discuss how the prospect could be properly approached for his application. Proposals of new ideas for improving the lodge meetings by programs or any suggestions that any members might have to offer for making the meetings more interesting should be given at this time. All members should be encouraged to offer suggestions.

12. **REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON FINANCE:** Under this item of business, the finance committee should report on items previously referred to it. The audit of bills should be carefully and thoroughly made. If there is some doubt about the correctness of a bill, it can be carried over until the next meeting while an investigation is being made. It is imperative that our Order maintain its reputation by the prompt -payment of all bills, therefore the committee should perform its duties in a thorough manner. The Noble Grand announces, "If there are no objections the bills will be paid. (A motion to pay the bills is not necessary if no one objects to the payment of them.)

13. **INITIATION OR CONFERRING OF DEGREES:**

Degree work is one of the most important functions of a lodge. Hence the ceremonies of initiation and conferring of degrees should always be performed in an efficient, solemn and dignified manner. These ceremonies should never be marred by pranks or horseplay of any kind. Do not read the work

of the degrees. Memorize it, so you can give it with credit to yourself, and to the lodge. Do not go through the work hurriedly. Be sure that the paraphernalia is clean and in good repair. The Noble Grand should remember that the order of business is only suggestive, and can be changed to meet the convenience of the lodge. It is permissible to confer the degrees as the first order of business after the lodge is open. By adopting this procedure you will eliminate a long tedious wait on the part of the candidates. Or in order to accommodate members of the degree team, the degree work might be given after the other business has been taken care of. A little planning ahead will save many valuable minutes. The Warden should see to it that the paraphernalia is ready before the degree team retires to the regalia room.

14. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES: Under this item of business, all standing and special committees that have not previously reported will present their reports for the consideration of the lodge. Important committee reports should always be in writing, signed by the committee, and entered upon the minutes of the meeting. Remember that things are done or "done for" in the hands of a committee.

The Noble Grand should choose the chairman of a committee with care and consideration, one who has an interest in that particular subject, and who will work diligently to promote the matter placed in his care. For the remainder of the committee he should appoint a sufficient number of qualified Members who will be of assistance to the chairman. He should select committee members who will attend lodge, keeping in mind the new member and put him to work promptly on some committee. (The Noble Grand appoints the majority of the committees and the Vice Grand the remainder of the committee members.) The committee on Resolutions of Respect should report at the end of the committee reports, in case of death of a Member. (The ceremony of Draping of the Charter should be used at this time.)

15. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Under this heading would be considered any business or matters of record that were not completed at a previous meeting and held over; or any matter specially ordered by action of the lodge to be considered at that particular meeting such as, a resolution amending the by-laws which has been read or offered at a previous meeting the required number of times, and is up for action at this particular meeting; further nomination of officers; and any other matters which have not been completed at a previous meeting.

16. NEW BUSINESS: This order of business should include resolutions, and motions pertaining to all new business, elections and installation of Officers, and any other business not specifically called for under the other headings, may be considered.

17. GOOD OF THE ORDER: Under this heading, members should be encouraged to offer any suggestions that they may have for the good of the lodge or for its welfare in general, or that of the Order. The Noble Grand should never permit anything that is not for the Good of the Order'. Criticisms that tend to cast aspersions on any branch of the Order or any member of the Order must never be tolerated; and it is the duty of the Noble Grand to promptly call to order any Member who attempts it. Discussions that cause dissensions and discord are barred by the Laws of the Order. This is the time to bring to the attention of the lodge any cases of charity which needs attention: also to make any announcements of other meetings of importance in the various branches of the Order. On nights when there is not much business and no degree work, some time can well be spent in the study of some of the teachings of the Order; or in studying some phases of the Laws of the Order; in studying or memorizing the unwritten work; studying the Constitution or the By-Laws of the lodge; or the charges for the degree work. Have the Constitution or the By-Laws read aloud, let the members ask questions and become thoroughly familiar with them. Present any program of entertainment that you may have at this time.

