

CHAPTER 25

PARTICULAR LODGES

COMMUNICATIONS AND BUSINESS

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Constitutional Provisions

Every Lodge must have one Stated monthly Communication at which every Brother should punctually attend, but the Lodge may dispense with the Stated Communications in the months of July, August, and September. The Worshipful Master has the power to order Called Communications of the Lodge at any time, by causing sufficient number of members to be served with timely notice thereof. (Art. X, Sec. 3)

The work and business of the Lodge must be transacted in a Master Mason Lodge, except the work and lectures in conferring the Degree of Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft; but those Degrees should be opened when there is no work to be done, for the instruction of the young Masons, and all Degrees should be closed at the close of every Communication. (Art. X, Sec. 12)

Rulings and Decisions

A Lodge is a body corporate with a Seal and can borrow money and transact business of the Lodge by its proper Officers. (1951 Proc. 26)

DEFINITION

Regulations

25.01 The lawful assembling of Masons in Lodge capacity is called "Communication."

STATED COMMUNICATIONS

BUSINESS THAT MUST BE DONE ONLY IN STATED COMMUNICATIONS

Regulations

25.02 The place, date, and hour of Communications of Particular Lodges shall be fixed in the By-Laws of each Lodge but each Lodge, whether provision therefore is made in the By-Laws of such Lodges or not, may dispense with Stated Communications or change the place and hour of meeting thereof in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 1 of the Article on "Communications" in the Uniform Code of By-Laws set forth in Regulation 24.05, *provided* that permanent change of meeting place of the Lodge

may be made only under Dispensation of the Grand Master under the provisions of sub-paragraph (b) of Regulation 6.12.

Called Communications may be called by the Worshipful Master, or in his absence from the jurisdiction of the Lodge by the Warden next in line, at any time and at any place within the jurisdiction of the Lodge. Notice of Called Communication to be held at regular meeting place of the Lodge may be given by announcement of such Called Communication at the Stated Communication preceding the date of such Called Communication or by written notice to the membership.

Notice of Called Communication to be held at a place other than the regular meeting place of the Lodge shall be by written notice to all the membership. No business shall be transacted at any Called Communication except such business as is permitted to be transacted in Called Communications and named in the call of such Communication.

Certain business shall not be transacted at any Called Communication, to wit:

- (a) Receiving petitions for Initiation or affiliation, or balloting, except by permission of the Grand Master under Regulation 6.10.
- (b) Reversing action of a Stated Communication.
- (c) Filing Charges for unmasonic conduct.
- (d) Masonic Trials.
- (e) Petitions for reinstatement and action thereon in all cases of suspension or expulsion for unmasonic conduct.
- (f) Any action acquiring or disposing of real estate.

RECONSIDERATION OF VOTE

Constitutional Provisions

The vote or decision at a Stated Communication of the Lodge cannot be rescinded, altered, or amended at a Called Communication of the Lodge, nor at any subsequent Stated Communication, unless the membership of the Lodge is given due notice of such proposed reconsideration. (Art. X, Sec. 29)

Regulations

25.03 A vote taken at any Communication can only be changed at a Stated Communication, with due notice to the membership of the reconsideration.

LODGE FUNDS

Regulations

25.04 Memorials of the dead and all other matters pertaining to a Masonic funeral, except the appropriation of Lodge funds, may be attended to at a Communication of a Lodge called for the occasion.

