



Brother Secretary,

Please find the proposed by-law changes to be considered at the 160<sup>th</sup> Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Kansas at the Capitol Plaza Hotel and Convention Center in Topeka KS on March 18<sup>th</sup> 2016.

Please notify the master of your lodge that these have arrived and arrange for their reading and discussion in your lodge. It is my belief that again this year, there will be no amendments allowed from the floor, so the proposals should stand on their own as written. Of course the Grand Master always has control over the Annual Communication and may, if necessity dictates, make exceptions on how this process is handled.

Please check your next edition of the Kansas Mason for further information about the Annual Communication in March, as well as the Grand Lodge website at; [www.kansasmason.org](http://www.kansasmason.org), where you will be able to find online registration information for the Annual Communication after the first of the year.

I would encourage that your lodge make it a priority to send a representative to the Annual Meeting in March, as you well know, the Grand Master and his Grand Lodge Officers are taking an especial interest in those lodges that attend, and equally important what lodges don't. The Grand Master does not want any more lodges to make the list of lodges that haven't had a representative at the Annual Communication in 3 or more years. If however your lodge hits that magic number, you can expect a call from the Grand Master inquiring about the reason.

As always Brother Secretary, if you have any questions or need assistance with something, please contact us at your earliest convenience.

So, in closing, I hope each and every one of you has a very Joyous Holiday Season and a most Happy New Year!

Sincerely and Fraternaly,

Tracy L. Bloom, PGM  
Grand Secretary  
M.:W.: Grand Lodge of A.F. & A.M. of Kansas

**Proposed changes to the Constitution and By-Laws of the  
M.:W.: Grand Lodge of A.F. & A. M. of Kansas submitted to  
the Grand Secretary by November 1 2015 and approved by  
the Jurisprudence committee for consideration at the 160<sup>th</sup>  
Annual Communication on March 18<sup>th</sup> 2016**

**CONSTITUTION**

**ARTICLE III**

**Grand Lodge Fund, Salaries and Allowances**

2-301. **Grand Lodge Per Capita Tax and Special Assessment-** Every Lodge Working under a Warrant of Constitution shall pay annually to the Grand Lodge a Per Capita Tax of ~~\$24.00~~ ~~\$30.00~~ on the roll of membership for the preceding year, commencing January 1, ~~2007~~ 2017, and an additional \$5.00 per year thereafter for 6 years, after which the Per Capita Tax will be \$60.00. \$2.00 of which will be used for the Kansas Mason. \$1.50 shall be allocated to the Kansas Masonic Home. Furthermore \$0.50 per year shall go to The George Washington Masonic National Memorial. **Provided**, That any increase in the per capita tax shall become effective on the Lodge roll of membership determined on December 31st, the following year. (Amended 1974, 1978, 1982, 1988, 1991, 1993, 1996, 2003, 2006, 2014.)

The per-capita tax shall not be assessed against the members, but shall be included in the amount for annual dues, and be paid out of the General Fund to the Lodge. Any Lodge which neglects or refuses to pay all its annual per-capita tax or any special assessments on or before the 31<sup>st</sup> day of January in each year, or which shall fail or neglect to transmit to the Grand Secretary its Annual Report on or before the 31<sup>st</sup> day of January of each year shall not be entitled to representation in the Grand Lodge at the Annual Communication following such failure. The postmark on the envelope shall be accepted as evidence of the date of transmittal; and in all such cases of failure, the Grand Secretary shall notify the Lodge to that effect and shall not issue credentials to such Lodge. (Amended 1955, 1962, 1967, 1992 and 2015). **Provided**, That no per-capita tax shall be paid by the Masonic Home Lodge for any of its members who are also members of the Masonic Home. (Adopted 1975). *Cross-Reference:* Constitution, Art. IV; Art. IX, Sec. 9; By-Laws, Sec. 4-306.

**Rationale:** With declining Membership and inflation, the Grand Lodge is experiencing an average adjusted loss in annual revenue of approximately \$33,000. (*Calculated based on per capita and inflation values since 2008*) To compensate for this loss, the COA and Grand Lodge Office have reduced their committed annual expenditures by \$40,000 to \$50,000. In addition to reducing other expenditures, the Grand Lodge has been holding down cost in other ways such as; holding wage increase in check, premium Blue Cross Blue Shield insurance policy provided to the employees of the Grand Lodge has been replaced with one that is less expensive for the Grand Lodge but in turn requires much higher out of pocket from the employees.

With projected increases in necessary expenditures such as Gas, Electricity, Water, Telephone, Internet, Office Supplies, Office Equipment, Security and Building Maintenance and the projected decrease in revenue due to decreasing Membership, the trend of reducing expenses to match reduced income is no longer sustainable. At this time, we must increase income in

order to meet our financial commitments. Based on projected Membership numbers, the proposed incremental Per Capita Tax increase will allow the Grand Lodge to once again have a balanced budget and improve the programs, support, services and quality of the Masonic Experience in this Grand Jurisdiction.

### Example of Per Capita Tax Increase

Membership numbers in the below table were based upon the current membership trend predictions.

