



THE STATED MEETING

The Function of the Master

During your term as Master of your Lodge, many types of meetings will be held. The primary function of the Master is to see that the meetings are properly managed and effective. Properly planned and executed meetings result in members' favorably participating and the reverse is the result of poorly planned and managed meetings.

The Monitor

As Master of your Lodge, you should memorize the Monitorial work for the conducting of the stated meetings. That is not to say that you can't have an agenda before you, however the wording from the monitor should be memorized so that you may efficiently conduct your stated meetings.

The Business of the Lodge

We know that every Lodge must hold a monthly stated meeting for the regular transaction of business. This is the primary forum by which the business of Freemasonry is conducted in your Lodge. While you make decisions; committees meet and agree on specific issues; nothing can be firmly resolved until it has been brought before and voted on by the brethren at a stated meeting. An astute Master will realize the limits of his authority and seek approval of the membership, prior to proceeding on any new policy and/or practice.

The Duty and Power of the Master

The most important duty of the Master is to learn the art of being a gracious presiding officer. **Under Masonic law, the Master has more power than the presiding officer of any other organization. The use of such power, however, in an autocratic manner would not make a meeting attractive.** The Master must be impartial and fair and, at the same time, maintain his position as the final authority. The Master should always encourage all brethren to take part in the discussion of business. Encouragement by the Master will do much to bring about a greater interest by the member on the sidelines.

Stated Meeting Planning

It is essential for you to have a "pre-meeting" with at least the Secretary of the Lodge and hopefully the other officers, to plan your agenda for the business that is to be transacted. **Do not leave agenda planning to anyone except yourself.** Once the agenda is developed, make sufficient copies so that the Officers and Committee Chairmen know what is happening. It is also suggested that copies be placed on the Tiler's desk.



Prior to the Stated Meeting

It is recommended that preceding your Stated Meeting, a dinner or other social program be held. This will encourage the members of your Lodge to attend. It is during this time that special announcements and/or programs may be held (such as entertainment, presentation of awards, discussion of special Grand Lodge Programs, announcements of upcoming events, and Members news and information, etc.).

The Order of Business

The Order of Business is fixed by our By-Laws. Follow that order and do not deviate. With a prepared agenda, your time will be effective. The following is the Order of Business:

1. Reading of the Minutes
2. Reports of Investigating Committees
3. Balloting
4. Reception of Applications
5. Miscellaneous and Unfinished Business (includes Bills and Communications, Reports of Special and other Committees, and New Business)
6. Conferring of Degrees

Make sure you know what business the Secretary will present at the Stated Meeting. See that this is on your prepared agenda. The minutes of the previous meetings should be concise, brief, and cover all aspects of debate.



Committee Reports

You are responsible to know what committees are ready to report at the Stated Meeting. Prior to the meeting, it is suggested that you contact the committee chairman to indicate that you will want a report and he is ready with a brief and concise report. If action is necessary, make sure that he has someone (either himself or another committee member) ready to make the necessary motion to implement the recommendation. It would be appropriate for the committees to make written reports so that they may be filed with the Secretary to be held in the archives of the Lodge.

Parliamentary Procedure

When that portion of the Stated Meeting dealing with miscellaneous and unfinished business is reached, it will be necessary that you have some knowledge of parliamentary law. Parliamentary law is the accepted code of rules for governing the conduct of a deliberative body or assembly. It governs in a Masonic Lodge in so far as it is not repugnant to the peculiar character of the Institution. It is necessary, therefore, that the Master has some knowledge of parliamentary law. An extensive study is not necessary.

The Master should know some of the fundamentals of procedure as modified by Masonic Law. If the Master has had no experience in action as a presiding officer, he should make an effort to acquire this knowledge prior to the year he serves as Master. Examination of Roberts Rules of Order and Masonic Parliamentary Law will give a Master sufficient information to avoid parliamentary difficulties.

Presiding officers should always remember to keep a cool head, do not get involved in personalities, use good common sense and remember that “peace and harmony and charity of thought and deed are paramount to all else.”

Masonic Law

Merely knowing the procedure to conduct a meeting will not save a Master from difficulty if he is totally ignorant of substantive Masonic Law. The Master should know if a proposal or contemplated action is contrary to the established law of Masonry in our jurisdiction. The Master is responsible to see that his Lodge conducts its affairs according to the Constitution of Grand Lodge of Kentucky.

All Masonic Law in this Grand Lodge jurisdiction is collected in a single volume of the Book of Constitutions. Therefore it is incumbent upon the Master (and senior officers) to become familiar with the Book of Constitutions as no Master can effectively direct the affairs of his Lodge without knowledge of Masonic Law. This is not to say, however, that a Master cannot seek advice when unable to decide a question. He must first make a conscientious effort to determine the answer.



