

**MINUTES of the BOARD OF GENERAL PURPOSES**  
**February 27, 2016**  
**Tru-Fel Masonic Hall, Bible Hill**

**Opening:**

The meeting was called to order at 2pm by the Chairman, RW Bro. Gary Patterson. Following an opening prayer, the Chairman welcomed those present and noted that although they were missing some members, this was an important meeting and that there would be no further delays.

**Grand Master Remarks:**

The Grand Master, MW Bro. Peter Ponsford, accompanied by the Deputy Grand Master, Junior Grand Warden and Senior Grand Warden, remarked that he was pleased with the high attendance given the importance of this meeting and how much work they have to do, and he brought greetings on behalf of Grand Lodge and thanked everyone for coming.

**Motion to Deviate from the Order of the Published Agenda:**

It was regularly moved and seconded that the Chairman be permitted to deviate from the order of the published agenda. The question was called and the motion was **Carried**. The Chairman noted that two items would be added, the Condition of the Order Committee and reimbursement of the expenses incurred by the Chairman for copying the material related to the Search for the Grand Secretary. It was noted by VW Bro. David White and VW Bro. Frank Gammell that they would be bringing Notices of Motion to the Board.

**Approval of Minutes:**

It was regularly moved and seconded that the minutes of the November 28, 2015 meeting be approved as circulated. Discussion followed and it was noted by RW Bro Leigh MacConnell that under the Approval of Minutes the wording should be changed to: Bro. MacConnell questions why the book produced by the Grand Librarian, Bro. Gordon MacDonald, containing descriptions of burial places in Nova Scotia of all the Past Grand Masters, is omitted and would like it added. As far as the museum is concerned there are a couple of wrought iron doors installed and keys will be provided to the Grand Lodge office and the Secretaries of the Lodges that meet there. His intent was to acknowledge Bro. MacDonald's time and effort and money put into the project. It was also noted that Bro. MacConnell's name was misspelled on page 9, fourth paragraph.

The question was called and the motion as amended was **Carried**

**Business Arising from the Minutes:**

**Public Relations Plan**

The Chairman briefed the Board on his meeting with MW Bro. Roy Lively during which Bro. Lively informed the Chairman that he has been having some difficulties and he has submitted his resignation from the Public Relations Committee. Since the Committee was not functional, a decision was made to appoint a new Chairman for the Committee and to offer him powers to add to the team as required. The initial appointment was for MW Bro. Reo Matthews as Chairman and it stands that the publisher of The Freemason, MW Bro. Barry Imber will remain on the Committee as will the Grand Secretary. It would be desirable that VW Bro. Kelly Hancock remain on the Committee as well. Approval of the Board was requested, and was regularly moved and seconded. The question was called and the motion was **Carried**.

MW Bro. Matthews was then invited to deliver his initial report.

Bro. Matthews stated that he has sought out members for this Committee that have a tangible asset to public relations, and has secured VW Bro. Kel Hancock for his experience with blogging and social media; he has invited a web designer, Bro. James Logan to be a part of the Committee; Bro. Mel Gosse is also back on the Committee because of his experience with Toastmasters and his ability to communicate effectively verbally and in written form; Bro. Peter Foote from the Valley, who was also on the Committee previously has agreed to once again serve; RW Bro. Bill Hilden from Digby and MW Bro. Barry Imber have also agreed to serve on the Committee. Bro. Matthews then delivered his report which

included a detailed plan regarding Vision, Mission, Structure and Action plans. Copies were requested and they will be available with the minutes and is as below:

The Chairman, Members of the Board of General Purposes, I am standing here before you giving a report about a committee I just became chair several weeks ago. It has been a steep learning curve for me, with a great deal of "bedtime reading". After having read as much background material as was available, I have put the following together as my Report on the PR Committee as I see it.