If a Grand Lodge Officer is Present they shall be the last to speak. After the Senior Officer present shall have spoken, the Noble Grand shall thank that officer and proceed with the closing of the lodge. No member should be permitted to speak after the Grand Master shall address the Lodge.

18. CLOSING THE LODGE: After the business of the Lodge is completed, the Noble Grand then proceeds to close the lodge according to the ritual. The same high standard of decorum and dignity that is enjoined for the opening ceremony should be observed in the closing ceremony. The closing ode should be sung. If the flag ceremony is used in the opening it should also be used in the closing ceremony according to the ritual. The Warden should collect the rituals, deliver them to the Noble Grand and report the number to him. A record of the number of rituals should be made in the minutes of the meeting

Draping the Charter

(Charter to remain draped for a period of 30 days)

After the death of a member, when the lodge receives and accepts the report of the Committee on Resolutions of Respect, it should then proceed to drape the Charter in memory of the deceased Member. It is suggested that the lodge use the Charter Draping Ceremony provided in a separate pamphlet provided by the Sovereign Grand Lodge. The Secretary should provide a copy of the obituary, along with the dates and titles of the deceased to the committee. The Warden should see that the Charter is placed in a location near the center of the lodge room prior to the opening of the lodge. The Warden should also make sure that the drape for the Charter is available, and placed at the Chaplin's Station along with the proper Ceremony Books.

SPECIAL DUTIES OF THE IMPORTANT OFFICERS

THE NOBLE GRAND

The Noble Grand is the head of the lodge. As such he is in complete charge of the Lodge's business and how it is conducted. On him rests the responsibility of what business is transacted; what procedures are followed; proper and discreet ways of entertaining motions and disposition of motions and suggestions; wisdom in selection and appointment of committees; conduct of degree work; care of sick and disabled members; the conduct of members while in session; and many other duties which may appear from time to time in the ministration of affair during his term of office. As such, he should have a good knowledge and understanding of the laws and regulations governing his lodge. He should know the Constitution and By-Laws of his lodge, and have a good knowledge of the Code of General Laws governing the Order; that he may know what disposition to make of special cases which might arise and require his decision. He should have a fair knowledge of parliamentary procedure so as to be able to rule properly on unusual and rare motions as well as proper routine in the conduct of business.

As head of his lodge he should be a model for as near perfection as possible. He should be prompt and punctual in attendance. He should always be present at the meetings when possible. If unable to attend a meeting, he should notify the Vice Grand and Secretary as early as possible before lodge time. He should be on hand early for the meeting-s when possible, so as to make preparations for the conduct of session, as well as to greet the Members as they arrive. Then, too, he should consult with the Secretary and get a knowledge of what business matters are to be brought up, sick members to be reported, bills to be considered, communications to be read, and all matters of business to be considered. He should know all these things before he calls his meeting to order.

In the matter of conducting the business of the Lodge the "Order of Business" as given in the ritual is merely a guide. He should be familiar with the order of business so as to follow it in general and never read it from the book. In fact, he should be familiar with the opening and closing as well as the order of business and never sit with "nose in the book", so to speak, in any of the procedure.

As stated above the "Order of Business" as given in the ritual is merely a guide and should not be read off formally. The Noble Grand should already know what items are up for consideration. If there are no bills to be presented, he should omit that item; and if there are bills, he should not say "Bills read and referred," but simply ask for the reading of the bills. and after they are read, refer them to the

