

Digest of Masonic Law

CHAPTER 12

GRAND COMMUNICATIONS AND PROCEEDINGS

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Constitutional Provisions

The Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Florida shall be held within the State of Florida between the 1st day of April and the 30th day of June at the time and place to be appointed by the Grand Master by Executive Order. At least sixty (60) days prior to the time and place of the Annual Communication, notice shall be provided to each of the Particular Lodges, Grand Lodge Officers, and Past Grand Masters. The Grand Master may call a special Communication of the Grand Lodge when, in his opinion, the interest of the Craft may require it. (1996) (Art. IV, Sec. 1)

A due representation of at least three Particular Lodges is necessary to constitute a quorum to open the Grand Lodge; *provided*, that should there not be a quorum of Lodges represented by 11 o'clock a.m., on the first day of the Annual Communication, it shall be the duty of the Grand Secretary to adjourn the meeting from day to day, or time to time, until a quorum shall be in attendance, not exceeding three days. (Art. IV, Sec. 2)

The Grand Master, when present, presides, and the Grand Lodge is opened in Ample Form. In his absence, the Deputy Grand Master presides, and the Grand Lodge is opened in Due Form. In the absence of the Grand Master and Deputy Grand Master, the Senior Grand Warden presides; and in his absence also, the Junior Grand Warden presides. And should the Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, and the Grand Wardens be absent, the Grand Master may appoint as his Special Deputy, any permanent member of the Grand Lodge to preside, and in case no Special Deputy shall be appointed and be present, and in case neither of the Grand Officers mentioned shall be present, then the oldest Master Mason present, being a Master of a Lodge, shall preside; and in either of the four last alternatives, the Grand Lodge will only be opened in Form, and the Officer so presiding pro tem, shall, during his presence in the East, be clothed with all the powers, prerogatives, and authority of the Grand Master, and be held to worship until a Grand Officer higher in rank shall appear and take his place. (Art. IV, Sec. 3)

Regulations

12.01 The phrase “the oldest Master Mason present, being a Master of a Lodge” used in Article IV, Section 3, of the Constitution

to designate the person to preside over the Grand Lodge in the absence of the regular presiding officer, means “the present Master of a Lodge, who has been longest a Freemason.”

DEFINITIONS

Regulations

12.02 The lawful assemblage of Masons in Grand Lodge capacity is called “Grand Communication.” Grand Communications are of three kinds: “Annual..... Special,” and “Emergent.” An “Annual Communication” of Grand Lodge is for the transaction of general business and the election and installation of Grand Officers for the ensuing year. A “Special Communication” of Grand Lodge is called by the Grand Master for such business as he may lay before it, of which all Grand Lodge Officers and members shall have due and timely notice. An “Emergent Communication” of Grand Lodge is a Grand Master’s prerogative, to be called at any time or place, or for any purpose as he may elect, and without formal notice to any one. He may call and preside over such Emergent Communication in person, or he may delegate his authority for such a Communication to a “Special Deputy,” unless the Deputy Grand Master be present, in which case he will take precedence over the Special Deputy, and Grand Lodge Officers who may be present are entitled to assume their respective stations or places, unless requested to serve in another. The minutes of all such meetings shall be filed with the Grand Secretary. (The only “Special Communication” ever held by the Grand Lodge of Florida was called by Grand Master Jesse Coe, and held at Tallahassee in June, 1845, for the transaction of general business and joining in the celebration of Florida’s admission to statehood, and the inauguration of Florida’s first Governor. The session lasted three days.)

Rulings and Decisions

An Emergent Communication can be called by the Grand Master at any time for any purpose he may elect. (1951 Proc. 26)

SEATING ARRANGEMENT

Regulations

12.03 The seats in Grand Lodge shall be arranged by Masonic Districts, under direction of the Grand Secretary, with the number of each District displayed at the East end of seat row. The District Deputy Grand Master, or some competent Brother appointed to act as such in his absence, shall occupy the front seat, and shall be responsible for those occupying seats in his section or division. No visitor or member

shall occupy a seat in Grand Lodge until he shall have made himself known to the District Deputy Grand Master in whose section he would be seated.