1. PR Committee must have a Vision & Mission Statements for guidance
2. PR Committee must receive direction from the Board as to its wishes.
3. PR Committee must create a description of its role within the framework of Grand Lodge/Board of General Purposes.
4. PR Committee deals with both internal and external relations, the reference Fraternal Relations Committee should be under its umbrella.
5. PR Committee must create a vehicle whereby it can track what has been successful and what has not been successful and why.
6. PR Committee should canvass other jurisdictions to see how their PR works/role.
7. PR Committee should become a "resource" of assistance to local event organizers/ the contact vehicle for Grand Lodge with media; other sources of advertising. (Constitution p. 20 Chapter IV - Public Relations - To Members, To Public, Not Funding Events - Info About Events)
8. Event plans should be acceptable to PR Committee before submitting for funding.
9. PR Committee ITSELF  
Regular meetings with agenda & minutes Distribute minutes to Chair/Board/Lodges Collect and collate information  
Regular contact with events planner Create a Manual of Resources:
  - a) Website
  - b) Facebook Page
  - c) Calendar of Events
  - d) Twitter
  - e) Parade Float
  - f) Flags/Banners (Where are they? How controlled?) Use throughout jurisdiction
  - g) "Freemason" (Improve distribution/ Newsletter)
  - h) Pamphlets (Organize them -GL Library, Lodges)

This is a formable task to complete; however, it is all doable. I have made an effort to search out committee members who have experience and an interest in Public Relations. Therefore, the committee has a web designer/an experienced blogger/Twitterer/business education/media person (written). In this way, a positive functioning PR Committee will work because we have taken ownership. The "Report on Communications & Public Relations" (Feb. 18, 2014) adopted by the Board, hits all the salient points and is an excellent place to start. It is now up to us to implement these recommendations. It is going to take some time, hard work and dedication. It is not a "Rush Job", as Masons have a tendency to do. It all has to fit into the proper framework and support the Boards wishes; the Constitution and Regulations. Do it correctly the first time!!! "It does make a difference".

The Chairman thanked MW Bro. Matthews for accepting the role of Chairman of the Public Relations Committee.

#### **Notice of Motion:**

VW Bro. David White then put forward a **motion** that \$1,500 from the \$5,000 allotted to the Public Relations Committee be set aside for Grand Master's Levee; motion seconded by RW Bro. Gary Smith. Discussion ensued, during which the Grand Treasurer was consulted, and Bro. Crosby recommended that a motion be made to amend the \$5,000 that's been set aside for the Public Relations Committee, the \$1,500 for the Grand Master's Levee, whatever amount of money needed to repair the float, and the

remainder to remain there until a detailed plan is made for the Public Relations Committee. A discussion ensued, with no resolution. The **motion was withdrawn** by Bro. David White.

Bro. John Cameron then put forth a **motion** that the Public Relations Report be accepted as a detailed plan, thereby meeting the conditions required to release the seconded Public Relations Committee fund. RW Bro. Bill Hilden seconded. The question was called and the motion was **Carried**.

### **Condition of the Order Report**

#### **Mentoring Program**

The Chairman indicated that the Grand Lecturer was examining the mentoring program to determine if he could make recommendations to the Board to make it more effective, but as he was not present, the Deputy Grand Master was called upon to deliver his report on Masonic Renewal, in reference to the guidelines for the District Deputy Grand Masters.

#### **Committee Reports:**

##### **Awards Committee**

There was no report from the Awards Committee

##### **Finance Committee**

MW Bro. Harold Crosby presented the report of the Finance Committee together with the 2015 Financial Statements of Grand Lodge and the proposed Auditors Report. The Draft Auditor's Report will be signed once it has been formally approved. The report states that "in their opinion the Financial Statements present fairly the financial position and the results of the operations of Grand Lodge for 2015". It was regularly moved and seconded that the Financial Report be accepted as presented. Bro. Crosby noted that this acceptance will include two additional recommendations to adopt the report and appoint auditors. The question was called and the motion **Carried**.

There was some discussion on whether or not the motions were approved in the Finance Committee report. Bro. Crosby noted that since the Report was accepted, so were the recommendations contained in that report recommending the appointment of the Auditors for 2016 and approving the Financial Statements for 2015.

##### **Fraternal Relations Committee**

MW Bro. Shane MacFarlane indicated there was nothing new to report and that a meeting will take place in the next thirty days which will include the Grand Secretary and the report will be presented at the May meeting and will be part of the report for the Annual Proceedings.