Year	Number of Members	per capita tax	Totals	predicted Operating budget	Surplus/Deficit
2015	19260	24	\$ 462,240.00	\$ 500,000.00	\$ (37,760.00)
2016	18428	24	\$ 442,272.00	\$ 480,000.00	\$ (37,728.00)
2017	17596	30	\$ 527,880.00	\$ 500,000.00	\$ 27,880.00
2018	16764	35	\$ 586,740.00	\$ 510,000.00	\$ 76,740.00
2019	15932	40	\$ 637,280.00	\$ 520,000.00	\$ 117,280.00
2020	15100	45	\$ 679,500.00	\$ 520,000.00	\$ 159,500.00
2021	14268	50	\$ 713,400.00	\$ 520,000.00	\$ 193,400.00
2022	13436	55	\$ 738,980.00	\$ 520,000.00	\$ 218,980.00
2023	12604	60	\$ 756,240.00	\$ 520,000.00	\$ 236,240.00
2024	11772	60	\$ 706,320.00	\$ 520,000.00	\$ 186,320.00
2025	10940	60	\$ 656,400.00	\$ 520,000.00	\$ 136,400.00
2026	10108	60	\$ 606,480.00	\$ 520,000.00	\$ 86,480.00
2027	9276	60	\$ 556,560.00	\$ 520,000.00	\$ 36,560.00
2028	8444	60	\$ 506,640.00	\$ 520,000.00	\$ (13,360.00)
Number of members is based on the trend of losing 832 net members per year					

Respectfully submitted  
Council of Administration

## BY-LAW

### CHAPTER TWO ARTICLE II

#### Communications of Grand Lodge

*Cross-Reference: Constitution, Art. VII.*

2-201. **Annual Communication**--The Annual Communication shall be held at such hour on the ~~third Friday~~ third Saturday of March in each year as the Grand Master may appoint, and at such place as may be designated at the preceding Annual Communication, or as the Grand Master may order; and no member reported present at any Annual Communication shall absent himself from any session without leave from the Grand Master of Grand Lodge. (Amended 1955, 1969, 1982). *Cross-Reference* : Constitution, Art. VII, Sec. 1.

**Rationale:** The Annual Communication being held on Friday can create a burden on our Member's responsibilities to themselves and to their families because, in many cases, they are required to take time away from their jobs to attend the Friday session of the Annual Communication. With the current trend of concluding all the required business of the Annual Communication in a single session and with the repeal of By-Law sect. 3-416. Sunday Ceremonies in 2014, this is the time to lessen the burden on our Brothers who would otherwise have to take time away from their work in order to attend to the duties of our Craft.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Mikel J. Stoops  
Past Master of De Soto Lodge #40

## BY-LAWS

### CHAPTER THREE CONSTITUENT LODGES

#### ARTICLE VI Miscellaneous

3-604. **Use of Cipher in Tyled Meetings Conferral of Degrees**--No Brother shall use the official cipher while engaged in the ceremony of Opening/Closing a Tyled meeting or in conferring any Degree, ~~or~~ while having a speaking part participating in such ceremony. Furthermore commencing on January 1, 2017 and from thence forward, no Brother having a speaking part in the Opening/Closing Ceremony of a Tyled meeting or in conferring a Degree may have upon his person the Official Cipher. The Cipher may continue to be used as a study tool while practicing such work in un-Tyled meetings.

**Rationale:** The focus of all Brothers in the purview of the M.W. Grand Lodge of Kansas should be to "Excellence in Esoteric Work" and to furthering Masonic Education. Therefore I believe this by-law needs to be redefined to reflect those goals. Although there is no current prohibition on use of the Cipher during the opening/closing of Tyled Meetings I believe that the law should specifically prohibit such use. Allowing non-participating Brothers to have the Cipher open and to follow the Work as it is conducted will assist them in learning the Work as most Lodges do not have the ability to teach the Work independent to conferrals and opening/closing their Lodge.

Respectfully Submitted:  
Vincent Tracey,  
Past Master, Lafayette Lodge #16, KS

### CHAPTER FOUR DEGREES AND MEMBERSHIP

#### ARTICLE II

## Conferral of Degrees

4-206. **Proficiency Examination**--The examination of a candidate upon his proficiency may be conducted while the Lodge is open on the Degree previously attained by the candidate or at any time at the Lodge hall in the presence of a committee consisting of a minimum of three Master Masons appointed by the Master for the purpose of conducting the proficiency examination. ~~This~~ The minimum proficiency will be recitation of the memory work as contained in the candidate handbook and completion of the Proficiency Support Examination as provided by Grand Lodge, for all three degrees. ~~will include the first and second degree proficiency. A candidate must be deemed proficient prior to receiving the second or third degree.~~ The third degree proficiency examination must be taken as soon as practical after completing the third degree. ~~should be completed but shall be at the option of the candidate.~~ The Lodge Masonic Education Committee will report the score of the ~~proficiency support program~~ Proficiency Support Examination before the Lodge vote is taken. The vote of the Lodge upon the proficiency of the candidate shall be taken with the candidate excused. If the Proficiency was demonstrated to a committee, then the vote shall be taken in open Lodge only after a favorable recommendation has been made by a majority of the committee examining the candidate. (Amended 1967, 1988, 1991, 1993). Cross-Reference: By-Laws, Sec. 3-403.