finance committee to be reported on later. Instead of "Communications read and disposed of." he should call for the reading" of the communications, if any, direct that individually, naming them separately, they be referred to the proper committee, acted upon immediately, placed on the bulletin board, or filed as the case may be,. If, as he has previously been informed, there are no communications, he omits that item. The same thing applies to applications for membership, reports or investigating committee, balloting on applications, etc. If he knows there is nothing to report on those items, why call for them? If there are no candidates for initiation or degrees, omit the item. If there are candidates calls for initiation or call for conferring of degrees, whichever may be, but do so informally; such as "we will now have the conference of the second degree and ask the degree captain to take charge and get the degree team ready. Be informal and omit unnecessary items, thus saving time and make the procedure seem more human. The Noble Grand should not only be familiar with the laws and procedures for conducting the business of the lodge, but he should also know the degree work; that is, he should have a fair knowledge of the procedure in all the degrees,. In fact, the Noble Grand should be able to confer all the degrees. It is not asking too much to expect all the officers to do the work in their respective stations as they progress through the chairs. It is true there are some who otherwise make reasonably good officers, but who cannot commit and deliver their parts. That is to be regretted, but when at all possible each officer should do his parts. There are occasions when a degree captain has his picked and drilled team, and does not want to reorganize his team each term as the officers advance; but otherwise each officer should insist on doing his regular part in his station, and should not be deprived of the privilege if he so desires. He is a better Noble Grand who has done his parts in degree work.

Needless to say the Noble Grand should select his committee members with care. He should take into consideration the nature of the work to be done, and choose the individual best fitted for the job; but at the same time not overwork certain members by giving them too many assignments.

Committee work should be well distributed among the able and willing workers, keeping in mind the general good of the Order in the work to be accomplished.

When a member is reported sick or in distress, it becomes the duty of the Noble Grand to see that the member is visited within twenty-four hours after he is reported, and as often thereafter as may seem necessary or advisable, but at least once a week. A report of the condition should be made to the lodge every week as long as he remains on the sick list. If there are several to be visited, the Noble Grand may call upon his visiting committee to assist in making the visits. This committee consists of The Noble Grand, the Vice Grand and their supporters. They may be assigned to visit sick members regularly, depending upon the convenience. The Noble Grand may also assign to any other member of the Lodge a place on the visiting committee, depending on that member's location with respect to the sick member to be visited.

When a member dies, the Noble Grand should contact the family as soon as possible after he receives notice of the death, and do all he can to extend condolence and sympathy to the bereaved family, and make arrangements for the funeral services, if the family desires an Odd Fellow Service. The Noble Grand and his Chaplain should be prepared to conduct the funeral service according to the ritual. In some lodges these rites are assigned to certain individuals, usually some older members with experience, who serve by temporary appointment at every funeral; but at times it may not be convenient for them to be present or even they, themselves, may need the rites performed for them. Hence the Noble Grand and Chaplain should be prepared to perform these services.

The Noble Grand should see to it that order and decorum prevails at all times during- lodge meetings. He should not permit promiscuous talking or moving about in the lodge hall during any deliberations or degree work. He should use his gavel to call for attention. or if necessary name the offending-Members and ask them to be decorous. In this he shall be assisted by the Vice Grand.

The Noble Grand, assisted by the Vice Grand and other officer is in complete charge of his Lodge and its concerns at all times. If he feels that he cannot conduct a lodge and its affairs as is fitting and

proper, he should not seek the office; but after he is elected and installed he should realize his importance and conduct himself accordingly. It is of no importance to be a Past Grand unless he has been a Noble Grand in fact as well as in position.

THE VICE GRAND

The Vice Grand is second in importance to the Noble Grand. He should be equally prepared to perform the duties of the Noble Grand and assist him at all times in the performance of his duties. As a potential Noble Grand he should be ready to do his parts in degree work, and to take over as Noble Grand in conducting the business of the lodge. Like the Noble Grand he should be prompt and regular in attendance when possible, and be familiar with the ritual as well as with the laws and regulations governing the Order.

THE SECRETARY

The Secretary is a very important officer of a lodge.

In fact a good secretary is the life of the lodge. He can make a lodge or kill it depending on his interest and ability or his lack of them. He should be well informed as to the laws and regulations governing a Lodge, and should know the Constitution and By-Laws "like a book," so to speak, so as to be able to advise the other officers and members on any matter of procedure.