References

Chapter 27

LODGE PROPERTY

Regulations

25.05 A Particular Lodge shall not sell, convey, dispose of, mortgage, or enter into any transaction relating to Lodge property except by special action of the Lodge by written or ball ballot with three-fourths favorable vote at a Stated Communication after due notice to the Lodge members of such contemplated action. All necessary documents, instruments, and papers relating to any such transaction required to be signed on behalf of the Lodge shall be executed in the name of such Lodge by the Worshipful Master under the Seal of such Lodge and attested by the Secretary of the Lodge. (2021)

ELECTION OF HONORARY MEMBERS

Regulations

25.06 The Grand Lodge will not object to a Particular Lodge conferring honorary membership upon a distinguished and revered Mason, which must be by unanimous ball ballot at a Stated Communication of the Lodge, after having been proposed, by Resolution at some prior Stated Communication. Such honorary membership imposes no duties or responsibilities, and confers no rights or privileges, except the right of visitation and speaking from the floor. Honorary membership may be revoked by majority vote at any Stated Communication. If the vote on a Resolution for honorary membership is dark, said Resolution becomes null and void, and the process must begin again (Same as 26.10). (2013)

BALLOTING

References

All balloting must be done in a Master Mason Lodge and at Stated Communications, except by Dispensation. Reg. 35.01
Waiver of Jurisdiction must be by unanimous ball ballot at Stated Communications. Reg. 34.02

CALLED COMMUNICATIONS**POWER TO CALL COMMUNICATIONS AND NOTICE****Regulations**

25.07 The Worshipful Master has the right to command the attendance of the Officers and members of his Lodge at any time by summons, whether so requested by the Lodge or not. A prudent Master will use discretion as to what is for the best interest of the Craft, and not abuse the power reposed in him.

25.08 A Warden cannot call a Communication unless the Master be absent from the Lodge Jurisdiction, and then the Warden highest in official rank is the Acting Master.

25.09 Notice must be given to all the members, so far as practicable, of every Called Communication.

25.10 A summons to attend a Lodge meeting should be in writing or printed, signed by the Secretary, and under the Seal of the Lodge, unless given by the Worshipful Master in open Lodge.

25.11 A printed facsimile of the Seal of a Particular Lodge and a printed facsimile of the signature of the Secretary of a Particular Lodge, on a summons to the members of the Lodge, shall be deemed as complying with the Regulation that a summons must bear the Seal of the Lodge and the signature of the Secretary.

25.12 The Worshipful Master, in his discretion, may call and open a Called Communication of the Lodge for the sole and only purpose of conducting funeral ceremonies and thereafter, until the Worshipful Master shall close such Special Communication, members of the Lodge may be summonsed, attend, meet, move in funeral procession, and conduct funeral ceremonies in Lodge formation without opening and closing of the Lodge. The Lodge shall in all other respects adhere to Masonic Law applicable to conduct of Masonic funerals. The Secretary shall keep minutes of each funeral ceremony, which minutes shall be read and acted upon at the next ensuing Stated Communication of the Lodge.

BUSINESS AND WORK THAT MAY BE DONE AT CALLED COMMUNICATIONS**Regulations**

25.13 Any business of the Lodge not otherwise restricted by the Constitution and Regulations, may be transacted at a Called Communication, when it has been expressly stated in the call, and due notice thereof given to all the members, so far as practicable.

25.14 Memorials of the dead and all other matters pertaining to a Masonic funeral, except the appropriation of Lodge funds, may be attended to at a Communication of a Lodge called for the occasion.

25.15 The Officers-elect of a Lodge may be installed at a Called Communication, when duly called for that purpose.

25.16 When a Communication is called for the sole purpose of conferring a specific Degree, it is not necessary to open the Lodge in any other Degree.

Rulings and Decisions

Only a Master Mason may take an active part in the Installation Ceremony of the Elected or Appointed Lodge Officers. It shall be the installing Marshal's duty to invest the Officers to be installed with the insignia of his office. (2012 Proc. 143-144)

REGULATIONS GOVERNING ALL COMMUNICATIONS

QUORUM

Regulations

25.17 The quorum of a Master Mason Lodge is three, a Fellow Craft Lodge, five, and an Entered Apprentice Lodge, seven. In the case of a Master Mason Lodge, three members of the Lodge are necessary to constitute a quorum, exclusive of the Tyler, who must be a member of some Lodge. If three members of the Lodge are present, the quorum necessary to open an E.A. or F.C. Lodge may be supplied with visitors, as the two latter Lodges are never opened, except for "Work and Instruction."

