



# Grand Lodge of Nebraska

## Area Meetings

October 2021



### Discussion Items

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# 2022 Grand Lodge Session

(Schedule is tentative and subject to change)

**I. Location** – Younes Conference Center, Kearney, Nebraska

**II. Dates** – February 3-5, 2022

**III. Tentative Agenda – Advance purchase of a ticket is required for all meal functions**

Depending on the COVID-19 restrictions at the time of Annual Communication, meetings, meals, and breakout sessions may need last minute adjustments. As much time as possible will be provided for any necessary changes.

(a) **Thursday**

*Past Grand Masters Lunch*

*Past Grand Masters Ladies and Widows Lunch*

*Grand Master's Banquet*

(b) **Friday**

*Awards Breakfast*

*Red Cross of Constantine Breakfast*

*Public Opening*

*Business Session Begins -- Election of 2022 Grand Lodge Officers and Voting on Grand Master's Recommendations may begin*

*Men's Membership Lunch*

*Secretaries Lunch and Workshop*

*Veteran Freemasons Lunch (Members only – Masons for more than 20 years)*

*Ladies Luncheon and Program*

*Grand Lodge Workshops*

*2022 Masters and Wardens Meetings*

*Membership Banquet*

(c) **Saturday**

*Masonic Education Breakfast*

*Business Session Reconvenes -- Voting on Grand Master's Recommendations*

*Grand Lodge Officer Installation*

*Installation Reception*

**IV. Credentials and Proxies**

- (a) Credentials for each voting delegate at Grand Lodge must be signed by the Secretary of his Lodge and bear the lodge seal. (See sample on last page of packet).
- (b) If credentials are not properly signed and sealed, voting will not be allowed for that delegate.
- (c) To be accepted and voting credentials issued, a Proxy must be signed by the officer specifically designating his proxy/appointee. Unsigned or incomplete proxies will not be honored by the Credentials Committee and credentials will not be issued.
- (d) The first paragraph of the Credentials Card states: "It is important that your Lodge register Credentials every year at the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge. Section 2-514 of the Grand Lodge Bylaws states that failure: '...to be represented at two successive annual communications...' could result in the forfeiture of the Lodge Charter."

**V. Balloting**

All Balloting at the 2022 Annual Communication, including the Election of Grand Lodge Officers, Grand Masters Recommendations and Member Resolutions, will be done by electronic means. Electronic balloting devices will be checked out to each delegate by the Credentials Committee upon registration. The devices must be returned to the Credentials Committee upon the completion of Annual Communication. Any devices not returned will be billed to the lodge at \$200 each.

**VI. Ladies are requested and encouraged to attend**

A program will be provided for the ladies during the Friday Ladies Lunch.

# Legislative Procedure in Nebraska

## Introduction

The actions of the Grand Lodge are governed by the rules and regulations written in the publication entitled The Constitution and Bylaws of the Grand Lodge A·F· & A·M· of Nebraska. A copy of this publication can be purchased by any member of the fraternity. Occasionally, the rules and regulations contained in this publication will need to be revised. Any member of the fraternity who is a delegate and/or member of Grand Lodge may propose legislation which changes the content of this publication, provided that the proper procedures for submitting legislation are followed.

## Forms of Legislation

There are three ways to change the rules and regulations contained in The Constitution and Bylaws of the Grand Lodge A·F· & A·M· of Nebraska:

1. Resolutions amending the Constitution
2. Resolutions amending the Bylaws
3. Grand Master's Recommendations amending the Bylaws

The proper procedure for submitting each form of legislation is as follows:

### Procedure for Amending the Constitution

The proposed constitutional amendment must be presented to the Grand Secretary in writing prior to the close of the Annual Communication in February so that it may be read into the minutes of the Annual Communication. A proposed constitutional amendment must be signed by at least five members of the Grand Lodge. **In order to determine who can sign a proposed constitutional amendment to the constitution, examine "Members of the Grand Lodge" further in this Legislative Procedure section.**

A proposed constitutional amendment must lay over one year after it has been read before it can be voted on.

Prior to the next Annual Communication, the Jurisprudence Committee will meet and indicate whether the constitutional amendment is in proper form and therefore is eligible to be voted on at the next Annual Communication. If the Jurisprudence Committee finds the constitutional amendment to be in proper form, a copy of the proposed constitutional amendment will be mailed to each subordinate lodge during the year.

