



Middlesex Freemasonry

Secretaries and Scribes E Guide

Revised 2024



GUIDE FOR SECRETARIES and SCRIBES E

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Preface

This Guide is written for Secretaries and Scribes E alike. Much of the procedures are common across Craft and Royal Arch and as such this document seeks to provide a common source of guidance. It is acknowledged that the focus of this text is Craft, however, where practicable, it is intended to be a guide common to both Orders, therefore the following are intended to have a common meaning:-

Craft / Royal Arch
Grand Master / First Grand Principal
Provincial Grand Master / Grans Superintendent
Lodge / Chapter
Warrant / Charter
WM / MEZ
Secretary / Scribe E

This Guide falls into four parts, with an introductory page and index.

1. The various stages in organising a meeting, noting where the occasional problem may be covered.
2. Other subjects to which a Secretary will need to refer.
3. Working lists for meetings and Initiates/Joining Members
4. A list of sources referred to in the other sections

Some matters are not included in that they rarely impinge on a Secretary's activities. Prime examples are the formation of a *new Lodge*, *moving* from one location to another, *amalgamation* or *closure*. It is recommended that in these cases a discussion be held with the Provincial Grand Secretary at the earliest opportunity, who will issue guidance and instructions.

Each subject is covered on a step-by-step basis with reference to

- a) Rules of United Grand Lodge 2024 Edition (Rules). Page numbers are not given, allowing for subsequent issues. <https://www.ugle.org.uk/about-us/book-constitutions>
<https://www.ugle.org.uk/about-us/royal-arch/supreme-grand-chapter>
- b) Provincial Grand Lodge By-laws (Province) and Masonic Notes (Notes) which are to be found in the Provincial Year Book after the list of Lodges and Senior Officers.
- c) Information for the Guidance of Members of the Craft 2024 Edition (Guidance) with Decisions of the Board of General Purposes (Guidance Decisions). This has the status of rules under Rule 229. As these are not numbered, the title is given.
- d) Lodge By-laws, based on the model by-laws.
- e) Recommendations and suggestions.

It is hoped that these notes will assist Secretaries in the well running of the Lodges within the Province.

Any suggestions or procedures that Secretaries have found of assistance should be sent in writing to the Provincial Grand Secretary.

Suggestion to the new Secretary

Visit another Lodge and observe the Secretary. Remember the address to the Wardens

- what is praiseworthy, imitate.
- what appears defective, in yourself amend.

Introduction - Organising the Work

With the adoption of the Hermes system by the Province in 2021, many of the procedures are now undertaken automatically by the on-line system and many of the following should be taken as a guide.

How the Secretary organises the office is an individual matter. However, throughout this Guide there are to be found some practical hints to make his life easier. This section contains more general notes that may be found useful.

The more that the Secretary can do in advance, the more he will enjoy his Masonry.

Diary

Lodge meetings tend to fall at irregular times, so it is useful to have a diary reminder system. This can be on a computer diary, a card index, or other system as preferred. The important thing is not to forget. Some suggested dates, to be varied for individual requirements, are included in the tick list on page 33.

Folders

We have all seen the Lodge Secretary scrabbling through a pile of papers saying "I had it here". This can be avoided by the use of five or six folders. The plastic ones are recommended, since it is easy to see which is which. Each folder should contain a working sheet of paper, as noted below. By this method, both action in Lodge and writing up the minutes will be more straightforward.

1. Things to do. This will contain a working sheet of people to see and what to see them about. It may contain other relevant papers. As each is done, mark it off (in red).
2. Agenda papers in agenda order, such as the dispensation, minutes, application and other forms for Initiates and Joining Members, certificates to issue. The working paper will list these and note the item number and what is to be done with each. A note of what to say or form of script may be useful.
3. First rising. Grand Lodge. The working sheet will give the words to be said. There is now no need to have Proceedings of Grand Lodge as a separate item on the Summons.
4. Second rising. Provincial Grand Lodge. As for 3 above. Remember, if there is an Official Visitor, leave space on the working sheet for his comments.
5. Third rising. Domestic, to include application forms for members to be balloted for next time. The working sheet could be more comprehensive.
6. When there is an Official Visitor, containing relevant papers. The working sheet will have notes to discuss.

Suggestion

Especially if there is a fair amount to mention on the risings, a précis tabled at the meeting could be more effective. Much speaking by the Secretary when eyes are on the clock and thoughts are on the bar is not conducive to gaining attention.

Summons

1.

- a) A Summons states who we are, where we meet, when we meet and what we will be doing. It is advisable that the date and time of the meeting be clearly visible on the front page, not hidden somewhere.
- b) Names of members should appear on the Summons subject to GDPR. It is recommended that addresses do not appear on the Summons, however, they should be circulated to all members at least once a year.
- c) Visiting Officers, as well as members, find it useful to have preferred first name on the Summons and it is suggested for general use.
- d) There is no required form of a Summons and Lodges will have developed their own design. A suggested format of the Agenda may include:

To display the Warrant and open the Lodge (that acts as a reminder to the Master).

To report the dispensation (unless the Dispensation specifically states it is to be read).

To approve previous minutes. Suggested wording

“To consider and, if approved, confirm the minutes of the Regular meeting held on (previously circulated)”. See page 6 in respect of an Emergency Meeting.

To invest officers not present at the Installation Meeting.

To ballot for Joining Members.

Ceremonies (Installation, Raising, Passing, Initiation, Exaltation). If other work is done in addition to an Initiation, it is recommended that the Initiation be done last so that the new Brother is not promptly shown out of the Lodge.

For Passing and Raising, show the date of the previous ceremony (e.g. To raise Bro....., passed on). Provincial Office has to check compliance with Rule 172 (four weeks between degrees)

Election of Officers. See page 25 as to election of Master and Treasurer.

To present Grand Lodge Certificates.

Reports from Almoner, Charity Steward and Event Co-ordinator and Royal Arch Representative (separate items).

To collect Alms – Recommended Summons entry example - substitute your own Lodge details:-

6. To collect Alms



This QR Code will take you to a webpage where
you can pay ALMS directly into our Lodges
Charity Relief Chest No L3420.

<https://gtap.uk/L3420>

7. The Risings.

8. To Close the Lodge.

Resolutions, pursuant to notices of motion given at the previous meeting.

To close the Lodge. The three risings do not have to be separately listed as they are part of the closing ritual (see ritual book).

Note: There is no need to have an item of 'Any other business' as all Lodge matters should be covered in the Risings. It is not correct to show on the Summons for the Installation Meeting the incoming officers other than the Master Elect. They do not hold office until invested.

1.2 Safeguards

- a) Before arranging the printing of the Summons, read through the minutes of the last two meetings to check that there has been no notice of motion that should be included under other business.
- b) Also, look at the Summons and minutes for the corresponding meeting the previous year in case something has been left out (such as presentation of the accounts).
- c) See notes on dress in Lodge on page 7 as regards Grand and Provincial Grand Officers at Installation meetings. The front page of the Summons may need amending – diarise a reminder.

1.3 Distribution

- a) All members (Rule 145). Send one to the Candidate / Exalte. If candidates for Passing or Raising, they are already members.
- b) Include copies of the Accounts when they are to be reviewed by the members.
- c) The Assistant Provincial Grand Master to whom your Lodge has been allocated.
- d) The Lodge Visiting Officer.
- e) Provincial Grand Secretary one copy if sent electronically, notwithstanding any private arrangements with Honorary Members.
- f) Other Brethren as directed for special occasions.
- g) The Masonic Centre.

1.4. Suggestions

- a) There is a standard cycle of meeting agendas, especially as regards accounts, elections and Installation. It can be an advantage to keep one copy of each Summons to assist in not omitting something the next year.

Meetings

2. See also tick list on page 30

2.1 Dates of Meetings

- a) Certain dates are prohibited. If the date of the regular meeting falls on a prohibited day or a public holiday, no dispensation is required to move the date seven days either way (Rule 139). The principal variable is Easter. If the Lodge meets in late March or April, diarise six months beforehand to contact the Centre if a change is needed: best to get in early.