References

The District Deputy Grand Master may approve in writing change of meeting place for any Stated Communication. Reg. 10.08

It is a Landmark of Freemasonry that every regular Lodge must be tyled while at labor. (Const. Art. XIII, Sec. 2)

PRESIDING OFFICER

Constitutional Provisions

When all of the three principal Officers of a Particular Lodge are absent, the Lodge may be opened and presided over by the District Deputy Grand Master or by the Junior Past Master present. (Art. X, Sec. 31)

References

As to Powers of Worshipful Master to preside, See Chapter 20

Regulations

25.18 When all of the three principal Officers of a Particular Lodge are absent, the Lodge may be opened and presided over by the District Deputy Grand Master, or by the Junior Past Master present.

TIME**Regulations**

25.19 A Lodge cannot lawfully meet or work on Sunday, except for funerals, or to attend Divine Service, or for very urgent charity. But the members of Lodges shall not be summoned to attend Divine Service at any time, nor attend in Masonic regalia.

25.20 A Lodge has authority to transact any regular business or work on the occasion of the celebration of the Saint John's Day festivals.

25.21 When Saint John's Day occurs on Sunday, the day following will be the official substitute.

25.22 A Lodge cannot be called from labor to refreshment to meet on a certain day in the near future to do any work that can be done at a Called Communication, because it is in conflict with Article X, Section 12, of the Constitution.

References

Second Stated Communication of particular month may be suspended by action of Lodge. Reg. 24.05, By-Law 5.02

Rulings and Decisions

A Lodge which has recessed for June, July, and August may be called back to resume Labor on Stated meeting night if all the members are duly notified. (1941 Proc. 76)

When Saint John's Day falls on Sunday, the day following is the regular date and no other day can be substituted for it. (1943 Proc. 82)

A Lodge which has recessed for the months of July, August, and September can be called back into Communication on a Stated meeting night during such months, upon due notice to the membership, and such meeting shall be considered a "Stated Communication." (1964 Proc. 65, 268)

Communication called by Worshipful Master during summer recess on regular meeting night after due notice to membership, is a Stated Communication and any business permitted at Stated Communications may be transacted. (1965 Proc. 196, 198)

OPENING AND CLOSING**Regulations**

25.23 Every "Communication" of the Lodge should be opened and closed with prayer.

SMOKING**Regulations**

25.24 Smoking in a Lodge Room is prohibited while Great Lights are open on the Altar.

Rulings and Decisions

To follow the "Clean Air Act" any tobacco products, including "E" cigarettes or any other vapor device that emits any substance into the air, are prohibited to be used in the Lodge Room. (2017 Proc. 115)

FLAG

Regulations

25.25 Every Particular Lodge must display the Flag of the United States of America in the Lodge Room at all Communications of the Lodge, but without ceremony, but this Regulation shall not be construed to prohibit a recital of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

LODGE PROCEEDINGS AND MINUTES

Regulations

25.26 Parliamentary terms and usages have no place in the Masonic Fraternity; therefore, protests, motions to adjourn, calls for the previous question, etc., cannot be entertained. Neither can substitutes for amendments to an original motion be allowed without the consent of the original mover.

25.27 The Master may “dispense with” and “resume labor” in any Degree at pleasure to facilitate the business and work of the Communication, but he should never call the Lodge to “refreshment” except for actual refreshment or rest from labor.

25.28 The minutes of the Lodge at every Communication must be read for correction and approval before the closing of the Lodge, unless dispensed with by the Worshipful Master, but the minutes of the previous Communication or Communications shall be read for final adoption at the next Stated Communication.

25.29 The minutes of Called Communications can only be adopted at Stated Communication.

25.30 The minutes of a Lodge, when practicable, should embrace the names of all present, members and visitors.

25.31 The minutes, after having been read and finally adopted, cannot be altered or expunged at a subsequent Communication. If any error has been stated, it should be corrected by making another entry at some subsequent Communication.