TIME OF CONVENING

Regulations

12.04 (Repealed 1985)

PROCEDURE AND PROCEEDINGS

Regulations

12.05 In making up the Grand Lodge Payroll, the mileage and per diem allowed Officers, Committees, and Members of the Grand Lodge shall be the amount set by recommendation of the Finance Committees with the approval of the Grand Lodge. (1985)

12.06 No Brother shall receive any mileage or per diem in more than one capacity, nor shall any Brother be entitled to compensation for any day in which he is not in actual and dutiful attendance upon the Grand Communication; nor mileage, when the traveling expenses have not been incurred exclusively for attendance upon the Grand Lodge.

12.07 The custom heretofore prevailing of recording the Proceedings of Annual Communications of the Grand Lodge in a book prepared for the purpose, after they have been made ready for the printer, is discontinued. In lieu thereof, the original minutes as made in the Grand Lodge should be carefully preserved and filed for future reference. The published Proceedings, after the approval by Grand Lodge, will then be the recognized record of the Annual Communications as they occur, and a copy thereof should be filed with the original minutes.

12.08 The Grand Lodge Proceedings are required to be printed annually, as soon as practicable after the close of the Annual Grand Communication, on the best possible terms, and in the most approved style.

12.09 The Regulations and Amendments passed each year by the Grand Lodge shall be properly recorded in the Proceedings of

that Grand Communication, and the Grand Secretary is also directed to publish therewith the names of all Members of new Lodges Chartered at that Grand Communication and their former Lodge membership. (1985)

12.10 The Grand Secretary is authorized to sell the Proceedings of the Grand Lodge to any Master Mason in good standing at cost.

12.11 It has for many, many years been the unbroken custom of this Grand Jurisdiction to include in the Proceedings of our Annual Grand Communications the names, names and numbers of Lodges, and date of death of deceased Master Masons of this Grand Jurisdiction. This Grand Lodge now adopts this custom as a declared policy.

12.12 All motions, Resolutions, Reports, and other proposals for Grand Lodge action shall, prior to such Grand Lodge action, be referred to, acted upon and recommendation made in regard thereto by an appropriate Grand Lodge Committee, including but not limited to:

(a) All proposals for legislation, trials and appeals, Charters, relations with other Grand Jurisdictions, relations with Foreign Jurisdictions, Appendant and Allied Orders, Masonic Digest, all Resolutions except Memorial Resolutions and all matters of Masonic Law, policies, and procedures, shall be referred to the Committee on Masonic Jurisprudence and the appropriate sub-committee thereof.

(b) All proposals involving management, control, budgeting, and expenditure of Grand Lodge funds, except the Masonic Home Endowment Fund, shall be referred to the Committee on Finance and Accounts.

(c) All proposals relating to management and operation of the Masonic Home shall be referred to the Board of Trustees of the Masonic Home.

(d) All proposals relating to Forms and Ceremonies, Ritual, Masonic protocol, and Memorial Resolutions shall be referred to Committee on Work and the appropriate sub-committee thereof.

(e) All other proposals shall be referred to an appropriate committee for action and recommendation.

(f) All proposals of like or similar nature or topics having been rejected by the Grand Lodge at two (2) consecutive Annual Grand Lodge Communications, shall not be submitted for consideration again for a period of three (3) years.

(g) Grand Lodge may waive the provisions and requirements of this Regulation by three-fourths vote. (1989)

VOTING

Regulations

12.13 All voting, in both Grand and Particular Lodges, not requiring ball or written ballot, shall be by “show of hands.”

12.14 In all cases, when voting in Grand Lodge upon any Resolution which will levy, or cause to be levied, a tax or assessment upon Particular Lodges or the members thereof, the vote shall be taken in the same manner and under the same Laws and Regulations as the voting for Grand Lodge Officers.

12.15 Any proposed amendment or alteration of the Constitution, or Regulations to be presented to the Grand Lodge for adoption at an Annual Communication shall be submitted to the Grand Secretary before December 31st by Resolution explaining the reasons for amending the Constitution or Regulation or proposing new Constitutional provisions or Regulations, using no more than two letter size typewritten single spaced pages, and must be sent by the Grand Secretary to each Particular Lodge, the Grand Lodge Elective Officers, the District Deputy Grand Masters, the District Instructors, and Past Grand Masters no later than sixty (60) days prior to the Grand Lodge Annual Communication. (1993)

A proposed amendment or alteration of a Regulation or of the Constitution may be designated emergency legislation by a majority vote of members present and presented at the Annual Grand Communication for consideration by the members of the Grand Lodge present and voting. (1984)

References

As to Powers of Grand Master relating to Communications, see Chapter 6
As to Lodge Representatives to Grand Lodge, see Chapter 29