2.2 Regular Meetings

These have to be held on the date in the by-laws, except by dispensation. A meeting may not be cancelled (Rule 137).

2.3 Dispensations may be sought from the Provincial Office via Hermes for:-

- a) Holding a meeting on a date other than that in the by-laws, which has to be within 28 days before or after the date in the by-laws (Rule 139c).
- b) Emergency meetings. See notes below.
- c) Holding a meeting at a place other than that in the by-laws (Rule 142).

2.4 Emergency meetings

Be aware that Rule 172 requires an interval of four weeks between a Candidate's degrees. Rule 139(d) states it operates from the actual day the meeting was held.

- a) No business may be transacted other than that detailed on the Summons and it cannot be held on the same day as a regular meeting (Rule 140). In particular the agenda may **NOT** include:
 - 1 Approval of minutes. The Summons for the next regular meeting would include, e.g., "To approve the minutes of the regular meeting held on and the emergency meeting held on".
 - 2 Ballots for Joining Members or reading of details of Candidates for Initiation. Where the business of the meeting is an Initiation, the ballot should have been taken at the previous regular meeting of the Lodge.
 - 3. Risings. (no risings) The Master goes straight into "Brethren, assist me to close the Lodge".

2.5 Adjournment of a meeting is prohibited (Rule 137).

This does not refer to calling off during a meeting, nor to, for example, the Candidate being advised that the Second Degree Tracing Board will be explained on another occasion.

2.6 Precedence in seating in the Temple. Normally the duty of the Director of Ceremonies, noted for information.

- a) To the left of the Chair, Master when a Past Master is working a degree, Immediate Past Master, Chaplain. Where a Past Master is working a degree on behalf of the Master, he does not assume the Master's collar. If working part of a degree he does not necessarily take the Chair.

- b) To the right of the Chair, AProvGM (if present) Official Visitor (if present), regardless of seniority, Grand Officers in order of seniority.

2.7 **Warrant**

- a) The Worshipful Master holds the Warrant under trust from the Grand Master and it is to be produced at each meeting (Rule 101 and Guidance - Custody). The meeting cannot be held if it is not available (Rule 103). It is not necessary to open the Warrant when it is displayed (Notes – Warrant).
- b) The Secretary would usually ensure the safety of the Warrant after the meeting (generally held in the Lodge locker).

2.8 **Proceedings**

- a) A Lodge may regulate its own proceedings, within certain parameters (Rule 155). See this rule if there is a protest.

2.9 **Ballot**

- a) The correct procedure is for the officer distributing the balls to place one in the hand of each member voting, not allowing the member to help himself.
- b) Where a ballot is being taken for more than one person, it is in order for a composite ballot to be taken provided no member objects. If a negative vote, then individual ballots are taken.
- c) In some Lodges (usually Past Master Lodges) it is the practice for only the principal officers to vote. This is in order, though it must be stated at the time that any member also has a right to vote.

2.10 **Voting**

- a) If votes are equal, the Worshipful Master or, in his absence, his deputy has a casting vote (Rule 156).

2.11 **Dress in Lodge and unapproved regalia.**

- a) See Rules 239 and 241. Morning dress means striped trousers and black jacket, dark suit means black, dark grey or dark blue, white shirt or shirt with white collar, black tie. The red and blue Middlesex Provincial tie and the Craft tie are the only ties with a motif approved for use at all meetings within this Province. This subject is covered in more detail in Guidance, - Standard of dress, masonic jewels, wearing of gloves, wearing of regalia and wearing of Royal Arch jewels
- b) It is not considered appropriate to continue to wear a Past Master's Jewel after receiving Provincial Grand Rank. The acceptable standard is to wear the Royal Arch jewel nearest to the centre of the body line, the Tercentenary Jewel, then the Middlesex charity jewel to the left of it.
- c) In Middlesex, Full Dress Regalia is worn at Installation and special Meetings within the Province (Notes – procedures). The Summons should advise this practice, which may not apply elsewhere.

2.12 Misbehaviour in Lodge

- a) Such occurrences luckily are rare and can usually be resolved by the Master either admonishing those involved or by calling off the Lodge for a period to allow tempers to cool. Rule 180 gives such a recommendation, but provides for sterner action, if necessary.

2.13 Salutes

- a) Always given when the Lodge is opened in the first degree.
- b) The salutes for various ranks are detailed in Rule 6. They are generally given after the minutes, though in many Lodges they are given on the risings. Where a Visiting Officer is present, take salutes after the minutes. If a member or visitor arrives after the salutes have been given, there is no need to repeat them.
- c) It is not customary to salute Grand or Provincial Grand Officers in their own Lodges (Notes – salutations), though often done when first appointed or promoted.

2.14 Suggestion

- a) The Master is often new to the job. He will find a typed sheet with colour coded instructions useful. (it can be as simple as "item 8, Brother Secretary"). Such leads to smooth running. A common colouring is red for actions, black for Master's words and blue for cues by others.

Initiates

3. Secretaries may wish to photocopy page 34 (and page 35 for the interview) and use the tick list by crossing out each part as it is completed or not needed.

Procedure

3.1

- a) Middlesex has implemented Hermes online registrations (ORF). Firstly the candidate will be sent an email to confirm he wishes to join and then to complete the ORF.
Download and Print the completed Registration Form P (Rule 159).

- b) Check details – see tick list on page 33.

- c) The Candidate is to be interviewed by the Lodge Committee (Rule 164), or by the Master if there is no Committee, who recommend the Candidate to the Lodge. The Committee has no power to approve the Candidate. A suggested list of questions is given on page 34. The Certificate on the form is now electronically signed by the Master.

If the Candidate is thought not to be suitable, either before or at the interview, the Master or Secretary must inform the Candidate, proposer and seconder tactfully and diplomatically to preserve harmony.

- d) **Announcement** of the application is required at the regular meeting before that in which the ballot is held. This is usually done on the third rising. If the ballot is not taken, the application lapses (Rule 159). The Minutes of the meeting must clearly state that this procedure has been carried out.

If this will impose serious hardship to a prospective Candidate, refer to Rule 160 and the Provincial Office.

- e) **Summons**. Details required on the Summons (Rule 164b).

- 1) Full name, age, occupation, address (private and business - not a box number).
- 2) Name of proposer and seconder, date of proposal in open Lodge. Rule 158 complied with (if applicable).
- 3) Suggested wording 'To ballot for and, if elected, to Initiate (at a later date), Mr.....'.

- f) **Ballot**

NB BoC Rule 159; Before the ballot is taken, read confirmation of the Master's certificate "[the Master] has made due enquiry with regard to the character and qualifications of the [name] Candidate and certify the in *my opinion/the opinion of a Committee of members of the Lodge, he is a fit and proper person to be admitted as a member of the Lodge.2. . See page 7 as to ballot procedure. It is not satisfactory for the Secretary to state "the details are as on the Summons, the Lodge Committee recommends the Candidate and the Master's Certificate has been signed." *as applicable

Be aware of the rules as to rejection in the By-laws, or consult Rule 165.

- g) **Initiation**

To be within one year of ballot, with the date of the ballot on the Summons. If at a later date, it is not necessary to give full details on the Summons again (to Initiate Mr....., balloted for on). If not Initiated within a year of the ballot, the election is void and the process must be repeated (Rule 159)

h) **After Initiation**

- 1) Complete the Hermes 'Post Meeting Report' and Register of Members.
- 2) Send payment by Bank Transfer or a cheque payable to United Grand Lodge of England to **Provincial Office**, who will update their records and forward to Grand Lodge. Provincial fees are invoiced in arrears on the Annual Return.

i) **Passing and Raising**

Ensure a gap of four weeks between degrees (Rule 172). Care with emergency meetings or shared work.

Where the Summons has to raise or pass one or more or a ceremony does not take place, record this in the PMR in Hermes

Hermes automatically requests Grand Lodge when completing the PMR after Raising to request a Grand Lodge Certificate (Rule 174a).