**Rationale #1 Clarify Candidate Handbook Minimum Proficiency:** *The wording of this by-law seemed to limit the proficiency a candidate could give to the wording given in the Candidate Handbook. Many Lodges encourage candidates to learn the First Lecture of the first and second degrees as proficiency. Additionally, the language requiring completion of the Proficiency Support Examination was not clear as being required in addition to reciting the required memory work.*

**Rationale #2 Master Mason Proficiency As A Requirement:** *Kansas continues to raise Master Masons but not require them to demonstrate a working knowledge of the teachings & symbolism of this important degree. These Masons, then move into lodge leadership positions or to other jurisdictions not having demonstrated this fundamental understanding.*

a. *The majority of Kansas lodges bringing in new MM have desire or have expectations of them stepping into officer or other leadership roles, sometimes almost immediately. Completing the MM proficiency not only solidifies their learning of the culmination of the Blue Lodge degrees but lays the foundation for future lodge officer's requirement for continual growth in the ritual.*

b. *73% (37 of 51) of Grand Jurisdictions in the United States currently require MM proficiency. Kansas remains as one of only 14 jurisdictions that have not adopted this hard requirement of completing the understanding of the MM degree. Understanding the MM degree is fundamentally critical before moving on to advanced degrees. ( source: Masonic Services Association)*

c. *This requirement is consistent with the Excellent in Esoteric Work lane that continues to be demanded by the craft in Kansas; it does not lengthen the time to become a Master Mason nor preclude the new MM from petitioning other bodies.*

Respectfully submitted,  
Dale Morrow  
Past Master, Belle Plaine Lodge #173  
Bob Talbott  
Past Master, Albert Pike Lodge #. 303

## ARTICLE IV

### Membership Dimission and Transfer

4-410. **Occasional Lodges**—Lodges with memberships of 45 or less members residing within 25 miles of the Lodge, and who are physically able to attend, may elect, by a majority of its membership present at a Stated Communication of the Lodge, to become an Occasional Lodge, thereby, operating and being governed under the following regulations:

1. Required to hold at least one stated communication quarterly, based on the calendar year. ~~an Annual communication to elect and install a Master, Senior Warden, Junior Warden and a Secretary/Treasurer.~~
2. The officers of an Occasional Lodge shall be: (1) Master; (2) Senior Warden; (3) Junior Warden; (4) Treasurer; (5) Secretary; (6) Chaplain; (7) Senior Deacon; (8) Junior Deacon; (9) Senior Steward; (10) Junior Steward; (11) Tyler with the exception that an Occasional Lodge is allowed to combine the offices of Secretary and Treasurer into a single office. The Master, Senior Warden, Junior Warden, and Treasurer / Secretary shall be chosen annually by ballot at the Stated Communication in the third or fourth quarter of the calendar year. The Stated Communication at which the officers are elected shall be termed the Annual Communication of the Lodge. ~~Send a copy of the minutes of this Annual Stated Communication within 30 days to the Grand Secretary.~~
3. Installation of the officers shall be held during the fourth quarter of the calendar year, on or before St. John's Day in December.
4. The minutes of all Stated Communication shall be sent to the Grand Secretary within 30 days of the meeting.
5. ~~3.~~ The Grand Secretary will be responsible to see that the notice of Annual Communication and Dues Notice are mailed to each member of the Occasional Lodge and that the dues shall be returned to the Grand Secretary's, office for filing.
6. ~~4.~~ The records of the Occasional Lodge shall be maintained in the Grand Lodge Office with copies being sent to the Lodge Secretary, who, also, will be responsible for sending any communications he receives immediately to the Grand Secretary, keeping a copy of the same for the lodge records.
7. ~~5.~~ The fee for this service shall be \$10 per member, plus customary charges for materials provided by Grand Lodge, and per capita tax being retained by the Grand Secretary and the balance being forwarded to the Secretary/Treasurer and acknowledgment of receipt the payment being sent to the Grand Secretary.
8. ~~6.~~ All other Constitution and By-Laws shall apply in the governing of the Occasional Lodge with the exception of those listed above. (Amended 2006)

4-410A. Occasional Lodges-Optional Dues Collection and Reporting-An Occasional Lodge may, at its option, choose to waive items ~~#3, #4 and #5, #6, and #7~~ in By-Law 4-410 by collecting its own dues, and making all reports and payments required by Grand Lodge, Provided the payments and reports are made by the established deadlines.

**Rationale:** It is very difficult if not impossible for a Masonic Lodge to serve its Members and community if it only meets once a year. Many of our Occasional Lodges are dying a slow death, not even being able to get a quorum for their once a year Annual Communication. I

strongly believe that the answer has to be more activity not less. Four meeting a year is still a low bar for Masonic activity but it is a step in the right direction to rejuvenate these Lodges.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Mikel J. Stoops  
Past Master of De Soto Lodge #40