



**Rensselaer – Schenectady Masonic District
Masters & Officers Association**

CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS

DATED: APRIL 25, 2008

ARTICLE I – PURPOSE

The purpose of this Organization, to be known as the Masters and Officers Association of the Rensselaer-Schenectady Masonic District, and hereinafter referred to as the Association, is to assist the District Deputy Grand Master, the District Staff Officer, and the Masters, Wardens, Officers and Brothers of the Lodges in the Rensselaer-Schenectady District in the discharge of their various responsibilities and duties.

ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP

The Association's meetings and proceedings shall be open to any Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft or Master Mason. The Association's voting members shall consist of the eight (8) Constitutional Officers (listed below) of each Lodge in the Rensselaer-Schenectady Masonic District. These officers are:

- 1) Worshipful Master
- 2) Senior Warden
- 3) Junior Warden
- 4) Treasurer
- 5) Secretary
- 6) Senior Deacon
- 7) Junior Deacon
- 8) Tyler

The District Deputy Grand Master, District Staff Officer and Assistant Grand Lecturer are also to be advisory members of this Association.

ARTICLE III – ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The Association shall, at each Annual Meeting and by a majority of the voting members there present, elect the following Officers:

- 1) President
- 2) Vice-President
- 3) Secretary
- 4) Treasurer

The President and Vice-President, for his term of office, shall be either Master, Senior Warden or Junior Warden of his Lodge. The Secretary shall be any voting member of the Association, for the term of his election. The Treasurer shall be a current or past Master or a current or past Warden of any Lodge in the District.

ARTICLE IV – DUTIES OF OFFICERS

President

- To preside over the meetings of the Association;
- To govern this Association in accordance with the Constitution and By-Laws of this Association;
- To maintain order and decorum among the members and their guests during the meetings of the Association;
- It shall be within the power of the President to insist that all members abide by his decision as to when any member or guest is out of order, or guilty of conduct unbecoming a member of this Association;
- To secure for the Association a Host Lodge for each regularly scheduled monthly or special meeting. The Host Lodge will be responsible for arranging for a caterer for that dinner meeting;
- To coordinate the preparation, printing and the distribution of the voting membership roster of this Association for his year. The President may defer the actual work involved in this project to a committee, comprised of members of the Association, but he is to ensure that the roster be prepared and distributed as soon after the Annual Meeting as practicable;
- To assist the Master of the Lodge of the retiring District Deputy Grand Master in the procurement of a past District Deputy Grand Master's jewel, for presentation at his homecoming, financially in the amount as set forth in the By-Laws, Section II, if the Association so requires;
- To arrange for lodging and/or transportation for the members of the Association as a group, to the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge, if the Association so requires;
- To authorize a six month, zero-interest loan to any distressed Master Mason belonging to a Lodge, or to a distressed Lodge, to be paid out of monies collected by the Treasurer. The President may authorize a grant if the Association so approves by majority vote.

Vice-President

- To preside over the meetings of this Association in the absence of the President, or at his direction;
- To assist the President in the organization of, and attendance at, the monthly dinner meetings of this Association;
- To accept reservations from each member or Lodge, maintain a written record of same, and contract for the total of such reservations each month with the Host Lodge for that meeting;
- To maintain a central calendar of Rensselaer-Schenectady Masonic District events to avoid conflicting events. He shall make this calendar available to all members of this Association and shall record all Masonic events that may be of interest to District Lodges and their members;

- To act in the stead of the President, should the President become incapacitated or otherwise unable to perform his duties in a timely manner.

Secretary –

- To record the minutes of all business transacted at all regular and special meetings of the Association;
- To advise each Lodge within the District, in writing, the amount owed to this Association under the general contribution plan as outlined in Section II of the By-Laws as soon after the annual meeting as possible;
- To receive these monies from the Lodges and turn them over to the treasurer for deposit;
- To advise the President before the January meeting of any Lodge which has not met their general contribution for the current year.

Treasurer –

- To receive all monies paid to the Association, deposit same in bank account(s) maintained in the name of the Association;
- To prepare and sign all vouchers and checks used to pay the legal obligations of the Association;
- To maintain proper financial records and submit an annual report to the Association at the Annual Meeting.

ARTICLE V – ELIGIBILITY OF PRESIDENCY

The President of the Association shall be elected from a pool of all District Masters and Wardens for the ensuing year. If there be no Master or Warden willing or able to serve, it shall be the option of the present President, should his status in his Lodge permit, to remain as President for the ensuing year, or allow the Vice-President to assume the office of President for the ensuing year.

ARTICLE VI – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee, advisory in nature, shall consist of three (3) past Presidents of the Association, appointed by the President, and serving at his pleasure. At each Annual Meeting, with the election of a new President, the members of this Committee shall be replaced or reappointed at the discretion of the newly-elected President. The purpose of this Committee shall be to serve as advisors to the President and Officers of this Association, and be available to answer all questions and/or problems in regard to the Constitution, By-Laws or traditions of the Association, and to see that the Constitution and By-Laws, or traditions of the Association are upheld and adhered to.

It shall also be the responsibility of this Committee, at each Annual Meeting, to see that newly-elected Officers of the Association receive an updated copy of the Constitutions and By-Laws for use throughout the year.

The members of the Executive Committee shall have no vote in the Association as such, unless said Committee members shall also be a voting member of the Association, as defined in Article II.