Remember to remind a Candidate for Raising to obtain an apron.

j) **Grand Lodge Certificates**

To be presented, if possible, in open Lodge, following notice on the Summons, and entered on the Minutes (Rule 174(d)). Usually presented by a senior member of the Lodge.

It should be stressed that it is not to be displayed where non-masons can see it. Problems with visiting Lodges overseas should be mentioned. (Guidance - attendance). Membership of the Royal Arch may also be recommended (Guidance - membership).

k) **Ceremony for another Lodge**

In some circumstances, a Lodge may perform a ceremony for another Lodge. The procedure is to be found in Rule 173. There is a formal work sharing scheme in the Province for Lodges either short of work or with work to offer. Contact Provincial Office for guidance. However, Hermes can request this for you, under 'Member Management' and 'Degree by Request'

l) **Visiting other Lodges**

A member may wish to visit another Lodge before receiving his Grand Lodge Certificate. An interim certificate can be obtained (Rule 174c), but first consult the Provincial Grand Secretary. In almost all cases his host will vouch for him.

Joining Members

- 3.2 See the Initiates tick list. The differences are noted here and the list may be amended accordingly. See also Provincial Notes - Candidates.

Procedure - covers Rejoining Members also.

a) Hermes will send the required form (ORF) to the joiner or re-joiner (Rule 163 be very careful to follow the requirements of this rule.).

b) Check details

- 1) Proposed and seconded by subscribing or Honorary Members.
- 2) Clearance certificates to be provided by the Candidate of each Lodge of which he is or has been a member (Rule 163c). If not in good standing, see Rule 163d.
- 3) If the proposed Joining Member is an Entered Apprentice or Fellow Craft, and so has no Grand Lodge Certificate, consult the Provincial Grand Secretary, who will make enquiries.
- 4) If from abroad, see Rule 163e.

Note that failure to enquire could involve the payment of outstanding fees to the other Lodge (Rule 163d).

c) **Interview** if the Lodge normal practice (see Rule 164).

d) **Announcement** of the application is required at the regular meeting before that in which the ballot is held (Rule 163a).

e) **Summons**

- 1) The details required are as for an Initiate, except that his age is not required. Give names and numbers of Lodges of which he is or has been a member.
- 2) Suggested wording 'To ballot for, as a Joining Member

f) **Before the meeting**

- 1) Ensure a copy of the by-laws is available.
- 2) Examine Grand Lodge Certificate (Rule 163c). Rule 163e gives procedure if issued other than under the English Constitution.

g) **Ballot** after notice on the Summons.

- 1) As to rejection consult Lodge By-laws and Rule 165.
- 2) If the place is not taken up within a year, the application lapses (Rule 163a).
- 3) It is common procedure for the intended Joining Member to retire during the ballot.

h) After Acceptance

- 1) Complete PMR in Hermes and record the acceptance of the member.
- 2) Hermes will update Provincial and Grand Lodge records.

i) Precedence

- 1) A Joining Member takes precedence on the Summons after the last Initiate. He takes precedence in Lodge according to his rank.
- 2) A Past Master of the Lodge on rejoining takes precedence as junior Past Master from the date he rejoins (Guidance - joining)

For example; Master in 1998 rejoins 2003, takes precedence after IPM (2001/2)

Cessation of Membership

3.3

Province by-law 3.4 requires that Provincial Office is to be advised as soon as possible of a member ceasing for any reason, this is achieved by prompt update of Hermes. In practice, events other than death or exclusion for unmasonic conduct can generally be notified when the Annual Return is completed. It is equally important to amend the Register of Members.

a) Death

- 1) Advise Provincial Office immediately, preferably in Hermes or by phone, confirmed in writing or by E-mail, noting if there is felt to be a need to advise senior members of the Province.
Nothing gives a Lodge a bad name as much as a widow receiving a letter sometime after his death. That the members attended the funeral or stood to order in his memory does not update the Provincial or Grand Lodge records. An In Memoriam should be on the next Summons.
- 2) The death of a Grand Officer should be advised in writing to the Provincial Grand Secretary.
- 3) If the death is of the Master or a regular officer, a replacement is required. If of the Secretary, the Grand Secretary and Provincial Grand Secretary should be advised as to whom correspondence should be sent. Usually an Acting Secretary is appointed immediately. If of the Treasurer, appoint a temporary officer, subject to election in the normal way in due course. See Rule 112b.

b) **Resignation** - voluntary

- 1) Membership of a Lodge and of the Craft are completely separate entities.
- 2) A member has a right to resign from his Lodge (Rule 183). He may withdraw such resignation, either voluntarily or on request by the Lodge.
- 3) If notice has been given to him of procedure for exclusion under Rule 181 - see below - a resignation cannot be withdrawn.
- 4) A member has a similar right in respect of the Craft but has to surrender his Grand Lodge Certificates (Rule 183A).

c) **Certificates** of Lodge Membership (**Clearance Certificate**)

- 1) Any member, or former member, may request a certificate of good standing without fee (Rule 175). Remember to check first with the Treasurer that all dues have been paid. The simplest form states 'Bro. X is/was a member of this Lodge and is/was not indebted to the Lodge'
- 2) See this Rule where there is any situation when a clean certificate cannot be given. The most common reason is where a member is in arrears of subscription either currently or when ceasing membership of the Lodge. There can also be cases where a member has been excluded, suspended or expelled.
For legal reasons, the letter must be factual, e.g. 'Bro. X resigned from the Lodge in 2xxx, in arrears with his subscription to the Lodge'.

d) **Non-payment of subscriptions**

Subscriptions become due and payable upon the first day of the subscription year.

- 1) Over two years - automatically under Rule 148. The cessation of membership should be reported on the Third Rising at the next regular meeting and entered in the minutes and Register of Members.
- 2) The advice to the member should note that he will not be able to attend any Lodge unless he is a subscribing member of a Lodge (Rule 127i). It has to be accepted that this can be difficult to prove if he is a guest of a Lodge member.
- 3) Rule 148 gives provisions as to ability to rejoin and does not prevent action under Rule 181.

A case can arise where the member has paid but dues have not been remitted for some reason. There is a right of redress on submission of proof of payment (Rule 150).

e) **Exclusion** from the Lodge (Rule 181). Note that **expulsion** can only be dealt with by Grand Lodge and the terms should not be confused. This may arise from two causes,

- 1) Non-payment of subscriptions for a period of less than two years, if provided in the Lodge by-laws.
- 2) A complaint of unmasonic conduct.

The following procedure, detailed in the Rule, relates to a complaint and may be varied in the case of non-payment, provided the principles are maintained. The Master and the Secretary should familiarise themselves with the Rule in advance.

Procedure

- 1) Notice in writing as detailed in 181(a)(i), being careful to follow the detail. See page 21 as to service of notice. Sent by Registered Post to last known address (but see Correspondence, page 21, paragraph 8.7).
- 2) Summons to state 'To ballot for the exclusion of a Brother under Rule 181, Book of Constitutions' ONLY. No other detail or names. Note Rule 181 (ii) – may be a written notice to all members.
- 3) In Lodge, visitors, other than an Official Visitor, are asked to withdraw.
- 4) Members to be advised of procedure (e to h below). To avoid dissention, the Master will probably need to rule in advance that there will be no discussion (see also Rule 180). He may, in some circumstances, wish to ask a senior member of the Lodge to take the chair for this item, especially if he may be construed as being personally involved.
- 5) Secretary to read letter of complaint, or detail of outstanding debt.
- 6) Member, if present, may reply, being required to speak strictly about the complaint with a time limit (say, 10 minutes) imposed in advance or the Secretary may read a statement submitted in advance.
- 7) A ballot is required (Rule 181d) with two-thirds of the members present voting for exclusion (181e). State in the minutes how many that is. Appoint a senior member of the Lodge to act as scrutineer with the Master. The member, if present, is also entitled to scrutinise the count.
- 8) Ballot taken by Deacons. Junior Deacon gives one ball to each member, do not allow members to take a ball.
- 9) The result is announced. If the ballot is in favour of exclusion, the excluded Brother leaves of his own accord.
- 10) If the Brother is absent, the Secretary advises him in writing of the result and that, if excluded, he cannot attend any Lodge unless he is a subscribing member of a Lodge (Rule 127i). It is advisable to confirm this to an excluded member in writing even if he was present.
- 11) The Secretary advises Grand Secretary and Provincial Grand Secretary promptly in writing in the case of unmasonic conduct. For non-payment of subscriptions, the Annual Return will suffice.