25.32 Lodge minutes may be kept in a loose leaf book but when 250 pages have been filled they shall be taken out and permanently bound. (1952 Proc. 161)

References

As to powers of Master over work and business of Lodge, see Worshipful Master, Chapter 20

As to Balloting, see Chapter 35

As to Degree Work, see Candidates, Chapter 31, and Ritual and Ceremonies, Chapter 38

As to Visitation and Avouchment, see Chapter 40

As to holding Communications in Ground Floor Rooms, see Reg. 6.12(c)

Rulings and Decisions

It is proper to record as “members present” name of E.A. present when E.A. Lodge opens. (1946 Proc. 33)

Lodge Minutes of the previous Stated or Called Communication must be read aloud in open Lodge in accordance with the provisions of Regulation 25.28 of the Digest of the Masonic Law of Florida. (2020 Proc. 84)

LODGE BUSINESS AND PROCEDURE

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Constitutional Provisions

Every Particular Lodge must be furnished with a Seal and appropriate Jewels, Furniture, and Working Tools, and all official documents must be verified by the Secretary, under the Seal of the Lodge. (Art. X, Sec. 23)

OTHER JURISDICTIONS

Regulations

25.33 The Lodges in Florida must respect the jurisdiction of Lodges in other Grand Jurisdictions.

ACTIONS FORBIDDEN

Regulations

25.34 It is not proper for a Masonic Lodge to endorse an applicant for political office.

25.35 Lodges must not contribute from their treasuries to Masonic or alleged Masonic objects in foreign jurisdictions, as for example, the building of a Temple at Jerusalem, unless such objects have been approved by the Grand Lodge, or by the Grand Master.

Rulings and Decisions

~~All rulings against Lodges participating in community projects and activities relating to charity, education, recreation, and welfare are repealed and rescinded, except those rulings prohibiting sponsoring games of chance. (1962 Proc. 264, 265)~~

It is not a violation of Masonic Law for a Lodge bulletin to include a listing of Eastern Star meetings and it is up to the Lodge to decide their policy in this regard. (1954 Proc. 63)

~~It is improper for a Lodge or Lodges to place containers at doors of a public building and to accept contributions collected in that manner for the purpose of raising money to pay expenses of a speaker at a public meeting to be held during Education Month. (1964 Proc. 64, 268)~~

~~Lodges are prohibited from conducting or sponsoring games of chance. (1968 Proc. 57, 212)~~

~~Grand Master's action in denying request of holding company of the property of a Particular Lodge to conduct bingo games was proper and in accordance with Masonic Law. (1969 Proc. 58, 212)~~

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Regulations

25.36 Particular Lodges may participate in community activities relating to the public school system, recognized charitable endeavors, community welfare, and recreation, in keeping with the established principles and objectives of Freemasonry, and such participation may be in cooperation with the other community organizations, but any Lodge participating in such activity shall immediately furnish the Grand Master with a full report thereon, and shall cease and desist therefrom on his order.

25.37 Particular Lodges, may, with the approval of the Grand Master, sponsor programs and projects for charitable, recreational, welfare, and educational purposes and for such purposes may singly or with other Particular Lodges, form corporations, associations or other organizations in furtherance of such programs and projects. Before engaging in such programs and projects, a full report must be made to and the same approved by the Grand Master, and when a Lodge or Lodges propose to form any corporation, association, or other organization in furtherance of such project or program, proposed Charter, By-Laws, Rules and Regulations, and other pertinent documents shall be submitted to and the approval thereof obtained from the Grand Master. The name of any such corporation may indicate the general purpose, and that it is sponsored by Masonic authority. No such corporation, association, or organization shall incur any indebtedness except for current operating expenses limited to one thousand dollars without express approval of the Grand Master. The approval of the Grand Master of any such corporation, association, or other organization and of any indebtedness to be incurred thereby shall in no wise bind or obligate the Grand Lodge for the payment of any indebtedness of such corporation, association, or organization. The Grand Master may appoint an appropriate advisory committee to assist him in reviewing all matters submitted to him under this Regulation.

