



Lodge Meetings

Module Seven

Overview

Most Freemasons cannot wait until the next stated meeting. In fact most stated meetings are fun and informative. The Brethren are inspired when they leave and cannot wait until they can tell a friend. Most stated meetings are educational with a topic the Brethren will ponder until we meet again. If this fits your Lodge than you are doing a great job and you should skip over this section. If you think possibly your Lodge could improve some than please proceed and grow. One thing this section explores is the Executive Lodge program. This is a program to take the every month business out of the stated meeting and freeing up time for more inspirational topics.

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The Executive Committee Program

The section will let you know what to expect of the Executive committee program. The following is an outline of a stated meeting of your Lodge.

- Opening – The purpose of the opening ceremony is to create a psychological divide between the real world and the Masonic world.
- Welcoming of Visitors and Members - the Senior Deacon would introduce all visitors. The WM would call off the Lodge; all Brothers would rise and greet each other. This creates air of good fellowship and a friendly environment.
- Report of Executive committee – A brief report on the actions of the Executive Committee, which may be in written form and distributed. Brothers have an opportunity to ask question.
- Report of sick and distressed Brothers – This is not just a simple report of who is in the hospital. The Master needs to ask the members if they know of a Brother or Widow who has cares or concerns that the Lodge needs to know and attempt to aid. After all who wish to share have been given the opportunity, the Master calls up the Lodge for prayer for aid to the distressed Brothers. This report could be one of the most beneficial and inspiring points in your activity with the Lodge.
- Report on Lodge activities and calendar – Master calls on a Brother to report on Lodge Activities.
- Membership development and retention – First reading of petitions and appointment of investigating committee. Balloting on petitions; Dues remission and report on late payment of dues. Report on an open house or open door program or any other membership related activity.
- Business – This section of the agenda is for any Brother to bring any business concerns he may have before the Lodge.
- Masonic education – This gives your Lodge an opportunity to inspire your members to become better men.
- Good of the Lodge
- Closing
- Dinner or Social time – Eating together is one of the most important ways to bond with members of the Lodge. It matters little what we talk about so long as we are talking, sharing a meal, and enjoying each other’s company. There is an old saying that, “You cannot hate a man with whom you break bread.”

You can see this is a stream lined agenda. This agenda allows time in the meeting for discussion and education. This time, if used properly, give your Lodge an opportunity to inspire your members. Give them something to tell their friends about. Make them want to come to the next stated meeting.

Sample Agenda for Executive meeting

- Call to order and prayer

- Reading and approval of minutes
- Considering and paying bills
- Financial report
- Receiving correspondence
- Report from Master and Secretary
- Building and grounds
- Lodge activity and calendar
- Old business
- New business
- Good of the Lodge
- Prayer and adjournment

Reg. 39.130. Executive Committee Program

The Executive committee shall consist of the Worshipful Master, Senior Warden, Junior Warden, Secretary, Treasurer, Trustees and any other members indentified in the by-laws. The Executive meeting is open to all Lodge members. The meeting is to be held at the Lodge the same time and day each month. The job of this committee is to handle the routine parts of a stated meeting like reading of the minutes. The Executive meeting also helps prepare better programming for the Lodge. It creates an environment where positive discussion creates better results. It also allows the Wardens a better opportunity to learn how the Lodge functions. The Executive committee will report to the Lodge at each stated meeting.

What do we gain by having another meeting?

The answer is change if you can handle it. If you take an honest look at the stated meeting agenda you will notice one thing. The focus of the meeting changes from a business meeting to a meeting about each other and Freemasonry. This can be a hard change. Education moves to the fore front of the new stated meeting. Brothers and widows concerns move to the fore front of the new stated meeting. This is a big change and it takes time to make it work. Time, patience and perseverance accomplish all things.

Educational Topics

Each meeting should have an educational topic to stimulate the mind of the members present. The topics for the presentations should be varied and while we are in a Masonic meeting our Minds need to be stimulated in all areas. One meeting may be very esoteric and consider the origin of the chair in the east and why it is called the east. The next presentation may be the Drug Enforcement in your community. While still others may center on the Ritual and where it began or how to fly a model airplane.

We all have different interests and we all need to be stimulated to have openness to all part of life and in our Masonic endeavors.

When looking for those non-Masonic topics, look from within your Lodge. Everyone has a favorite subject they would be willing to share. When looking for a Masonic topic, look to the "Short Talk Bulletin" produced by the Masonic Service Association and sent to the Master of the Lodge for his use as a subject for each month.

Bring in Non-Members for Educational Presentations and Discussions

Most of your Masonic presentations will be fellow Masons who have studied a researched a Masonic topic. Some non-Masonic presentations will come from within the membership of the Lodge. However, it may be an advantage to invite a non-lodge member to Present a subject you feel would be of interest to the Lodge. Inviting someone to discuss financial advice on retirement or the history of the local library, courthouse, and the three room school may be of interest to our Lodge. There is probably a person in the community who knows the local history and be happy to give a presentation, but may not be a member of the fraternity.

Calling the Lodge from labor to refreshment or waiting until after the close of the meeting to have the presentation is always an option when the opportunity presents itself.