Other Points

- 1) If for non-payment of subscriptions, a composite ballot may be taken initially.
- 2) If for non-payment of subscriptions, advise Grand Secretary and Provincial Grand Secretary if they are subsequently paid (Rule 181h).
- 3) The Provincial Grand Master may order reinstatement (Rule 182) if a complaint is made within three months.
- 4) The effective date of exclusion will be the date of the meeting.

d) Disciplinary Matters

There are a whole variety of these, including

- 1) Masonic disputes (Rule 184).
- 2) Appeals and complaints (Rule 185)
- 3) Advertising (Guidance - advertising) or publication (Rule 177)
- 4) Duty to act within the law and to report convictions (Rule 179 & 179A)

The Provincial Grand Master has power to suspend Brethren (Rule 75). Grand Lodge has power to expel.

Procedure (Province By-law 10)

- 1) The Master to act promptly to enquire into the matter and endeavour to resolve it.
- 2) The Master may wish to consult the Lodge Visiting Officer.
- 3) Write to the Provincial Grand Secretary stating the position clearly and objectively. Who does this will depend on those involved.

It is worth noting that writing direct to the Grand Master, Provincial Grand Master or Pro Provincial Grand Master may itself be construed as a disciplinary matter (Rule 17 and Province by-law 8.3).

Minutes

4.

- 4.1 A **Minute Book** has to be kept and the detail entered therein (Rule 144). There is no specific provision as to whether it has to be a bound book, written minutes or loose leaf. The only essential is that it has to be a permanent record.
- 4.2 The minutes are to be read at the next regular meeting unless a copy has been circulated to each member of the Lodge. (Rule 144). This overrides, in this case only, the provisions of Rule 177 forbidding publication of masonic proceedings. It is recommended the Minutes are circulated to the members in advance of the meeting to avoid the need to read them in the meeting.
- 4.3 Apart from this, there are no firm rules, though accepted procedure is that the minutes should mirror the course of the meeting fairly accurately and that a copy of the Summons should accompany the signed copy of the minutes. Individual styles are welcome, but extensive verbosity is not appreciated.
- 4.4 With the increased use of word processing, there can be an advantage in having the minutes of each meeting during the year on separate files. It is only necessary to alter names for such items as Installation. Distribution of copies of the minutes with the Summons keeps members informed, especially if prevented from attending a meeting.

4.5 Suggested Outline

- a) Where and when. Sample wording; 'Minutes of the 123rd Regular Meeting of the Backyard Lodge No. 9989 held at the Somewhere Masonic Centre on Monday 31st January 2003 at 6p.m.'
- b) Those present - office and officers, members, visitors. The most practical way is to use the format in the Signature Book, e.g.

Officers	Worshipful Master	W. Bro. T H E Boss
	As Senior Warden	Bro. A S Tandin
Members	W. Bros....., Bros.....	
Visitors	Name, Lodge name and number, masonic rank.	

If to be read in open Lodge, read the Master and Wardens' names and suggest the others are taken as read, having entered in pencil in the margin, e.g. 10 officers, 8 members, 12 visitors.

- c) Warrant displayed and Lodge opened.
- d) Minutes of previous meeting and confirmation thereof.
- e). Detail of ceremonies undertaken, initially as on the Summons (but see Rule 144(i)). If the work is undertaken in all or in part by other than the Master or usual officers, it is courteous to give their names and can be advantageous later when considering honours recommendations. For the wording there may be a need refer to previous similar ceremonies in past Minutes.
- f). Alms collected to £x - remind the Treasurer to tell you. Proceeds from raffles etc. at the after proceedings may be included for later reference.
- g) Any other reports and business. Care to enter items subject to notice of motion correctly.
- h) Risings. These should have been prepared in advance, see page 3, and taken from the worksheets.
- i) Closure of the Lodge

4.6 Recommendations and suggestions

It is not necessary to record everything that happened in the Temple. It has been known for the ceremony to be repeated almost word for word in the minutes (took 25 minutes to read). Particularly if minutes are being circulated, and could be read by non-masons, details of ceremonies should not be included.

With the risings, especially on the Third Rising, the use of short notes and/or bullet points can be an advantage. Again, it is not necessary to include every domestic item (the Treasurer reminded the Brethren that one had not yet paid for his meal).

When writing minutes of a meeting, it can be advantageous to deal with one item at a time. For example, "minutes were agreed" – put them in the Minute Book. When files are empty and minutes written, the job is done.

Some Secretaries print the computer file of the previous year's minutes and amend it as forecast for the forthcoming meeting. At the meeting, amend this draft in red: the minutes are nearly finished before the meeting ends. Sitting in Lodge with a laptop is inelegant and important items can be missed.

4.7 Records

The permanent records of the Lodge are the Register of Members (Rule 146 (ii)), the Summons, the Signature Book, the Declaration Book and the Minute Book. They should be kept in a safe place and retained indefinitely, see Rule 144. Usual practice is to retain a copy of the Summons in the Minute Book.

Where signature sheets are used instead of a book, these should be attached to the minutes to form a proper record.

The accounts are usually “entered in the minutes” and a signed copy should be retained therein.

Where records are retained on computer, the Data Protection Act may require every member to be aware of that fact.

How other records are maintained and for how long will depend on individual practice and thinking. Some ideas are given, but do not have any regulatory authority.

If prior year information can be obtained from other sources, such as yearbooks, a short retention period may suffice.

Most items relating to a particular meeting need not be retained, nor need working papers after the minutes are approved.

A file for each year enables systematic pruning to be done.

The Statute of Limitations enables most documentation to be disposed of after six years.

4.8 Circulation of Minutes

Normal practice is to send a copy of the minutes with the Summons for the next meeting to subscribing members and those Honorary Members who were subscribing members.

After Proceedings

5.

Since customs vary so widely, no specific rules are made, only guidance as to good manners. However, as the Festive Board is not strictly a Masonic Lodge, customs usually dictate who does such as choosing the menu and liaison with the centre and caterers. This is usually the (Assistant) Secretary.

- 5.1 It is not now considered correct practice for the Master, when entering, to be accompanied by the Initiate.. The after proceedings are under the control of the Director of Ceremonies – but see 5.5 below (Notes – Initiates).
- 5.2 **Challenging and Cross Toasting** should not be permitted. Excessive wine taking is detrimental. (Guidance – after-proceedings).
- 5.3 The **Hall Stone Jewel** is worn when craft regalia is worn (Rule 251 and Guidance Decisions – Hall Stone). It is not therefore appropriate to wear it at after proceedings.
- 5.4 The **Gavel** was given to the Master at his Installation and, correctly, only he should use it, not, for example, the IPM in wine taking.

- 5.5 Where an **Official Visitor** is accompanied by a Provincial Director of Ceremonies, his DC will take control of the proceedings, including a 'White Table' - see below.
- 5.6 The **Seating Order** to the right of the Master is Initiate (if any), 'Chains' (see page 26) in order of seniority, Visiting Officer, Lodge Grand Officers. Note that Lodge Grand Officers, or Grand Officers as personal guests, may not wish to be seated at the top table.
- 5.7 **Visiting Officer** is seated prior to the entry of the Master and do not enter with him.
- 5.8 **Toast List**. This is usually provided at centres within the Province and is to be found in the Provincial Year Book after Notes. Care to note any changes advised since the issue of the Year Book.
- 5.9 **Smoking** is not permitted.
- 5.10 An **Official Visitor** will normally reply to the toast to the Province.
- 5.11 **Masonic 'Fire'** is given after the toast to 'The King, The Craft and Royal Arch Masonry', but not to 'The King'.
- 5.12 **White Table** where Ladies and/or non-Masons are present.