Rulings and Decisions

If Lodge membership is properly informed, it is proper for the Lodge to contribute money for scholarship to deserving student of local junior college. (1962 Proc. 81, 296)

A Lodge may sponsor a community Christmas tree for local children, with expenses paid from General Fund of the Lodge, provided Lodge is properly informed on the matter. (1962 Proc. 82, 296)

APPEALS FOR AID

Regulations

25.38 Particular Lodges and individual Masons subject to the jurisdiction of The Grand Lodge of Florida cannot issue an appeal for aid under any circumstances without first having obtained the approval of the Grand Master, which approval must be written or printed on the appeal.

Rulings and Decisions

An appeal for financial assistance may be made to members of own Lodge but not to others. (1942 Proc. 45)

It is not improper for a Brother to solicit funds for Memorial Hospital in open Lodge since solicitation is for charitable purposes. (1946 Proc. 37)

Neither a Lodge, nor any member thereof, is permitted to issue a written appeal for any kind of material assistance except in case of the Lodge appealing to its own membership. (1954 Proc. 63)

Lodge may not issue general appeals for building funds, but may solicit such funds from its own membership, and may place container in Lodge hall for contributions to building fund. (1965 Proc. 198)

VOTING AND BALLOTING

Regulations

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

25.40 On all questions properly submitted to vote of the Lodge by a show of hands, a majority vote of the members present and voting is decisive, and the Worshipful Master should announce the results accordingly.

25.41 None but members of the Lodge have a right to ballot, and no member present can be excused from balloting on any question before the Lodge, except by a vote of the Lodge, upon good cause shown; nor can a member be permitted to retire from the Lodge to avoid casting his ballot. (Same as 26.18 and 35.07)

References

See Balloting, Chapter 35

A.L. DATE TO BE USED IN RECORDS

Regulations

25.42 The A.L. date shall always be used in Masonic records and A.D. may also be used in connection therewith.

SEAL**Regulations**

25.43 Every Lodge is required to have an appropriate Seal, but a scrawl may be submitted therefore until it can be procured.

NOTICES**Regulations**

25.44 It is difficult to prescribe a definite period of time in which a great variety of notices must be given, but in every case reasonable notice is requisite, when such notice can be effected at all.

25.45 When a party entitled to notice resides beyond the jurisdiction of the Lodge, a written or printed notice forwarded by mail, properly sealed, and correctly addressed to the party, is sufficient.

MASTER'S AUTHORITY**References**

As to Master's authority over Lodge Business and Procedure, see Worshipful Master, Chapter 20

ALL ACTS ARE REVIEWABLE BY GRAND LODGE**Regulations**

25.46 Any act or decision of a Lodge or Master may be reviewed by the Grand Lodge, or in the recess of the Grand Lodge, by the Grand Master, subject to the action of the Grand Lodge.

LODGE FUNDS**Regulations**

25.47 Lodge funds may be used for charity, public installation, entertainments, refreshments, and for any purpose not unmasonic, when ordered by the Lodge.

25.48 The Grand Lodge by appropriate Resolution adopted April 26, A.L. 5972, A.D. 1972, and reported 1972 Proceedings 284 and 285 defined and declared Freemasonry to be a nonsectarian religious, educational, and charitable organization founded upon, possessed of, and adhering to the principles, precepts, tenets, and beliefs that characterize such organization.

The character of Freemasonry as a fraternal organization possessed of the characteristics above recited shall be exemplified and demonstrated by devoting a part or portions of time of every Stated Communication to a program for lecture, speech, talk, discussion, or visual demonstration in regard to a Masonic or Community Charity or an appropriate religious subject or an educational subject. When possible, notice of such program shall be given by announcement in Stated Communication or by publication in the Lodge Bulletin or Trestleboard. (Added 1979)