DVD Presentations

Topics for presentations are varied and so is the medium for those presentations. Most homes today have a DVD player and all PC's have a CD or DVD player built-in. Again, the subjects are varied and can be presented in an open Lodge. The important thing to remember after the presentation is the discussion which should follow. Almost any CD or DVD presentation will give an opportunity to have a discussion, thus enhance the fellowship of the Lodge. DVD's are available from many organizations within the Fraternity. You may also down load presentations from many web sites for use as a presentation in the Lodge.

Twenty-Five and Fifty Year Awards

The Fraternity has many honors and awards. One of the greatest honors and one that some members will not be able to receive is the Twenty-Five (25) and Fifty (50) Year Awards as members of the Fraternity. The occasions when members are eligible to receive these Awards are times when the Lodge will have an opportunity to plan an event for the Lodge.

The Grand Lodge office will update you on all the new Fifty (50) Year Award of Gold members each year with the return of your annual report in the spring. You need to insure all are updated and that you have a list of all your Twenty-Five (25) year members. Contact the Grand Master to see if he can be available to make the Award of Gold presentations or you may have a member which does a good job of making presentations do them.

Per regulations, an Award of Gold, Seventy-five (75) year member or Fifty Year Past Masters pin may be worn by his widow or daughter when he is deceased.

Lodge Committees

Other committees may be appointed by the Worshipful Master. He is encouraged to assign new Brothers to committees which may include a Coach Committee. This would assist in the candidates learning their Ritual.

A Mentor Committee could be formed to help a new Brother understand the deeper meaning of the Fraternity.

A committee for Publicity and general Lodge appearance would benefit the Lodge.

Committees could be formed for newspaper articles; Internet web sites, Face Book, meal preparation, supporting a softball team, visitation for other Lodges, etc.

Stated Meetings and Announcements

Everyone understands that your time is valuable. When you consider your time is more valuable than mine, we have issues. That is not the correct way to establish trust and friendship. Every meeting should begin at the appointed time, neither before nor after. When you are installed as Worshipful Master, you should inform the Wardens if you are going to be late. They are to assume the stations and open the Lodge on the appointed time.

If your reason to have a meeting is to see how quickly you can start and finish, you shouldn't be starting at all. If your meeting gets bogged down in a long discussion, you need to consider if a committee may not be the best answer to resolve the discussion and bring their findings back for the next meeting.

Our latest Indiana Ritual gives the order of business:

- Ritual Opening
- Reading and approval of minutes of the previous meeting
- Petitions, Transfers, Wavers and Demits
- Reports on Standing Committees
- Communications
- Bills
- Reports of Investigating Committee and Balloting on candidates
- Unfinished Business
- Miscellaneous Business to include sickness and distress
- Financial Statement
- Ritual Closing

During the Miscellaneous Business, you should include the "Masonic Education Committee Report".

Your Lodge may elect to use the "Executive Committee Report" which is explained in the Indiana Blue Book under Chapter 39, Reg. 39.130 and on page two (2) of this Module. This program is intended to shorten the business section of the stated meeting of the Lodge. However, that time is intended to improve the Masonic Education and fellowship of the Lodge.

Also included under the Miscellaneous Business should be the activity in other Lodges in the area, giving the Members the opportunity to visit and fellowship with those Lodges.

Masonic Home or Masonic Home Foundation Presentations

Masonic Home

Freemasonry always has inculcated lessons of love and helpfulness that reach out toward the unfavored and unfortunate, especially to the aged Mason, the widow and the orphan. Around its Altars are taught the tenets of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth that find expression in pure benevolence of which the Indiana Masonic Home is a noble example.

The cornerstone for the present Indiana Masonic Home was laid on October 21, 1915. One year later, October 28, 1916, the Home was dedicated and the first resident moved in. Since then, the Indiana Masonic Home has been a safe haven for over nine thousand (9,000) adults. Eight hundred and sixteen (816) children have lived at the Home from 1916 through 1975. Many of those "Home Kids" are living there today in their retirement.

Today, the Indiana Masonic Home has over four hundred (400) residents. It is a Continuing Care Retirement Community, affording lifestyles in Cottages, Duplex units, Residential Apartments, Assisted Living Apartments, Skilled Nursing Care and Memory Care.

Each year in the summer of early fall, the Grand Lodge sponsors "Masonic Home Day" and invites all members of the Fraternity to join at the Home for a day of fellowship and fun. This is the time to visit with the residents and other members at our gem stone in Franklin, Indiana.

Masonic Home Foundation

The Indiana Masonic Home Foundation, located at 525 N. Illinois St., Indianapolis, IN 46204 was incorporated in 1936 to provide long-term financial assistance to the Indiana Masonic Home. The Foundation continues to be the largest non-resident source of funds for the Home.

The Indiana Masonic Home Foundation is a not-for-profit (501) C (3) corporation whose objective is to provide financial support for the continuum of quality care to eligible members of the Indiana Masonic Home family.

Attending a presentation or inviting a presentation in your Lodge or Area will give you and your membership additional information about the Home and the Home Foundation.