

Report of the 2015-2016 Jurisprudence Committee on Legislation At the 2016 New Mexico Grand Chapter

11/17/2016

Dear Sisters and Brothers of the Grand Chapter of New Mexico,

Pursuant to the Bylaws Governing the Grand Chapter of New Mexico, Article XIV Amendment Section 2 “.....the Jurisprudence Committee will publish the outcome of Grand Chapter voting to the New Mexico OES website no more than 30 days after Grand Chapter closes.” We submit this report to assist the General membership to be updated, informed, and allow them to be prepared as the Chapters answers Bylaws Governing Subordinate Chapters - Article XIII Duties of Officers - Section 8 Reading Constitution and Bylaws. We ask that the **Chapter Secretaries read this report in Chapter** at their earliest convenience; preferably as soon as possible.

The Election of Grand Officers was accomplished in a proper and timely fashion under the guidance of Worthy Grand Patron Robert Sonnamaker during the Friday morning session of the 2016 Grand Chapter. The following were elected by acclamation as outlined in our Constitution’s Article VII Section 2: Worthy Grand Matron – NanC Krass; Worthy Grand Patron – JD “Jim” Davis; Associate Grand Matron – Gay Chambers; Associate Grand Patron – Larry Bishop; Grand Conductress – Kati Yates; Grand Secretary – Debbie Davis, PGM.

The following were elected thru due and proper process: Grand Trustee (2yr term) – Larry Lindberg, PGP; Grand Trustee (3yr term) – Glinda Lewis; Grand Treasurer – Kathy Walker; Associate Grand Conductress – Pamela Sutcliffe; and Grand Sentinel – Larry Holmes.

Worthy Grand Matron – Elect, Sister NanC Krass, then announced that the following Grand Officers will also be serving this year: Grand Trustee, Chairman – Pamela Mayne, PGM; Grand Chaplain – Greg Ward; Grand Marshal – David Bachman; Grand Organist – Diane Rogers; Grand Adah – Laura Hill; Grand Ruth – Ana Carrillo - Tolhurst; Grand Esther – Edie Davis; Grand Martha – Cheryl Martin; Grand Electa – Lindsay L. Elifritz; and Grand Warder – Frank Rauber.

Also, Legislation was considered and voted on at the 2016 New Mexico Grand Chapter Session. The Legislation was presented to the General Membership via publication on the OESNM website 30 days previous to the beginning of Grand Chapter and via the Registration Committee who properly issued to all voting Delegates copies of the Legislation for deliberations during the Friday Morning Session of Grand Chapter. We had thirteen (13) proposed legislation changes to consider. These included one (1) to the Constitution of the Grand Chapter, eleven (11) to the Bylaws Governing the Grand Chapter, and one (1) to the Bylaws Governing the Grand Chapter. The Jurisprudence Committee wishes to thank Worthy Grand Patron Robert Sonnamaker and the Grand Parliamentarian, Brother Dan Irick, PGP, for their calm and steady guidance of the voting process for both the Elections of Grand Officers and the proposed Legislation during the deliberations of the Grand Chapter. They both truly upheld the tradition of stalwart leadership by our Brothers. The Jurisprudence Committee wishes to express their gratitude for their assistance and support.

The standard use of the Red Voting cards distributed by the Credentials Committee to the voting Delegates and the use of Pages to facilitate the “Card Counts” as well as the swift gathering of the ballot

slips aided the voting process and reduced the amount of time spent in the process, so we wish to thank all the Pages for their assistance as well.

You will remember that there were two (2) proposed bylaw changes that were “tabled” during the 2015 Legislative process which needed to be dealt with this year. The Worthy Grand Patron and the Jurisprudence Committee requested that the Grand Parliamentarian rule on the process of “tabling a motion within and by the use of the Grand Chapter.” It was the ruling of the Grand Parliamentarian, thru his study of Robert’s Rules of Order that the two (2) pieces of legislation were presented in proper form at the 2015 Grand Chapter Session. However, his ruling also said, “The Proceedings indicate that a motion to table the legislation was made and properly seconded. The vote was favorable to table the legislation. Nevertheless, within our Grand Chapter usage when a motion to table is accepted, the legislation is removed from discussion, but is to be taken off the table before the completion of the Grand Chapter Session or within a specified timeframe. Since a clear timeframe for reconsidering the item was not stipulated, and it was not removed from the table within the business conducted for the year, these proposals are considered to have been rejected by the voting delegates of the 2015 Grand Chapter.”