The question whether or not to consider the amendment at the next Annual Communication must be put to the membership of each subordinate lodge. The question must lay over for one month before a vote can be taken. The vote is not an indication of whether the members of the lodge favor the amendment, but the vote is an indication of whether the lodge is in favor of having the constitutional amendment brought to the floor of the next Annual Communication for a vote. The result of the vote in each subordinate lodge to consider an amendment must be communicated under the lodge's seal to the Grand Secretary before the first day of December preceding the next Annual Communication. If a majority of all subordinate lodges vote to consider the amendment, it will appear on the legislation agenda of the next Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge.

In order for an amendment to pass during the Annual Communication of Grand Lodge, it must receive a favorable vote by a majority of the members present and voting.

### Procedure for Amending the Bylaws via Resolution

The Bylaws may be amended either by a resolution presented by the members of Grand Lodge or by a recommendation presented by the Grand Master. This section covers the procedure for a resolution proposed by members of the Grand Lodge. The proposed written amendment must be presented to the Grand Secretary prior to the close of the Annual Communication in February so that it may be read into the minutes of the Annual Communication. A proposed amendment must be signed by at least five members of the Grand Lodge. **In order to determine who can sign a proposed amendment to the bylaws, examine "Members of the Grand Lodge" below.**

A proposed amendment must lay over one year after it has been read. The only exception to the one year time period occurs when unanimous consent is given by the Grand Lodge to consider and act upon a proposed amendment at the current Grand Lodge Session. In the interest of allowing ample time for subordinate lodges to consider a proposed amendment, one or more Grand Lodge Officers may vote against a motion waiving the one year layover.

Prior to the next Annual Communication, the Jurisprudence Committee will meet and indicate whether the amendment is in proper form and therefore is eligible to be voted on at the next Annual Communication.

In order for an amendment to pass during the Annual Communication of Grand Lodge, it must receive a favorable vote by two-thirds of the members present and voting.

## **Procedure for Amending the Bylaws via Grand Master Recommendation**

Grand Master Recommendations are printed annually in the Grand Master's communication address. They can be formulated at any time after the Grand Master has been installed in office. Consequently, any member of the fraternity can approach the Grand Master and suggest an item for legislation. Since these are recommendations from the Grand Master, he will have the final determination as to what legislation is presented at the Annual Communication under his name.

All recommendations that the Grand Master intends to make must be submitted to the Jurisprudence Committee, all Grand Lodge Officers, and the Masters of all subordinate lodges, not less than 45 days prior to the opening of the next Annual Communication. Grand Master recommendations will appear on the legislative agenda of Grand Lodge unless the Jurisprudence Committee determines that they are not in proper form to be voted on.

In order for an amendment to pass during the annual communication of Grand Lodge, it must receive a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting.

## **Members of the Grand Lodge**

The members of Grand Lodge consist of the following Nebraska Masons:

- Grand Master
- Deputy Grand Master
- Grand Senior Warden
- Grand Junior Warden
- Grand Secretary
- Grand Senior Deacon
- Grand Junior Deacon
- Grand Chaplain
- Grand Orator
- Grand Historian
- Grand Custodian
- Grand Marshal
- Grand Senior Steward
- Grand Junior Steward
- Grand Tyler
- Grand Musician, if appointed
- Personal Representatives of the Grand Master
- Each Worshipful Master, Senior Warden, Junior Warden and Secretary of a Nebraska Subordinate Lodge or their proxies\*, registered with Credentials at Annual Communication
- Past Grand Masters belonging to a Nebraska Subordinate Lodge
- Past Deputy Grand Masters belonging to a Nebraska Subordinate Lodge

**The Masons listed above are the only members who can sign any piece of legislation, and must be registered with Credentials to qualify.**

\*It is important to note that a proxy for the Master, Wardens and Secretary must come from such officers' subordinate lodge and be a Master Mason in good standing of such subordinate lodge.

# 2021-2022 Grand Master's Recommendations

These Recommendations are in PRELIMINARY form and are subject to change due to input received at these Area Meetings and review by the Jurisprudence Committee. The final packet will be sent to the Lodges and Jurisprudence Committee no later than 45 days prior to the opening of Grand Lodge.

## GRAND MASTER'S RECOMMENDATION NO. 1

Amend paragraph (b) of **Section 2-1601 – DEFINITIONS** by adding and deleting certain language, so that such sections, as amended, will read as follows, with the new language shown in bold and italicized and the deleted language stricken.