White Table Procedures

Full coverage is given in Provincial Notes under White Table. Points to note.

- a) It should be avoided at both Installation and Initiation meetings, where special events take place. (see also Guidance - non-masons).
- b) The following should take place in Lodge and not in the after proceedings,
 - 1) Any address by an Official Visitor is to be on the Second Rising.
 - 2) Charity collection.
 - 3) Any matter of masonic business.
- c) In addressing the assembled company, use 'Worshipful Master, Ladies, (Gentlemen) and Brethren', and 'Immediate Past Master'.
- d) Grace is to omit Masonic references and is to be by the (Acting) Lodge Chaplain. That after the meal may be sung, provided all have the words.
- e) Wine taking is restricted to,
 - 1) Master and visiting Pro (Deputy, Assistant) Provincial Grand Master, not Visiting Officer.
 - 2) Master and all - to remain seated.
 - 3) Pro (Deputy, Assistant) Provincial Grand Master with all - to remain seated.
 - 4) Master with Ladies (and non-masonic guests). If only ladies, courteous that they remain seated, otherwise all should stand.

f) Toasts are restricted to

- 1) The King, by the Master.
- 2) The Worshipful Master, by the IPM. The Master may reply.
- 3) Neither the toast, nor the reply, is to give any reference to the work in the Temple.

Neither Masonic Fire nor the Tyler's Toast is to be given.

Accounts/Fees/Treasurer

6.

More detailed guidance is given to Treasurers. This section only deals with the subject as it affects the Secretary.

- 6.1 **Annual Accounts** - are made up, audited, sent to members and presented in accordance with Lodge By-laws. A copy is to be sent to Provincial Grand Lodge at the same time as they are sent to members (Province by-law 9). There is an advantage to check the Treasurer has this in hand some three months before the due date.

It is not appropriate for the Treasurer, nor the Audit Committee members, to propose or second the adoption of the accounts.

6.2 **Election**

- a) The Treasurer shall be elected in the same way and on the same day as the Master (Rule 112).
- b) It is normal also to elect members of the Audit Committee at the same time. In view of the legal position of professional auditors, who need a practising certificate, it is recommended that the words 'Audit Committee' be used instead of 'auditors'.

- 6.3 **Prolonged Absence or Incapacity** of the Treasurer is covered by Rule 112.

- 6.4 **Subscriptions** are payable and restrictions can be placed by the by-laws on those who have not paid (Rule 145).

Lodge by-laws may provide that the services of the Secretary are equivalent to the Lodge subscription (Rule 104c). Where the full subscription includes dining, either the full amount or the non-dining element may be regarded as coming within Rule 104c.

The By-laws may also have a provision for the Master and/or the Secretary to have an allowance for guests of the Lodge.

- 6.5 **Duties** of the Treasurers and Audit Committee are covered by Rule 153.

- 6.6 **Fee** for Initiation cannot be waived and must be paid either prior or on the same day (Rule 169).

Rule 171 makes the proposer and seconder responsible for the fees of the Initiate and Joining Member.

- 6.6 A **Schedule of Fees** is sent out each year by both Grand and Provincial Grand Lodge and a copy should be given to the Treasurer.

Secretaries are sometimes asked what has to go into the Lodge accounts – refer to Rule 153.

All moneys due to, or held for, the Lodge.

Any other funds maintained by or in connection with the Lodge. This includes moneys which are not required to be part of the Lodge Funds.

By-Laws of the Lodge

7. See also Provincial Notes – Lodge by-laws

- 7.1 If By-laws are more than a few years old, consideration should be given to adopting the format of the Model By-laws. Seek guidance from the Provincial Grand Secretary.
- 7.2 If so wished, a Lodge may include in the published by-laws other matter such as the original by-laws. It is important that which is the current by-laws and which is additional material are clearly indicated.
- 7.3 Details of regular meetings, specifying which shall be the Installation meeting, are required to be included (Rule 137).
- 7.4 A copy of the by-laws is to be given to each incoming member and each incoming Master and his acceptance of them is deemed to be an undertaking to comply with them (Rule 138).
- 7.5 It is not necessary for the By-Laws to be read in Open Lodge (Guidance, - reading).
- 7.6 Draft by-laws, or amendments, require approval through the Provincial Grand Secretary.
- 7.7 **Procedure** in respect of amendments
- a) Contact Provincial Office, who can provide advice on the recommended format.
 - b) Agree the changes in Committee.
 - c) If of a major nature, submit the draft changes to members of the Lodge. This will give an opportunity for comment. If, for example, the change is solely to amend the time of grace before cessation of membership for non-payment of fees, prior full consultation may not be needed.
 - d) It is advisable to contact the Provincial Office for guidance as to possible acceptance.
 - e) The change is then to be agreed at a regular meeting, with full details of the proposed amendment printed on the Summons. Though not specifically required, it is advisable to give notice of motion at the previous meeting.
 - f) Submit the form in triplicate to Provincial Office for approval.
 - g) A printed copy of the revised by-law, when approved, is sent to the Grand Secretary and Provincial Grand Secretary (Rule 136). Especially if the change is material, copies may be sent to all members.

Note

The Provincial Grand Master may approve amendments “substantially in accord with model by-laws”, otherwise approval of the Grand Master is required (Rule 136). It is required that all amendments are such as can be approved within the Province. NB By Law changes are not valid until formal approval by the Grand Master.

Correspondence and Addresses

8.

Correspondence

- 8.1 All correspondence for the Provincial Grand Master or the Pro Provincial Grand Master is to be sent through the Provincial Grand Secretary (Province 8.3 & Notes - communications).

Similarly, communication to the Grand Master is through the Grand Secretary (Rule 17).

- 8.2 Correspondence with other masonic bodies is through Grand Secretaries (Guidance - correspondence)
- 8.3 Items are to be sent to such persons as the Provincial Grand Master may direct (Province By-law 9).
- 8.4 Secretaries are requested to scrutinise any correspondence carefully and take appropriate action, especially as regards sending notices of seminars, receptions etc. to those involved.
- 8.5 Grand Lodge and other central bodies' circulars, etc. are to be distributed as requested within a reasonable time. This is usually with the Summons for the next meeting. Where there is a long interval between meetings (often 6 months through the summer) it may be advisable to gather routine correspondence and make a mid season mailing.

Service of Notice

See Rule 191 as to requirements. This applies especially in disciplinary matters

Addresses

- 8.6 Neither a masonic prefix nor rank should be shown on an envelope (Guidance - masonic designation). Use Initials and name, with Mr. or Esq.
- 8.7 Where rules state registered post, recorded delivery, 'signed for' is acceptable (Guidance - recorded delivery).
- 8.8 Provincial Office staff does not check the addresses on Summonses. Hermes should be used to amend any member's details as they become known.
- If the Provincial Office is not informed, mistakes can occur with possible embarrassment to the Province and hence to the Lodge.
- 8.9 Many addresses can be found by use of the Contents list in the Masonic Year Book and Provincial Year Book. Some are not so easy.

Provincial Grand Almoner in list of officers of Provincial Committees.

Assistant Provincial Grand Masters in Masonic Notes.

Honorary Members

9.

9.1 There is a tendency to appoint a long serving member to Honorary Membership. What is more important than his age is his service to Masonry.

9.2 Be aware that, if a Brother is not a subscribing member of at least one Lodge, he may find it difficult to obtain relief from Masonic charities should he fall upon hard times.

9.3 A member should not be given Honorary Membership solely because he cannot pay his dues (Guidance - honorary). There are other ways to overcome such a problem.

9.4 Procedure (Rule 167)

- a) Check that he is a subscribing member of a Lodge and willing to accept the honour.
- b) If it is proposed to elect the (Pro) Provincial Grand Master, or other senior provincial officer, consult the Provincial Grand Secretary.
- c) Give notice of motion at one regular meeting and place the proposition on the Summons for the next.
- d) Election is by ballot, and the number of any votes against is to be recorded.