When -possible the secretary should be present at least a half hour before Lodge opens and have his books ready for the meeting. He should be ready to advise the Noble Grand as to the business of the meeting, reports of sick members; bills to be presented; correspondence to be read; applications to be considered, new and for ballot; degree work to be conducted; matters of business to be brought before the Lodge, so far as he has knowledge of them; and such other matters that he may have knowledge of pertaining to business or the Good of the order. He should be kind, courteous and patient with the officers and members, ready and willing to give and receive information and advice. He should be alert and attentive to the proceedings of the lodge. and keep an accurate record of all matters of business transacted just as they occur. It sometimes saves trouble if the records show just exactly what happened. He should have complete notes on all things proper to be written, and later write up his minutes according to the notes he has made.

Some secretaries, especially in small lodges, write up their minutes in a specially prepared minute book as the events take place, so that when the lodge is closed their records are finished, and they don't see them again until the next lodge meeting. That is not always the best procedure, because often after a record there are changes made, and it is not always easy to make the changes in the book without some defacement. The minute book should not only be accurate, but it should be neat and orderly. This is a permanent record, and should be in such form as to be easily read and understood by anybody at any future time.

Not all secretaries spend any time at their desks other than at lodge meetings. In such cases the secretary should see to it that his records are completed before he leaves after the meetings. In most cases it will not require much extra time. If additional time is needed, and especially when matters of importance arise, he should arrange to spend some extra time at his desk between meetings in order to have his records complete and ready for the next meeting'. This he should be willing to do, whether he gets paid for it or not, in order to be an efficient secretary. do justice to his job. and bp. of service to his lodge. This will not be a problem with paid secretaries; who spend some time between meetings at the lodge hall or office.

Financial secretaries, whether they are also corresponding secretaries or not, should be very careful to keep their accounts accurate and up to date, especially the accounts for membership dues. Many good members are lost because the Secretary through carelessness has allowed them to become delinquent in dues. He should put forth special effort to see that members are notified of any arrearages, and "go out of his way" if need be to make. collections at the convenience of the delinquent member. Then. too. he should see to it that an official receipt properly signed and sealed, be given promptly to every member when his dues are paid.

The secretary should keep a record of all sick members showing when they reported sick. what benefits. if any, were paid and when. and en they were reported off the sick list. Also his minutes should show a complete record of deaths, when and where funeral services were conducted, and the place of interment. A secretary's records and accounts should be correct and up to date, so that if anything should happen to him, another could take over any time with a minimum of checking and auditing.

THE TREASURER

The treasurer is the financial officer of the lodge. As such he shall receive from the Secretary all monies that have come to the lodge for any purpose, and each time he receives any amount large or small he should give the Secretary a receipt for it. It is important and recommended that instead of keeping any such monies in his pocket, he deposit same in a bank as soon as possible, and pay it out for any purpose by check authorized by the lodge at a regular meeting. He should keep an account of all money received and paid out as the transactions occur, so that he can report to the lodge at any time the amount of money available.

OTHER OFFICERS

All appointed officers of a Lodge should be selected by the Noble Grand and Vice Grand according to their availability to attend and their capability to fill their chairs. It is desirable that every officer be prepared to do the degree work which his position calls for: and it is expected that he do so, except in cases when the degree captain has a specially organized and drilled team to confer the degree. In such cases he should make an effort to be able and capable of becoming a part of that team during his term of office.

GUIDES SUGGESTED TO NOBLE GRANDS AND VICE GRANDS FOR SUCCESSFUL MEETINGS

1. Make sure that your Home Tax and your Per Capita Tax are paid up to date. If they are not, plan a social function to raise the money rather than taking it out of the treasury.
2. Make sure that your statistical report is properly posted and up to date.
3. Make sure that your lodge is in possession of all the rituals that it is charged with, also that you have an up-to-date Code of General Laws, the latest Grand Lodge Constitution, and a Funeral Ceremony Book. And a Ceremony for Draping the Charter booklet..
4. Make sure that all officers of the lodge keep in good standing.
5. The Noble Grand, Vice Grand, and Secretary should meet prior to the opening of lodge to discuss the communications, and up-coming business.