**Sec. 2-1601 – DEFINITIONS** – The following definitions shall apply to this chapter:

(b) “Period of membership” shall be determined by computing the aggregate time a Master Mason shall have been a member in good standing in a subordinate lodge of this Grand Jurisdiction and a member in good standing in a subordinate lodge of any other Grand Jurisdiction given fraternal recognition by the Grand Lodge A.:F.: & A.:M.: of Nebraska, if such be the case. Periods of suspension for non-payment of dues less than three years shall be included when making the aforesaid computation, and periods of ~~dual~~ *plural* membership shall be computed on the basis of membership in the parent lodge only. Expulsions for any reason or suspensions except for non-payment of dues less than three years shall be deducted when computing the number of years a member has been in good standing. All subordinate lodges of this jurisdiction shall cooperate with any Master Mason in attempting to establish his period of membership and said lodges shall also cooperate with the Grand Lodge in all matters relating thereto.

**RATIONALE:** This is a housekeeping issue to bring this section into alignment with Section 2-408 – PLURAL MEMBERSHIPS with regard to members holding membership in two or more lodges. This will allow for all memberships in two or more lodges to be referenced with one word instead of dual for two and plural for three. The change will also streamline reporting of the events in the membership database.

## GRAND MASTER'S RECOMMENDATION NO. 2

Amend **Section 2-1602 – YEAR PIN AWARDS** by adding and deleting certain language, so that such sections, as amended, will read as follows, with the new language shown in bold and italicized and the deleted language stricken.

**Sec. 2-1602 – YEAR PIN AWARDS** – All Master Masons in good standing who have been such for periods of fifty, sixty, *sixty-five* and seventy *and seventy-five* years, respectively, and who are members of subordinate lodges in this jurisdiction, shall be entitled upon application by the Lodge, to receive from the Grand Lodge a suitable year pin, which shall be selected and provided by the Grand Secretary and paid for out of the Grand Lodge funds. Subordinate lodges are authorized to present a suitable year pin to Master Masons who are members in good standing of the subordinate lodge, for a period of twenty-five years, at the expense of the subordinate lodge presenting the same.

**RATIONALE:** This is an administrative addition to include the new awards that were added a few years ago and are already in the Ceremonies Manual.

## GRAND MASTER'S RECOMMENDATION NO. 3

Amend **Section 2-501 – MEETING PLACES** by adding and deleting certain language, so that such sections, as amended, will read as follows, with the new language shown in bold and italicized and the deleted language stricken.

**Sec. 2 501 – MEETING PLACES** – A subordinate lodge cannot meet in a private house, ~~in a hall over a saloon, or over or in a public dance hall.~~ A lodge room in a dedicated hall may never be used as a public hall or by organizations whose principles are un-Masonic. ~~for public dancing. It may, however, be used by other orders if their principles are not unmasonic.~~

**RATIONALE:** Portions of the present language are out of date in today's society. Lodges are now generating income by renting portions of their buildings to outside organizations. They are using their judgment to establish the allowable usages and restrictions of the facility in the rental agreement.

#### **GRAND MASTER'S RECOMMENDATION NO. 4**

Amend the second paragraph of **Section 2-504 – CALLING OFF AND ON** by adding certain language, so that such sections, as amended, will read as follows, with the new language shown in bold and italicized.

**Sec. 2 504 – CALLING OFF AND ON** – The conferring of degrees shall be conducted by the subordinate lodge opened upon the degree then under consideration. To pass from a lodge of one degree to a lodge of another degree, the lodge may be first called to refreshment and then opened in the degree desired. The closing of a lodge in one degree also closes the lodge opened on all inferior degrees.

A lodge cannot be called off from one day or night to another day or night, except in cases of trials *and Grand Lodge Annual Communications carrying over multiple days.*

**RATIONALE:** This additional language is to clarify that, although subordinate lodges are prohibited from calling off from degree work on one day and resuming the next, the Grand Lodge of Nebraska is allowed to call off from Annual Communication business from one day to the next.

#### **GRAND MASTER'S RECOMMENDATION NO. 5**

Amend **PART TWO, CHAPTER IV** to add a new **Section 2-409** to read as follows, with the new language shown in bold and italicized:

***Sec. 2-409 – TEMPORARY SAFEGUARD SUSPENSION – The membership of any member who is charged with a crime classified as a felony; a crime against a child, regardless of severity; a crime of domestic violence, regardless of severity; or a crime of a sexual nature, regardless of severity; or issued a protection, restraining, or no-contact order as a result of or in conjunction with any of the above, as defined and classified by the Nebraska Revised Statutes, the United States Code, or the criminal laws or code of any other state of the Nation; shall, without action, be immediately suspended upon receipt of any such charge. Such suspension of membership shall persist for the entire duration of the corresponding criminal investigation and legal case.***

***During such time the member shall not be eligible to petition for reinstatement. Upon a showing by official documentation that the member has been acquitted or found innocent of all criminal charges arising from the criminal case causing his suspension, the Grand Lodge of Nebraska shall automatically reinstate the membership of said member unless the member remains subject to pending Masonic charges arising out of the criminal case at issue.***

**RATIONALE:** This change is in response to an increasing number of members being charged with, and eventually convicted of, crimes that undoubtedly violate the morals of our institution and present a danger and significant liability to our Fraternity, youth groups, and appendant bodies and our reputation as a Craft. As the duration of the prosecution and resolution of criminal cases continues to increase, it is necessary to protect our members and youth during the pendency of such cases by implementing a mechanism to suspend the membership of a Mason charged with a serious crime and prevent his attendance at, and participation in, our functions and those of our youth groups and appendant bodies until such time, if ever, as he is found innocent of such crimes.