9.5 Status (Rule 167)

- a) Not liable for fees to Lodge, nor is Lodge liable for Grand Lodge or Provincial Lodge dues. Not included in Annual or Installation Returns.
- b) May attend, but not vote or hold office.
- c) If a Past Master of the Lodge, may propose or second Candidates.

9.6 Precedence where a Lodge has a number of Honorary Members.

Current Pro (Deputy, Assistant) Provincial Grand Master will normally appear first, Grand Officers follow, then Provincial Grand Officers. They should be listed in order of seniority of the masonic rank held. (Guidance and Notes - precedence).

9.7 Summons

- a) Honorary Members are entitled to receive copies of the Summons.
- b) If the Pro or Deputy Provincial Grand Master is an Honorary Member of the Lodge, there is no need to send him a separate Summons unless so requested.

Lodge of Instruction/Lodge Committees

10.

10.1 Lodge of Instruction

- a) Lodges of Instruction are to be governed by a regular Lodge (Rule 132). How the Lodge governs the Lodge of Instruction is a matter for local practice within the constraints of Rule 132.
- b) A Lodge of Instruction shall keep minutes, and any officer shall surrender Lodge of Instruction property when ceasing office or when called upon (Rule 134). This would be either to his successor in office or to the Lodge Secretary
- c) The times and places of meeting and any changes thereto are to be approved by the Provincial Grand Secretary (Rule 133).
- d) A Lodge may withdraw recognition from the Lodge of Instruction - see Rule 135 for procedure.
- e) It is suggested that the offices of Secretary and/or Treasurer of the Lodge of Instruction be held by junior members of the Lodge who have potential for holding those offices in the Lodge.

10.2 Lodge Committees

Lodge Committees may be authorised by the by-laws (Rule 154) but do not have executive powers unless so stated.

Master and Officers

11.

11.1 Master

Election to be on the day named in the by-laws (Rule 105a).

- a) If by ballot, state who is eligible, by position, and indicate for whom members may wish to vote. Ensure in advance that sufficient election slips are ready.
- b) If there is only one nomination and no member present calls for a ballot, the Master may declare named Brother elected. Suggested wording for the Summons.

To elect a Worshipful Master and Treasurer for the ensuing year.

(Note: The only nominations of which the Secretary is aware are of Bro. as Master and Bro. as Treasurer and, subject to the provisions of Rules 105(a) and 112(a) respectively, it is proposed to declare a ballot in their favour. Any member may, however, demand a ballot)

- c) After the election, remind the Master Elect he will need a different apron for his Installation.. A separate meeting with the Master Elect to discuss such items as his officers may be an advantage

11.2 Eligible (Rule 105a).

- a) Any Past Master.

- b) Any Warden who has served a full year in that office, that is from one Installation to the next. If it is desired to elect as Master a Warden who has not so served see Rule 109. In some of the circumstances outlined below, a later date may be regarded as the regular Installation date for this purpose - see the relevant Rule.

11.3 Problems that may arise before Installation.

- a) No Brother may be Master of two or more Lodges at the same time except by dispensation (Rule 115).
- b) Note that, in some of the circumstances outlined in the following sections, it may be necessary to seek a dispensation under Rule 115 for a Master who has served two years to continue in office.
 - 1) Motion that the Master Elect be not installed - see Rule 105b for detailed procedure to be strictly followed.
 - 2) Master Elect dies or becomes disqualified or incapacitated or declines office.
 - Less than seven days before Installation, outgoing Master continues (Rule 107).
 - Not less than 7 days before Installation. Issue revised Summons to elect replacement, for Installation at a later meeting. (Rule 106).
 - Not less than 2 months between the regular dates of election and Installation and not less than 6 weeks before Installation. Convene an emergency meeting to elect a replacement. (Rule 106).

11.4 Master Elect not present at Installation meeting

- a) Installation postponed to another regular or emergency meeting within 5 weeks (Rule 108a).
- b) 11.4b If not then present, election is void and outgoing Master continues (Rule 108b).
- c) 11.4c No Master Elect may assume the Master's chair until he had been installed (Rule 105c)

11.5 At the Installation meeting

- a) It is suggested that arrangements are made in advance to place Past Masters as Wardens and Inner Guard to facilitate the ceremony and Installation of officers.
- b) The summary of the Antient Charges and Regulations to be read by the Secretary to a new Master (Rule 111) is on page vii of the Book of Constitutions. Put a marker in beforehand. The full version is after the Rules.
- c) If a Board of Installed Masters cannot be constituted, act as though Master Elect is absent (Rule 108c). The quorum for a Board is three (Guidance – Board, definition).
- d) If the outgoing Master is not present to be invested, he cannot be invested at a later date (Guidance – Board, definition (iii)).

11.6 **Problems** that may arise **during** the year of office

- a) Death or incapacity. Wardens and Past Masters to act (Rule 119a).
- b) Absence. See Rule 119b as to precedence in assuming the Chair, though the Master may arrange, usually in conjunction with the Director of Ceremonies and/or Secretary, for a member to act for him (Rule 119d)
- c) If *no Installed Master* is present, abandon the meeting, enter as such in the Minute Book (Rule 119c).
- d) The Master may remove an officer and shall fill a vacancy in a regular office -Rules 120 & 121.

11.7 **Master Continuing** in office for a second year. This may be either under the provisions of Rule 107 or because the Lodge so wishes. If the latter, he must be elected in the normal way.

Possible procedure:

Agenda to read 'To proclaim W. Bro.....as Master'

Place Past Masters as Wardens and Inner Guard to facilitate investiture of officers.

Open in three degrees and commence ceremony from closing of Board of Installed Masters, or

Conduct ceremony in first degree, amending proclamation accordingly.

No address to the Master, to the Wardens only if there is a change.

11.8 **Officers**

- a) Most provisions regarding Lodge Officers are found in Rule 104 and Notes - Officers

104(a) Divides these into

Regular Officers who must be appointed (Master, Wardens, Treasurer, Secretary, Deacons, Inner Guard, Tyler)

Additional Officers who shall be appointed (Almoner, Charity Steward)

Additional Officers who may be appointed. (Chaplain, a Director of Ceremonies, a Membership Officer, a Mentor, an Assistant Director of Ceremonies, an Organist, an Assistant Secretary and a Steward or Stewards) and no other.

No Brother can hold more than one Regular Office but may also hold one additional office.

104(b)

All officers, except the Tyler, must be subscribing members of the Lodge.

104(d)

Precedence for investiture and otherwise is given in detail. In practice, this is the order that should be shown has not previously been occupied on the Summons. Reference will mainly be required when a member is appointed to an Additional Office that has not previously been occupied.

104(e)

No Brother has any right to claim advancement. Except for those who have to be elected (Master, Treasurer and, usually, Tyler), appointments are in the sole discretion and power of the Master.

Secretaries need to remember this when guiding the Master Elect.

104(f) & 104(g)

The Immediate Past Master is not an officer of the Lodge (104f). He holds his office by virtue of his Mastership and takes precedence immediately in front of the Chaplain (104g).

Rule 113

The Tyler, if not a subscribing member, is to be elected on the same day as the election of the Master and Treasurer. If a member of the Lodge he is appointed.

Rule 116

On Installation, the Master shall invest all his officers present.

Official Visits and Visitors

12.

12.1 **Official Visits** see also Notes – official visits and procedures

- a) Where an official visit is desired for a specific occasion, such as a Lodge anniversary or Banner Dedication, a written notice should be given to the Provincial Grand Secretary at least six months, preferably two years, ahead. Senior Officer diaries tend to fill up quickly (Notes – Summons).
- b) Official visits divide into two categories, with different procedures:
By a 'Chain' - Pro (Deputy, Assistant) Provincial Grand Master
Visiting Officer on behalf of the Provincial Grand Master.
- c) By a '**Chain**'. You will be instructed to include in the Summons, usually immediately after the confirmation of the minutes 'To receive the (Pro, Deputy, Assistant) Provincial Grand Master'.