##### **Heritage Committee**

There was no report from the Heritage Committee.

##### **Long Range Planning**

VW Bro. John Cameron stated that he has a hand written report and that the formal report will be delivered to the Grand Secretary on Monday, March 1. Bro. Cameron went over the present structure of the Long Range Planning Committee, which includes W. Bro. Bill Merriam in Cumberland County, W. Bro. Emile Saad, present at this meeting, RW Bro. Ken Conrad, VW Bro. David Ross and Bro. Cameron. The District Deputy Grand Masters and the District Elected Representatives are ex officio members and therefore included in the Long Range Planning Committee upon election, for the purposes of gathering and disseminating information to their respective Lodges. The core group of five members will do much of the tactical work since it would be cumbersome to include all of the brothers from all over the Province. The information will then be distributed to the District Representatives.

The Project Charter and process overview are amended and will be distributed. Dialogue will continue with three other jurisdictions: Manitoba, BC and Yukon, and Ontario, to benefit from their experience with structure, and effectiveness in Long Range Planning.

To improve internal communication, Bro. Cameron asked for help with crafting a communications piece, to engage the interest of the membership and to underscore "what's in it for them", to be included in the Freemason publication, the deadline being March 15<sup>th</sup>. He asked that the Grand Lodge website also include a similar communication, and that the Grand Lodge continue to post and mail updates on where we are on Long Range Planning. Bro. Cameron also reminded the Board about the 3 hour workshop that was agreed upon.

Bro. Cameron noted that the values we hold dear drive our behaviors, so it will be vital to include a value statement that could be drafted at the Grand Communication, perhaps during a half hour workshop attended by those interested in putting this statement together. He also suggested an updated S.W.O.T. analysis: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. One was done in 2005, which will be attached to the submitted report. Another one hour workshop would be valuable to put together a new S.W.O.T. analysis, preferably also held at the Grand Communication, a matter which he will discuss with the Grand Secretary.

A discussion ensued on the Project Charter and the membership list.

### **Masonic Renewal**

It is their hope that the incoming District Deputy Grand Masters will be schooled by the outgoing District Deputy Grand Masters, and that the new Grand Master call each incoming DDGM. The Deputy Grand Master confirmed that this is what is happening.

Bro. David White indicated that the report circulated at the Halifax District 2 Association meeting, there were objections to the last paragraph and that it should be removed.

The Chairman responded that the report came from the Masonic Renewal committee which is a membership committee and that paragraph was part of the mandate for that particular committee. Bro. White will report back to the District with that information.

### **Ritual and Education**

The Grand Lecturer was not present and no report made.

### **Website Committee**

The Grand Secretary reported that updates are being made and that the site is working properly and is operating well.

### **New Business:**

#### **Ad Hoc Committee on the Review of the Board of General Purposes**

MW Bro. Gerald Riley reported that many submissions had been received and were appreciated. It was determined that the Mission Statement should be Leadership; Education; Fellowship. The Long Range Planning Committee is felt to be the leading Committee. Many comments have been received and added to the discussion.

An extension was requested and granted to consider the many issues. An interim report will be available at the May meeting.

#### **Ad Hoc Search Committee on the Office of Grand Secretary**

The Chairman reported that applications have all been reviewed and found all the applicants to be qualified and now will have to come to election.

MW Bro. Lawrin Armstrong, Chairman of the Board of Jurisprudence, has consulted with all members of the Board and they do not feel the process as they understand it is the proper way to fill the Office. The proposal was to be put before the Board and the candidates present were to be interviewed by the Board, and then a vote called. His opinion is that there would not be enough information for the Board to make a judgment on who should be appointed for this paid position, that it is not fair to the applicants or to the Board. The standard for this process is to call for applications, to vet the applications, to short list them, and then after a detailed individual interview a choice and recommendation is made to hire this person. Bro. Armstrong argued that the Committee was not put together properly. He proposed the following **motion**:

I move that the Board today elect a Committee of no less than three and no more than four regular members of this Board who have not already been involved in the Grand Secretary Search Committee process, but to include at least one Past Grand Master; and that this Committee be charged with the responsibility of vetting all applications for the position of Grand Secretary and within the next ten days to select three candidates which they feel are the most qualified and suitable to fill the position of Grand Secretary; and further that this Committee will interview those three candidates for the position of Grand Secretary and no later than March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016 choose which of them they feel is the most qualified and suitable to fill the position; and that an emergent meeting of the Board be held on Saturday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016 to receive the name of the candidate recommended for appointment; and further that the name of that candidate be recommended to the Grand Master and the incoming Grand Master to be appointed as Grand Secretary effective April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016 to fill the position until June 2017. And further, if the candidate selected is not the incumbent Grand Secretary, that he be appointed as an Assistant to the new Grand Secretary for the Period of April 2<sup>nd</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016 to assist in a smooth transition within the office to the new Grand Secretary.

The motion was seconded and discussion followed.

The Chairman began the discussion, being the person who had put together the Committee. He indicated that on Dec 10<sup>th</sup>, this letter was distributed to every Lodge in the Jurisdiction and that the process was very clear, nor was any official motion put forth from this Board to change that. He believes that the Committee was appropriately put together as outlined in the Constitution in which it is stated that the Board will select the candidate to be recommended to the Grand Master. This position was advertised, applications received and vetted and recommendations were brought back to the Board. He believes that the Committee was appointed properly. He is of the opinion, therefore, that the Board should then make the selection and accept the responsibility for the decision.

A discussion followed in which it was argued that an interview conducted by 40 members would be very difficult for the candidates. The Chairman addressed this concern, confirming that the applicants would not be subjected to 40 questioners, but by one questioner and the Board would evaluate the answers.

The question was called, 15 in favour, motion **carried**.

The Chairman called for nominations to elect members of the Committee: MW Bro. Lawrin Armstrong, MW Bro. Reo Matthews, VW. Bro. David White, and MW Bro. Owen Walton were nominated. All Nominees confirmed their acceptance of the nominations. The Committee will select their own Chair.

The Chairman turned over the packages of materials already accumulated to MW Bro. Armstrong.

Brothers were reminded that all Committee reports for the Condition of the Order Committee are due March 15<sup>th</sup>.

The Grand Secretary noted that all reports have to be vetted by the Condition of the Order then brought back to Grand Lodge to be placed in the Hand Out, so the sooner they're completed the better.

The Chairman called for the appointment of the new committee for the Condition of the Order. The following have been approached and have agreed to serve:

MW Bro. George A. Grant, Chairman, RW Bro. Robin C. Laurie, VW Bro. Frank Gammell, RW Bro. Donald MacLean and RW Bro. Robert Turner. All nominees accepted.

## **Motions**

RW Bro. Leigh MacConnell – Ref The Wearing of the Masonic Apron- motion is **withdrawn**.

MW Bro. Lawrin Armstrong:

## **Motions**

I, Lawrin C. Armstrong, Past Grand Master and Chairman of the Board of Jurisprudence hereby move:

That Regulation I, Constituent Lodges, Section 1 Authority, subsection (d). The subsection now reads:

(d) Every Lodge has the power to enact Bylaws for its own government. All Bylaws shall be consistent with the Constitution and Regulations of the Grand Lodge. All Bylaws and any amendment or repeal thereof, with the exception of a Bylaw setting fees and/or dues, shall be invalid until approved by the Grand Master.

It is suggested that Lodges which have not already done so amend their By-laws with regards to fees and/or annual dues with wording such as the following: *“The fees payable for admission, and the rate of annual dues payable to the Lodge by each member, shall be determined from time to time as required, by the giving of a Notice of Motion at a meeting with the proposed change being published in the summons for the regular meeting at which the proposed change will be considered. The change must be approved by at least two-thirds of the members present and eligible to vote and if approved will be effective at the beginning of the next calendar year following.”*

The motion was seconded, the question was called and the motion was **Carried**.

## **Motion 2:**

That Regulation I, Constitution Lodges, Section 3 Meetings, subsection (a). The subsection now reads:

(a) The regular days and places of meeting of a Lodge shall be stated in the Bylaws and may only be changed by dispensation issued by the Grand Master.