ORGANIZE FOR A SUCCESSFUL TERM

1. Strive to make the lodge room and the entire building attractive in appearance. The new members will judge you accordingly.
2. Publish, a complete list of your membership, showing address, phone numbers, birthdays, date of affiliations and other interesting data; and then see that each member gets a copy of I, or has access to it.
3. Devise a promotional system of attendance on the basis of reward and competition, either in the form of drawing one name each night entitling the Member to a prize, if he be present, or in the form of a dinner to a winning team at the end of a team.
4. Strive to perfect a degree team in at least one degree Appoint an enthusiastic degree captain and co-operate with him, rehearsing often.
- 5 Start a membership drive and recommend any brother who brings in 10 or more new candidates within a period of 12 months for the Sovereign Grand Lodge Meritorious Service A ward.
6. Plan to make officials visits to other lodges, and schedule invitations to other lodges to be your guests.

7. Plan to observe appropriate ceremonies; such as Memorial Service, Membership Week, Flag Day, Wildey Anniversary, Anniversary of your own lodge, Anniversary of I. O. O. F., and other important dates

8. Plan competitive events that may interest the members.

9. Plan social events with your spouses and the Rebekahs.

Improve your meetings

1. Open promptly at the time set by your By-Laws.

2. Maintain decorum and dignity. No member should speak without first obtaining permission of the floor from the Noble Grand.

3. Do not allow long debates about trivial things. Refer controversial cases to a special committee for a report at some future meeting.

4. Do not allow exchange of sarcastic or personal remarks.

5. Appoint a Lodge Instructor and refer all questions of law and usage to him..

6. Avoid correction of mistakes in open Lodge, especially if made by a new and inexperienced member. Tutor him after lodge.

7. Learn your charge of office and encourage your officers to do the same. They will follow your example. If you are lax, they will be also.

8. Use tact and be diplomatic; consider the feelings of others, and remember to "think before you speak."

9. Appoint all committees you need, and call on them for reports. They will not function unless you call on them.

10. Make it a point to know what unfinished business is on the books.

11. Prepare a program of activities and keep it current.

12. Be humble enough to seek the advice of more experienced members whenever you are in doubt.

13. Do not be a drifter; put forth your best effort to make a success of your term. think ahead and work to put over your program. You will experience some failures and disappointments. If one thing fails, try another.

14. Never forget to give recognition in open lodge to any Member who renders a service to you or to the lodge.

15. Set a time limit for debate on controversial issues. They can drag out a meeting and fray nerves. Table them or refer them to a committee for future report.

16. Always make visitors feel that they are welcome to your lodge.

Committees

1. If possible, talk to the members you plan to appoint on a committee before you announce them.

2. If a committeeperson does not participate, replace them with somebody who will work.

3. The Noble Grand and Vice Grand must consider themselves as members of all committees and offer to help. Work with your committees, not against them.

4. Call on your committees regularly for reports and when they have accomplished their missions, then discharge them with thanks.

5. Some members have special aptitudes for certain duties. Try to select the right member fur the job.

WV IOOF Manual of Instructions

This Manual of Instruction was approved by the Grand Lodge of West Virginia at the regular session held in the City of Huntington in October, 1958.

Signed by the Committee:

Carl Fortney, P.G.M.
Otway Gunnoe, P. G. M.
Brison E. Kimble, P. G.

This Manual of Instruction was revised by Douglas Cooksey on February 28, 2007.

This Manual of Instruction was approved by the Executive on March 7, 2007.

Russell Swecker, Grand Master
Robert Fisher, Deputy Grand Master
James Varney, Grand Warden
Paul Hevner, Grand Secretary
Larry Ferguson, Grand Treasurer
Kenneth Robey Sr., Junior Past Grand Master