Will be accompanied by a Director of Ceremonies, who will liaise with the Lodge.

Any other salutes are to be given before he enters,

The Master should offer the gavel, as there is a right to occupy the Chair (Rule 122).

The visiting Director of Ceremonies will take charge of placing in the recession/retiring procession.

12.2 By a **Visiting Officer**

- It is not to be regarded as an inspection, but as a link with the Provincial Executive.
- To be seated on the immediate right of the Brother presiding (Rule 124), except when certain senior brethren are present.

- Will not be accompanied and will be present in the Lodge before it is opened. If it is the custom of the Lodge for the Master to enter in procession, it may be appropriate for the Lodge DC to escort him to his seat immediately prior to the entry of the procession.
- Not separately saluted. Salutes are to be given after the minutes are taken and the Brother calling the salute will refer to W. Bro. XXX (name and rank) on an Official Visit by command of the Right Worshipful Provincial Grand Master.
- He will reply to the salute to his rank (Grand or Provincial) regardless of seniority.
- At the end of the meeting, the VO is placed behind the Senior Warden in the recession/retiring procession, NOT next to the Master.

12.3 Requests for Information will be sent to the Lodge Secretary some time before the visit.

The supply of the information requested is of importance to the Visiting Officer to enable him to do his job properly.

Part of this job is to make recommendations for honours (see page 28 regarding appointments & promotions). If he has not the information, he is not able to recommend, to the Lodge's detriment.

12.4 Involvement of Official Visitors

Do not assume that an Official Visitor, at any level, will take any part in the ceremonies. It is courteous to make early enquiries, usually by telephone. Rarely will a Visiting Officer take any part as he would rather see the Lodge work.

12.5 Other Visitors to the Lodge

- If not known to, or vouched by, a member of the Lodge, make due examination (Rule 125 and Guidance - attendance), especially if from another constitution. This is usually by examination of his Grand Lodge Certificate.
- The Master has power to refuse admission (Rule 126).
- See Rule 127 for procedure in case of someone who is not a subscribing member of any Lodge by reason of:

Exclusion for non-payment.
Expulsion or resignation from the Craft.
Other reason.

Accepted that this may be difficult to ascertain and even more difficult to implement without causing hurt feelings.

12.6 Senior Officers

- When senior members of Grand Lodge or of other Provinces propose to visit a Lodge informally, it is essential that the Provincial Grand Secretary be advised as soon as it is known, to ascertain whether any courtesies need to be observed.
- Secretaries should advise the Provincial Grand Secretary by phone, noting that many such senior members could be members of Bard of Avon Lodge No 778 and so Middlesex members.

12.7 Visits to Other Lodges

Guidance - attendance, covers attendance at Lodges overseas. The procedures should be either on the Summons as a permanent reminder or mentioned at intervals in open Lodge.

Appointments and Promotions

13.

Secretaries often receive enquiries from members and may find these notes of use.

13.1 Lodge See notes on Officers on page 25

13.2 Province so far as it applies to Middlesex. Other Provinces vary.

Appointments are in the absolute discretion of the Provincial Grand Master within the limits of Rule 68(a) except that the Treasurer is elected. Ranks given may be either Acting or Past.

Acting (Present) Ranks are as implied, and usually indicate the recipient is active in his Lodge(s) and a member of one of the Installed Masters' Lodges. Duties are required.

A Past Master can generally expect to be considered for appointment to Provincial Rank seven to nine years after he has left the chair, the rank depending upon regular attendance at meetings and what he has done since leaving the chair.

It should be noted that holding a non-progressive office within the Lodge for over six years can be seen as a negative matter which may be holding up other members' eligibility for appointment.

Provincial Grand Stewards are selected and appointed any time from attaining the chair. Being appointed a Provincial Grand Steward does not affect appointment to other Provincial Ranks.

13.3 Procedure

See also 12.5 on page 27. The recommendations are collated by the Assistant Provincial Grand Master responsible for the group and discussed with the Deputy Provincial Grand Master, who submits them to the Provincial Grand Master for approval.

When an honour is offered, and accepted, it is expected and only common courtesy, to attend the Investiture meeting to receive the honour unless there are any extenuating circumstances.

13.4 Other Provinces

Provincial Office should be advised by letter of a member of the Lodge being appointed Master of a Lodge or receiving Provincial Rank in another Province or in London.

13.5 Grand Rank

Whereas Provincial Grand Rank relates to work in Lodges, recommendations for Grand Rank relate to work in the Lodge, Province or wider Masonry.

The Province is advised of the number of new appointments that can be made each year. They are few in number and recommendations are put forward for these, and for promotions, to the Grand Master by the Provincial Grand Master. Grand Rank appointments and promotions are awarded at the sole discretion of the Grand Master.

Any recommendation should be discussed with the Lodge Visiting Officer in the first instance.

Returns

14. Are all now managed within Hermes

In order that the Grand Lodge and Provincial Grand Lodge Offices may assist Lodges, it is important to keep them informed. One way is by the prompt submission of returns.

Failure to submit Returns in time - Rule 152 provides for penalties, as does Province 3.3.

Titles

15

15.1

Some confusion can arise as to the correct abbreviations.

- a) For ease of reference, see the alphabetical listings at the end of the Provincial Year Book. Basic guidelines, with example of Junior Deacon.

Grand Ranks -	Present/Active -	no prefix	JGD
	Past -	prefix P	PJGD
Provincial Ranks -	Present/Active-	prefix Prov	ProvJGD
	Past Active-	prefix PProv	PProvJGD
	Past Rank only-	prefix PPr	PPrJGD

Thus in Middlesex, 'Prov' and 'PProv' are used solely to indicate holders of Active offices Present or Past and 'PPr' only for appointments to and promotions in Past Rank.

Where space does not permit 'Prov', 'Pr' is acceptable, as used in the individual Lodge listing in the Year Book for holders of Past Active Rank.

- b) Where a member is a Grand Officer, it is not necessary to also include Provincial Rank. However, this may be included to show senior Active Provincial Rank, if wished.
- c) Where a member is a Provincial Officer and has received promotion, it is not correct to include previous rank in the same Province.
- d) Where a member holds rank in more than one Province and/or London, show the Middlesex rank first.
- e) When showing rank in other Provinces, include the name of the Province in brackets after the rank.. There is no precedence between London and Provincial Grand Ranks.
- f) It is not appropriate to include the Secretary's rank on the part of the Summons calling the meeting.

Meeting Tick List

This sheet is designed so that it can be copied and each item ticked as completed. Reference is to M Day, hence M-7 is 7 days before the meeting. It is complementary to the Initiates tick list.

- M-42 Prepare Summons and send to printer.
 Any changes of address, rank, new members, etc.
 Draft agenda – check from last year's Summons.
 Notices of motion – check last two meetings' minutes.
 Dress for Installation Meeting - see page 8 at 2.12.
- M-28 Distribute papers – see page 5
 Summons.
 Minutes of last meeting.
 Secretarial notes and attendance slip.
 Anything else to send out.

Retain three copies of Summons.

Minute book, printer next time, agenda next year.

Advise centre of dining menu and estimate of numbers.

- M-21 Check regalia required for the Master Elect and Candidate for Raising
Ensure a Book of Constitutions and a copy of the Lodge By-laws is held for the Master Elect or Initiate
- M-14 Review position as regards officers, advise DC of potential problems.
- M-7 Check likely dining numbers. Prepare list of diners (also for Treasurer) and table plans.
Prepare folders (see page 3)
- M-4 Advise Centre of final dining numbers
Load case with what to take – see next page – What to take
- M+3 Write up minutes
Stick signed minutes and Summons in Minute Book
File papers needed for future reference where they can be easily retrieved.
File other papers in year file
Send to Provincial Office
Advise of work not done or where the Summons gives an option.
Form P with cheque, if required, in favour of the United Grand Lodge of England.
Installation and/or Annual Returns
Send to Grand Lodge
Form P5 after Raising for Grand Lodge Certificate.
Installation and/or Annual Returns.