ARTICLE VII – MEETINGS

The Association shall hold a dinner meeting each month, except during July and August, on the last Friday of the month, at a time, and at a Host Lodge designated by the President. Special meetings of the Association may be called at the discretion of the President or, in his absence, by the Vice-President. A call for a special meeting shall designate a time, location and the nature of the business to be transacted.

Due to the proximity to Thanksgiving and Christmas, the November and December meetings shall be combined into one meeting, to be held on the first or second Friday of December, as designated by the President.

Due to the proximity of Memorial Day, the May meeting shall be held on the first Friday of June or the second-to-last Friday of May, at the discretion of the President. This meeting shall be the Annual Meeting of the Association. The order of business for the Annual Meeting shall be (but not limited to) as follows:

- 1) All regular business, excluding the messages from the Assistant Grand Lecturer, Staff Officer and District Deputy Grand Master
- 2) Election of Officers for the ensuing year
- 3) Per Capita Assessment for the ensuing year
- 4) Schedule of Meeting Dates and Host Lodges for dinner meetings for the ensuing year
- 5) Message from the Assistant Grand Lecturer
- 6) Message from the Staff Officer
- 7) Message from the District Deputy Grand Master

ARTICLE VIII – VOTING

All members of the Association shall share the privileges of the floor equally, in accordance with the usual rules of parliamentary procedure. Voting members of the Association shall each have one vote, none to be cast by proxy.

ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENTS

The Constitution, and its By-Laws, may be amended by two-thirds majority vote of the members present at a regular meeting, provided any proposed amendment shall have been submitted in writing to the President, and incorporated in the call of the meeting. Should the above not be complied with, any proposed amendment brought to the floor must be tabled for the next meeting, and incorporated in the call of that next meeting.

BY – LAWS

Section #1 – Committees

The President shall have the power to appoint such committees as deemed necessary and advisable.

Section #2 – Income and Expenses

Subsection #1 – Income

Income shall come from (but is not limited to) interest from investments, dinner proceeds, Lodge per capita assessments.

- a) Dinners - The charge for dinners before a meeting shall be \$15.00 per person. The Association will continue the tradition of covering the cost of the meal for the current District Deputy Grand Master, Staff Officer and Assistant Grand Lecturer. The Vice-President shall collect the monies from the dinner and pay them to the Treasurer for deposit. From the money received, at least \$3.00 per dinner shall be deposited and up to \$12.00 per dinner shall be paid to the Host Lodge. *(This was updated on April 25, 2008.)*
- b) In accordance with the amendment passed on September 28, 2001, each Lodge's per capita assessment shall be \$.60 per Lodge member as of the Annual Meeting. These monies will be collected by the Secretary, who will pass them to the Treasurer for deposit.

Subsection #2 – Expenses

Monies held by the Association shall be kept in their respective accounts and be available for their specific purposes. The expenses of the Association shall include loans or grants (as specified in the Constitutions, Article IV, Duties of the President), general Association expenses, Investiture Service expenses, Grand Lecturer Convention expenses, Past District Deputy Grand Master's jewel and District Internet Website Hosting and Domain Name Registration

- a) General Association Expenses – Reasonable monies shall be made available for the Association expenses, which may consist of printing and postage cost for the roster, and any other incidentals pertaining to and authorized by the Association.
- b) Investiture Service Expenses – The entire cost of the program prepared for the Investiture Service shall be borne by the Association, paid only when requested and documented by a current Assistant Grand Lecturer.
- c) Grand Lecturer's Convention Expenses – The Association shall pay for the costs of refreshments for the Grand Lecturer's Convention,

upon submission of an itemized statement of expenses, and upon request and documentation by a current Assistant Grand Lecturer.

- d) Past District Deputy Grand Master's Jewel – A sum of money not to exceed five hundred dollars (\$500.00) shall be made available for each District Deputy's term of office, to secure a Past District Deputy Grand Master's Jewel for the retiring District Deputy Grand Master.
- e) Internet Website Hosting – The annual cost of hosting the District website shall be made available to the District Webmaster, who shall present the Association an invoice for reimbursement.

Section #3 – CRITERIA FOR THE “TRAVELING TROWEL” AWARD

The roll call of Lodges in attendance shall be taken at the beginning of each meeting. The Traveling Trowel shall be awarded to a Lodge by the following order of precedence:

- a) A Lodge must have at least two (2) Wardens or a Master and one (1) Warden in order to be eligible for the award;
- b) The award is presented to the eligible Lodge with the most members present
- c) If two or more eligible Lodges have the same number of members present, the number of *voting* members will break the tie.
- d) If (c) results in a tie, the highest officer present breaks the tie.
- e) If (d) results in a tie, the second highest officer present shall break the tie, and proceed until tie is broken.
- f) If a tie still remains after (e), a coin toss shall determine the award recipient.

Section #4 – ORDER OF BUSINESS

- 1) Pledge of Allegiance
- 2) Roll Call & Award of the Traveling Trowel
- 3) Reading of the Preceding Meeting's Minutes
- 4) Treasurer's Report
- 5) Reports of Committees
- 6) Old Business
- 7) New Business
- 8) Lodge Announcements
- 9) (Annual Meeting – Election of Officers, Assessment & ensuing year scheduling)
- 10) Assistant Grand Lecturer's Message
- 11) Staff Officer's Message
- 12) District Deputy Grand Master's Message
- 13) Reading & Approval of Present Meeting's Minutes
- 14) Adjournment