# CREDENTIAL INSTRUCTIONS

It is important that your Lodge register Credentials every year at the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge. Section 2-514 of the Grand Lodge Bylaws states that failure: "...to be represented at two successive annual communications..." could result in the forfeiture of the Lodge Charter.

**Instructions for correctly completing the Credential Card (on reverse):**

**1. Elected Officer is attending Annual Communication:**

If the Officer to whom the Credential Card is issued will attend Annual Communication, *only Section A* is completed, signed and sealed.

- OR -

**2. Elected Officer will assign a Proxy to attend Annual Communication:**

If the Officer cannot attend Annual Communication, then *Sections A and B must be completed*, signed and sealed for the proxy, including the name of the person appointed as proxy, and signed by the officer to whom issued.

The Credential must be surrendered to the Credentials Committee at Annual Communication by the Officer or his proxy in order for the Lodge to be registered and to have a vote in Grand Lodge or a voice on the floor.

**Reminder:** A current dues card is required for admission to the Lodge room at Annual Communication.

**Take your completed Credential with you to  
Annual Communication or you will not be entitled to vote.**

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**Section A:**

## CREDENTIAL

**THIS IS TO CERTIFY:**

That \_\_\_\_\_ is the duly elected and installed

W.:M.:  S.:W.:  J.:W.:  Secretary of \_\_\_\_\_ Lodge No. \_\_\_\_\_,  
located at \_\_\_\_\_, Nebraska, and is entitled to all the rights and privileges of the  
Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Nebraska to be held at Kearney, Nebraska, beginning the first  
Friday in February.

*Lodge Seal*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lodge Secretary

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**Section B:**

## PROXY

I hereby appoint \_\_\_\_\_ to serve as my proxy at the Annual  
Communication of the Grand Lodge as stated above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Elected Officer

# Additional Discussion Items

## Topics:

- **Annual Communication**
  - Planning to return to open session of the past
  - Schedule and activities may need to be “adjusted” depending on COVID-19 restrictions
- **Lodge Revitalization Grant Program**
  - For 2021, one \$1,000.00 and two \$500.00 grants are available
  - Raise a matching amount from a new lodge project and apply for grant
  - Application available on the Grand Lodge website.
- **Lodge Degree Proficiency**
  - If you are planning to certify your lodge in the degrees, you are running out of time. Reach out to your Deputy Grand Custodian to get these scheduled
- **Proficiency Tools**
  - Mini-ciphers for EA & FC Proficiency Questions & Answers are available for order from the Grand Lodge Office
  - Ciphers can be used for practice and teaching, but not in open lodge when demonstrating proficiency
  - Proficiency requires answering questions in each degree’s Proficiency Manual and displaying adequate proficiency in answering questions in Q & A. (Proficient – NOT perfect)
  - Continuous floorwork manual is extensively updated and available online
  - Round-table practices are strongly encouraged
  - Updated Balloting and Installation procedures are in Ceremonies Manual (also online)
- **Membership Restoration**
  - Rusty Trowel degree is in Ceremonies Manual – use it!
  - Titanium Trowel award is new – equivalent of Artificer award, but for returning brethren and their mentor. A beautiful pin has been created. Contributes to Rock Maul Award
- **Consider Supporting the Grand Lodge Financially**
  - Nebraska Masonic Endowment Fund – purchase a brick, estate donations, donations
  - Masonic Homes and Foundations continue to need our support

## Grand Master’s 2021 Priorities:

- Guard the West Gate by selecting quality men and conducting effective investigations
- Deliver a meaningful initiatory experience
- Provide a dedicated and well-informed mentor
- Include the new Mason in regular communications, degrees, and social activities

## Open Discussion:

- What can the Grand Lodge provide to help your lodge?
- What can the Grand Lodge do differently to assist Masonry in Nebraska?
- What Grand Lodge programs and/or policies should be implemented, or discarded, or adjusted to assist your lodge?
- If you could change one thing associated with Grand Lodge, what would you change?