SUMMARY

In summary, to conduct a Stated Meeting that is effective the following is suggested:

- Be organized (prepare an agenda).
- Have a pre-meeting with at least the Secretary.
- Verify what business the Secretary will bring up.
- Make sure all reports are concise.
- Know what committees will report.
- Open Lodge (ritual) on time.
- Start business portion on time.

The meetings will become something the brethren will want to attend when you make them interesting, short and worthwhile.



A SCRIPT FOR CONDUCTING A STATED MEETING

Reading of Minutes

Brethren, this being our stated meeting for the month of (Month), the first order of business will be the reading of the minutes of our last Stated and subsequent Special meetings.

(Secretary reads the minutes)

Brethren, you have listened to the reading of the minutes of our last Stated Meeting; if there are no errors or omissions, they will stand approved as read.

(pause)

There being none, Brother Secretary, it is so ordered.

(Gavel)

Or, if the minutes were corrected,

If there are no further errors or omissions, they will stand approved as corrected.

(Gavel)

(Secretary reads minutes of Special Meetings, if applicable)

Brethren, you have listened to the reading of the minutes of the special meeting of (Date); if there are no errors of omissions, they will stand approved as read.

(proceed as above)



Reports of investigating committees

Do we have a visitor who would be kind enough to retire and take our Tiler's place while we vote?

(If no visitor is present, vote is taken up to and including Junior Deacon, who will then go out and relieve Tiler. Tiler enters Lodge room. Master must then re-read all Investigating Committee reports. Tiler votes. He remains inside until result of ballot is announced. He then retires and Junior Deacon returns to the Lodge).

Brethren, the committee upon the application of Mr. (Full Name) to receive the degrees of Masonry in this Lodge (or, upon the application of Brother (Full Name) for affiliation with this Lodge) has made an unfavorable report, and I declare the applicant rejected.

(Gavel)

and/or

The committee upon the application of Mr. (Full Name) to receive the degrees of Masonry in this Lodge (or, upon the application of Brother (Full Name) for affiliation with this Lodge) has made a full and favorable report (or, favorable report).

Balloting

(Master rises)

Brethren: We are about to ballot upon the application of Mr. (Full Name). his age is (Age); occupation (Occupation); residence (Residence); recommended by (two recommenders) and refers to (names of references).

Brother Senior Deacon present the ballot.

(S.D. rises, gives sign and presents ballot box to Master, then stands facing the East on the Floor just north of the Master's pedestal)

(Master displays ballot box to Senior and Junior Wardens who vote without standing or giving sign)

(After each Warden has cast his vote, the Senior Deacon places ballot box on left page of the Bible, makes sign and votes, then stands at north side of altar, facing the East)

The brethren of _____ Lodge No. ____ will approach the altar and deposit their ballots upon the application of Mr. (Full Name) to receive the degrees of Masonry in this Lodge (or, upon the application of Brother (Full



Name) for affiliation with this Lodge). Remember that balls elect and cubes reject. Be careful how you vote.

(Secretary leads the line. Junior Deacon is last to vote.)

Have all the brethren of _____Lodge No.____ voted? If so, I declare the ballot closed.

(Gavel)

(S.D. returns ballot box to Junior Warden and Senior Warden for their inspection, then stands at north side of altar while Wardens report. Senior Deacon then returns ballot box to Master. Master rises, receives ballot box, examines it and proceeds as follows:)

If favorable

Brethren, you have elected Mr. (Full Name) to receive the degrees of Masonry in this Lodge (or, you have elected Brother (Full Name) to membership in this Lodge by affiliation.

(Gavel. Master destroys ballot.)

If unfavorable

Brethren, you have rejected the application of Mr. (or Brother) (Full Name) to become a member of this Lodge.

If only one cube

(Master, without declaring results, says)

Brethren, to correct a possible mistake, we will again ballot upon the application of Mr. (Full Name) to receive the degrees of Masonry in this Lodge (or, upon the application of Brother (Full Name) for affiliation with this Lodge.

(proceed with ballot as above)



Reception of applications

Brother Secretary, are there any applications?

(Secretary will read the applications)

A proper investing committee will be assigned.

Miscellaneous and unfinished business

Reports of Special Committees

Bills and communications

(after Secretary reads bills)

Brethren, you have listened to the reading of our bills; what is your pleasure?

(Wait for motion and second, then)

Brethren, it has been regularly moved and seconded that we pay our bills. Is there any discussion?

(pause)

All in favor will say AYE.

(pause)

Those opposed, No

(pause)

The Ayes have it. The motion is carried.

(Secretary reads communications)

New business

Conferring of degrees (if any)

Close Lodge