Now plan the next one!

What to Take

The Secretary is usually the one lugging a large case, but it is not necessary to take every item every time. The following are suggested.

1. Each Meeting

- a) Necessary - Signature book or sheets. Not in themselves a record of attendance unless fully completed.
 - Minutes of previous meeting for signature. If on a separate sheet, it is not necessary to take the Minute Book: put it in the Book after the meeting.
 - Spare copies of Summons.
 - Application forms.
 - Items relevant to agenda - see folders on page 3.
- b) Recommended- Book of Constitutions (amended) and Lodge by-laws.
For reference- Guidance for Members of the Craft & Masonic Charities Information.
 - Masonic Year Book.
 - Provincial Year Book.
 - Various booklets issued by Grand Lodge.
 - Secretaries' Guide.

2. **Initiation**
 - Book of Constitutions for Initiate.
 - Lodge by-laws for Initiate.
 - Declaration Book.
 - Ballot box. This is usually in the Lodge Room, but make sure it has enough balls in it. (the responsibility of the DC, but check to be sure).
3. **Joining Member**
 - Lodge by-laws for Joining Member.
 - Ballot box.
4. **Elections**
 - Sufficient voting slips for Master and Treasurer if by ballot.
5. **Installation**
 - Collar for Immediate Past Master, depending on Lodge custom.
 - Book of Constitutions for Master and to read Antient Charges.
 - Lodge by-laws for Master.
 - Returns completed ready for signature by the new Master (see page 31).
6. **Official Visitor**
 - Papers sent to you and copies of your replies.
 - A note of any points that you wish to raise.

Approximate Timings

	<u>Time</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Incoming procession	4 mins	
Opening (each degree)	4 mins	
Minutes	4 mins	12 mins
Resuming (per degree)	1 min	
Risings	7 mins	
Closing	4 mins	
Recession/Outgoing procession	4 mins	15 mins
Initiation	40 mins	
Restore comforts	5 mins	
Charge	7 mins	52 mins
Second degree questions	5 mins	
Prepare Candidate / open 2 nd	5 mins	
Passing	40 mins	
Restore comforts	5 mins	
Tracing Board	11 mins	
Closing	4 mins	1 hr.10 mins
Third degree questions	5 mins	
Prepare Candidate / open 3 rd	5 mins	
Raising	45 mins	
Restore comforts	5 mins	
Traditional History	15 mins	
Closing	4 mins	1 hr. 19 mins

Installation	60 mins	
Investiture of officers	30 mins	
Presentation PM Jewel	2 mins	1 hr. 32 mins
Dispensation	2 mins	
Ballot	5 mins	
Elections	8 mins	
Accounts	4 mins	
Reports, Almoner, etc. (each)	4 mins	
Presentation of Certificate	5 mins	

The timings are based on Emulation Ritual. They endeavour to allow for fast and slow speakers and Deacons. In practice, allow for some 10% 'slippage' time.

Initiates Tick List

Secretaries may wish to copy this page and cross out each item as it is completed or not needed. It is complementary to the meetings tick list.

1. Check details on Application Form P.
 - Lives or works in the Province (Rule 158) - if not, see below.
 - If not living in England or Wales, see Rule 161 and Guidance – Candidates.
 - Over 21 and reputable (Rule 157).
 - Proposed and seconded by subscribing or Honorary Members (Rule 159).
 - Candidate, proposer and second answered all questions and signed the form. If candid is unable to sign the declaration on the form, write to Provincial Grand Secretary with the reasons (Rule 164(a)(ii)).
 - Check details of occupation for Summons (Rule 164b). Retired or self employed is not regarded as sufficient.
2. Acknowledge receipt to Candidate. Advise next stage and approximate date.
- 3 **Rule 158** Procedure - see also Guidance – which gives full notes.
 - a) Candidate gives reasons in writing. This may be waived by the Master if the reasons are known (such as the son of a member).
 - b) Write to Provincial/London office(s) of where he works and/or resides stating the enquiry is under Section Rule 158 and giving his full name and the address in that area.
 - c) He cannot be proposed in open Lodge until the reply is received and, preferably, should not be interviewed.
 - d) Reply received. Advisable to state Rule 158 complied with either on the Summons or before the ballot,
4. Arrange committee meeting to interview the Candidate, ensuring his availability in advance. Possibly write formally to confirm date, time and place, advising proposer and second.
5. Announce candidature at regular meeting next before ballot takes place.
6. Full detail on Summons (Rule 164b). Send him Summons and attendance slip, but not minutes, with a friendly letter telling him when to report (if, for example, a Passing is held before the Initiation, he does not need to attend before the start). Advise him of the dress code and enquire of any special dietary needs.

7. Ensure a separate Book of Constitutions is held as well as a copy of the by-laws (or the Secretary will lose his copy!).
8. At the meeting
 - Form P previously certified by the Master and declaration by the Candidate in Hermes
 - Book of Constitutions and by-laws on Master's pedestal. Check ballot box for balls.
 - Remind Junior Deacon to introduce himself to Candidate.
 - Remind proposer and second to escort Candidate from Lodge on closure, not leave him standing.
 - Organise Bank Transfer or cheque for registration fee from Treasurer.
9. After the meeting
 - Complete Post Meeting Report and send cheque to Provincial Office or email Bank Transfer Confirmation.
 - Update Register of Members and details on working copy of Summons for next meeting.

Suggested Questions to Initiate

Secretaries may wish to have copies of this sheet for use at the interview. The questions are in the spirit of the Aims and Relationships of the Craft found at the front of the Book of Constitutions and at the start of Guidance. The Master has to satisfy himself of the Candidate's suitability and put him at his ease. The proposer and/or second may wish to suggest the way the questions be put.

<u>Officer</u>	<u>Question</u>
W.M.	Do you believe in God (a Supreme Being)?
W.M	Do you accept that Freemasonry is not concerned with religious matters or political opinions and that these are not discussed in masonic circles? (<i>as to religion, see also <u>Guidance</u> - relationship</i>).
Secretary	Will you assure us that you do not seek to use membership for commercial gain nor for social advancement?
Secretary	Do you accept that Freemasonry is not a charitable institution and is not to be regarded as an insurance for your dependents?
Treasurer	Can you afford the expenditure involved without detriment? Has your proposer told you of the costs involved in joining (<u>Rule 169</u>)?
Charity Stwd	Are you aware of the masonic charities (<i>detail</i>) and that you will be expected to support these charities?
	Would you be able to do so without detriment to your personal financial position?
Preceptor	Have you been informed of the time commitment you would be expected to give the Lodge and the dates of the regular meetings?
	In due course, you would also be expected to attend the regular instruction classes. At the present time, could you afford time to do so?

- Any Member Are you married or have a partner?
 If so, is your wife/partner aware of, and approves of, this application and your desire to be a Mason?
 Why do you want to become a Mason? Are you sure that it is not just a passing fancy?
 Why this Lodge?
- Have you ever applied to join another Lodge? Have you ever been a member of a similar organisation (*Rule 176*)? Are or were any of your family Freemasons?
- Can you confirm that you have never nor been convicted by a Court of any criminal offence, no matter how small, or been the subject of a disciplinary investigation before a professional body? (*Be aware of the Rehabilitation of Offenders legislation*)
- W.M. Has any brother any other question?
 Have you any question you would like to put to us?

Reference Points

Reference is made to various sources. This list shows those sources and the appropriate page(s)

Book of Constitutions (Rules)

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75	Power to suspend	15
101,103	Warrant produced, lost, etc	7
104	Officers of the Lodge	27, 20
105,108	Master – election & Installation	25, 26
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109	Master, qualification of Warden	25
111	Master to observe Landmarks	26
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115	Master- over 2 years or of 2 Lodges	25
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Middlesex Freemasonry, 148 London Road, Twickenham, Middlesex TW1 1HD
Tel: 020 8891 3300; E-mail: office@pglm.org.uk Web Site: www.pglm.org.uk

Revised & Edited by Nigel Harris-Cooksley E&OE-2024