The former Subsection (a) has been split into (a) above and (b) below as follows:

(b) No Lodge shall change its regular place of meeting, unless approved by a vote of its members present in open Lodge, after notice to every member, specifying that such vote shall be taken. A favourable vote to make such change must be approved by the Grand Master before a change is valid.

The above splitting of Subsection (a) into (a) and (b) means that the other remaining subsections (b) to (h) would have to be renumbered (c) to (i).

The motion was seconded, question was called, motion **Carried**.

**Motion 3** was set aside for a moment to address Motion 4, which will affect or nullify Motion 3.

## **Motion 4**

That Regulation V, Discontinuance of Lodges, Sections 1 to 8 was deleted in its entirety and replaced with the following:

1. A Lodge may voluntarily decide to close and discontinue operating at any time.
2. Members of the Lodge shall be entitled to a minimum of two months' notice, in writing, before the meeting at which a motion to close and discontinue operating is to be considered.

3. A motion to close a Lodge and discontinue operating must be approved by no less than seventy-five (75) percent of the members, voting either in person or by proxy.
4. On approval of a motion to close a Lodge and discontinue operating, the Secretary shall forthwith forward to the Grand Secretary a copy of the approved motion; documentary evidence that the required notice was given; and a tabulation of the vote of the members, all of which will be submitted to the Board of Jurisprudence for review, which will report its recommendations to the Grand Master.
5. The decision to close a Lodge and discontinue operating shall become effective when approved by the Grand Master upon the recommendation of the Board of Jurisprudence.
6. Prior to the cessation of operations demits shall be issued to all members in good standing.
7. The Warrant of a Lodge that voluntarily closes and ceases operation shall be placed in temporary darkness and may only be reactivated by a petition to the Grand Master, signed by at least seven former members of that Lodge who are in good standing and residing within the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia, giving the name and number of their present Lodge. A petition to reactivate shall state the names and standing of the members proposed for the office of Worshipful Master, Senior and Junior Warden. If a petition is not received within fifteen years from the date of retirement of the Warrant, the Warrant will be deemed to be surrendered and placed in permanent darkness.

Immediately following the last meeting discontinuing the operation of the lodge, the Secretary of the lodge shall return to Grand Lodge the Warrant, the Lodge Seal and the Minutes Book.

The motion was seconded, question was called, motion **Carried**.

#### **Motion 3:**

That Regulation IV, Consolidation of Lodges, Section 5

**NOTE: This motion was withdrawn as the approval of Motion No. 4 covered this change along with other change to the whole Section.**

#### **Other Business:**

The Chairman moved that the printing costs incurred in the selection process of the Grand Secretary up to this point be covered. The motion was seconded, the question was called and the motion **Carried**.

It was requested that the names of the applicants for the position of Grand Secretary be read out. The question was called and the motion was **Defeated**.

#### **Notices of Motion**

I, Frank Gammell, the Elected Representative from Pictou County District move or cause to be moved at the next general meeting of the Board of General Purposes, that the Necrology Service at the Grand Lodge Annual Communication include the names of all departed Brethren, and not just the names of the departed Grand Lodge Officers.

#### **Explanation:**

Currently the only departing brothers listed at our Grand Lodge Annual Communication are Past Grand Lodge Officers but we all hear and are told that all Masons are part of Grand Lodge. Therefore, all Master Masons as part of Grand Lodge should be properly recognized.

The Grand Master confirmed that this should have been added when the motion was made that all Master Masons be voting members of Grand Lodge. He looks upon it as an oversight.

The Grand Secretary responded that it is an agenda item for the Grand Master.

The Chairman asked that Bro. Gammell document this request in a letter to the Grand Secretary, and Bro. Gammell agreed to do so and the motion was **withdrawn**.

There is an emergent meeting called for **April 2, 2016** at the Tru-Fel Masonic Hall in Bible Hill commencing at 1 pm for the sole purpose of selecting the Grand Secretary to serve until June 2017.

The next regular meeting of the Board of General Purposes will be held on **May 14, 2016** at the Tru-Fel Masonic Hall in Bible Hill commencing at 11 am.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned on a regular motion at 4:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Northup  
Grand Secretary, P.T.