

Synopsis
of the
234th Annual Communication
of the
Grand Lodge of AF & AM of North Carolina

The 234th Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of AF & AM of North Carolina met at the Benton Convention Center in Winston-Salem on September 24th and 25th, 2021. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic and per national, state, and local recommendations and ordinances, as well as Orders of the Grand Master, face covering requirements and social distancing protocols were observed. Past Grand Secretary T. Walton Clapp, III opened the Session.

Presiding and Present were:

R. David Wicker, Jr., Grand Master
Larry B. Thompson, Jr., Deputy Grand Master
Kevan D. Frazier, Senior Grand Warden
Donald E. Kehler, Junior Grand Warden
Lewis R. Ledford, Grand Treasurer
Jonathan A. Underwood, Grand Secretary
Robert W. Rideout, Senior Grand Deacon
Steve M. Norris, Junior Grand Deacon
Gilbert D. Bailey, Grand Marshal
Michael A. Register, Grand Steward
Philip R. Johnson, Grand Steward
Paul Menard, Grand Chaplain
Calvin Rogers, Grand Tyler
Herbert C. Lyon, Grand Lecturer
Daniel F. Finch, Grand Historian
Oscar Alleyne, Grand Orator

Right Worshipful Brother Oscar Alleyne, Junior Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge of New York, gave the oration.

Most Worshipful P. Shaun Bradshaw, PGM, delivered his final address covering his year as Grand Master in 2020. Most Worshipful R. David Wicker, Jr., Grand Master, delivered his interim Grand Master's address.

The proposed 2022 budget of the Grand Lodge was **APPROVED**.

The Credentials Committee reported the attendance of 793 delegates from 266 lodges were present. Additionally, 125 Grand Lodge Officers, and Board, Committee, and Commission members were present, which amounted to 917 delegates present.

The following grand lodge officers were elected or appointed for the year 2022, to wit:

Larry B. Thompson, Jr. (127), Grand Master
Kevan D. Frazier (118), Deputy Grand Master
Donald E. Kehler (409), Senior Grand Warden
Robert W. Rideout (155), Junior Grand Warden
Lewis R. Ledford (27), Grand Treasurer
Jonathan A. Underwood (770), Grand Secretary
Steve M. Norris (727), Senior Grand Deacon
Gilbert D. Bailey (693), Junior Grand Deacon
Michael A. Register (493), Grand Marshal
Philip R. Johnson (106), Grand Steward
C. Alvin Billings, Jr., (409), Grand Steward
James G. Jones (102), Grand Chaplain
Joel M. Howard (127), Grand Tyler
J. Randolph Browning, III (127), Grand Lecturer
Steven A. Campbell (127), Grand Historian
W. Leon Rippy (31), Grand Orator
T. Marcus Browne, III (352), Judge Advocate

The installation of the above named elected and appointed Grand Lodge Officers will be held on Saturday, December 4, 2021, in Salisbury, NC.

The Committee on Charters and Dispensations reported Oxford Lodge 122, Green Level Lodge 277, Harmony Lodge 340, Youngsville Lodge 377, and Southern Pines Lodge 484 all requested duplicate charters, and recommended each be granted a new charter. The motion of the Committee on Charters and Dispensations was **APPROVED**.

The Committee on Charters and Dispensations further reported Prometheus Lodge Under Dispensation at Newton requested a new charter be granted to them for the practice of regular Masonry. Having found all the lodge's paperwork and fees successfully executed, the committee recommended a charter be granted. The motion of the Committee on Charters and Dispensations was **APPROVED**, and Prometheus Lodge 775 was granted a charter. The ceremony of institution will take place on Friday, October 15 at Newton, NC.

Four foreign grand lodges requested recognition, which were all **APPROVED**, to wit:

Grande Loja Maçônica do Estado do Rio Grande do Norte

Grande Loja Maçônica F & A M do Nuevo Leon

Grand Oriente de Mato Grosso do Sul

Grande Lodge of Croatia

Inasmuch, the Great Priory of America of the Order of Beneficent Knights of the Holy City, a York Rite Body, also requested recognition, which was **APPROVED**.