His ruling went on to say, “The Bylaws Governing the Grand Chapter of New Mexico, Article XII Miscellaneous, Section 2 states ‘All business must be disposed of before Grand Chapter is closed, except as may lie over by virtue of the Constitution, Bylaws or by a majority vote of the members present.’ The motion made the suggestion that the wording be changed or the proposal be rewritten at the time of tabling. Since the legislation was not rewritten and presented before the end of Grand Chapter 2015, it cannot be carried over to this year’s meeting since a specific time was not stated in the tabling motion. Had the sponsors wished to do so, they could have rewritten the legislation and submitted it in the proper fashion.” Therefore, the published proposals that were labeled “tabled” were removed from consideration. (For reference see the published proposals: under **BYLAWS GOVERNING THE GRAND CHAPTER: Article IV Duties of Grand Officers and District Instructor Section 11 DISTRICT INSTRUCTOR** and **Article IV Duties of Grand Officers** ADDING “and District Instructor”.)

The Grand Parliamentarian also suggested that the proposal under **BYLAWS GOVERNING SUBORDINATE CHAPTER: Article VII Closing a Chapter** should also be removed from consideration to be reworded for presentation next year. Per his suggestion, it was removed by the sponsors.

Unfortunately, the Grand Parliamentarian’s explanation on “tabling a motion” gave some delegates the thought that if they were tired of the discussion or did not agree with the proposal at hand, tabling it “indefinitely” would “kill” the proposal without needing to address it because a time frame for reconsideration would not be defined in the motion to table. Several pieces of legislation were disposed of in this manner.

Please remember that a lot of thought and anxiety goes into the writing of every proposal. Something always triggers the perceived need that prompts the submission of a piece of legislation. Proposals for bylaws are made to strike up and encourage thoughtful and courteous discussions. We publish our Legislation on our website before Grand Chapter Sessions so that those discussions and considerations can happen within our chapters before we come to Grand Chapter, specifically so that we can be good representatives for our chapters. To wait for the voting process to begin before you take a good look at the proposals weakens the effectiveness of the process. To decide to rush a proposal to “the table” rather than allow discussion also defeats our legislative traditions. The best way to make your opinion known is to vote. To argue only because the proposal is conflicting to your own opinion is not only counterproductive, but truly contrary to our Obligation. The process we, as a Grand Chapter,

have developed allows for the opinions of three (3) representatives for and three (3) against each proposition to be heard in 2 to 3 minute increments. This really isn't that time consuming (you've sat thru longer commercials or sports replays), but it does allow for opinions, reactions, and feelings to be expressed. It also gives the persons who felt the need to submit the proposal the feeling that the voting members of the Grand Chapter gave fair and true deliberation to the process. To dismiss out of hand anyone's proposal is to diminish that person and their right to be heard.

Of all the submitted proposals, only two (2) passed. Both were under **BYLAWS GOVERNING THE GRAND CHAPTER**. The first was **Article II Revenue subsection (I)**. This proposition was necessary to bring our Grand Chapter into line with a Bylaws change that came out of General Grand Chapter last November. **Article II Revenue will now read:**

(I) From each subordinate chapter the sum of two dollars (\$2.00) per annum per member on its rolls as of the close of their fiscal year. The Grand Secretary will forward the money to the Right Worthy Grand Secretary. This shall be done once a year along with the Annual Report.

The second was **Article X Report of Committees Section 1, which will now read:**

Section 1

The reports of all committees of this Grand Chapter may be submitted to the Grand Secretary either in writing, signed by a majority of their members, or by email.

Lastly, Sisters and Brothers, we ask that you please **take the time to review** the Bylaws of **YOUR own Chapters**, with an eye toward seeing that it worthily serves the best interest of your Chapter and that the Articles do indeed serve to delineate properly the tasks set. Remember that any changes made to Chapter Bylaws need to be submitted, under seal of the Chapter, to the Worthy Grand Matron for final approval.

We worked very hard at our duties on the Jurisprudence Committee. We received your proposals for legislation and vetted their appropriateness. We worked closely with the Worthy Grand Matron, we consulted with the Grand Parliamentarian, the Worthy Grand Patron, several members well versed in Robert's Rules of Order and Adam Hathaway, who is Junior Grand Warder of the Grand Lodge of New Mexico and a professional parliamentarian, to provide the best prepared presentation of Legislative process we could. And so we thank you, Sisters and Brothers of the Grand Chapter of New Mexico, for allowing us to serve you on this committee. We appreciated your efforts to assist in the improvement of our Constitution and Bylaws and how we govern ourselves. We also thank those who have assisted us in all of our efforts, especially the Worthy Grand Patron Robert Sonnamaker and the Grand Parliamentarian, Brother Dan Irick. They allowed all of us to learn from this process.

Respectfully Submitted: The 2015 – 2016 Jurisprudence Committee

G. Kitt McKown, PGM Chairman
Lynda Johnson, PGM Member
Jim Krass, PGP Member