The Committee on Appeals submitted its report, to wit:

6 Applications for Restoration were made this year, including those of DBF of Hall Lodge 53, MEF of Clifford Duell Lodge 756, JEB of Proctorville Lodge 643, TSN of Newell Lodge 739, and SRS of Bingham Lodge 272, all of which were recommended for rejection by the Committee on Appeals and were **REJECTED** for restoration by the delegates assembled.

Brother GBD of Youngsville Lodge 377's application for restoration was recommended for approval by the Committee on Appeals and was **APPROVED** for restoration by the delegates assembled.

All of the actions of the Judge Advocate were recommended for approval by the Committee on Appeals and all those actions were **APPROVED** by the delegates assembled.

All the actions of the Trial Commission were recommended for approval by the Committee on Appeals and all those actions were **APPROVED** by the delegates assembled.

The Committee on Masonic Jurisprudence presented its report, to wit: the delegates assembled **APPROVED** the remaining 3 Orders and 2 Opinions of Past Grand Master Bradshaw. Likewise, the delegates assembled also **APPROVED** all 16 of Grand Master Wicker's Orders.

The following amendments to The Code were considered, along with the results of each amendment group.

Amendment Group 1

- This amendment requires lodges to fully insure their property.
- This amendment was **APPROVED** by the Grand Lodge.

Amendment Group 2

- This amendment would have permitted lodges to vote on petitions for the degrees collectively.
- The amendment was determined to be in violation of the Landmarks of the Fraternity and recommended to be ruled out of order by the Grand Master.
- The Grand Master ruled this amendment **OUT OF ORDER**.

Amendment Group 3

- This amendment would have allowed lodges to open and conduct business on the First Degree.
- Upon the count of a paper ballot, this amendment was **REJECTED** by the Grand Lodge.

Amendment Group 4

- This amendment was intended to correct conflicting language in the Code concerning obstructive motions.
- The amendment was determined to be inconsistent with the language of the Code and recommended to be rejected.
- This amendment group was **REJECTED** by the Grand Lodge.

Amendment Group 5

- This amendment requires consolidating lodges to deed its property to the consolidated lodge to meet certain legal requirements.
- This amendment was **APPROVED** by the Grand Lodge.

Amendment Group 6

- This amendment would have permitted endowed memberships to be purchased by the estate of a deceased brother Master Mason.
- The amendment was determined to be inconsistent with the language of the Code and in contravention to the laws of North Carolina and recommended to be ruled out of order by the Grand Master.
- The Grand Master ruled this amendment **OUT OF ORDER**.

Amendment Group 7

- This amendment would have increased the initiation fee to provide more charity to our charities.
- Due to the failure of the passage of Amendment Group 8, which also affected the initiation fee, the Grand Master ruled this amendment **OUT OF ORDER**.

Amendment Group 8

- This amendment would have raised the minimum initiation fee to \$125.
- This amendment group was **REJECTED** by the Grand Lodge.

Amendment Group 9

- This amendment removed certain outdated and poorly phrased Masonic offenses from the Code.
- This amendment was **APPROVED** by the Grand Lodge.

Amendment Group 10

- This amendment removed certain outdated and poorly phrased Masonic offenses from the Code concerning gambling.
- This amendment was **APPROVED** by the Grand Lodge.

Amendment Group 11 and its Substitute

- This amendment clarified the presentation of Service Awards to lodges and members.
- This substitute amendment was **APPROVED** by the Grand Lodge.

Amendment Group 12

- This amendment would have created a Grand Lodge Committee on Philanthropy.
- In consideration of an internal review of the Grand Lodge's charitable endeavors, this amendment was **WITHDRAWN**.

Amendment Group 13

- This amendment would have created a Subordinate Lodge Committee on Philanthropy and made the Committee on DeMolay optional.

- In consideration of an internal review of the Grand Lodge's charitable endeavors, this amendment was **WITHDRAWN**.

Amendment Group 14

- This amendment would have permitted any Mason from any lodge to object to the passing or raising of a candidate in any lodge.
- This amendment was determined to infringe upon the rights of individual lodges and recommended to be ruled out of order by the Grand Master.
- The Grand Master ruled this amendment **OUT OF ORDER**.

Amendment Group 15

- This amendment would have permitted lodges to conduct some meetings virtually.
- This amendment group was **REJECTED** by the Grand Lodge.

Respectfully submitted,
Jonathan A. Underwood
Grand Secretary