

2022

“Opinions” of the Board of Custodians

From time to time, the Board of Custodians is asked for its opinion on various issues. Listed below are the Board’s responses to some of these questions.

1. Plurals of words may be substituted as appropriate when there is more than one candidate.
2. When a lodge is being opened, the pass (or word) should also be received from the JW. This is consistent with the wording of the OSW.
3. It is preferred that the OSW not be used when coaching or instructing candidates, however, under no circumstances shall the OSW be given to a candidate for his own self-instruction. The Vocabulary shall not be used when coaching or instructing candidates.
4. Catechism coaching must be done only by Master Masons. A Master Mason must pass his 3rd degree proficiency before coaching the Master Mason’s catechism.
5. To ensure consistency in this Grand Jurisdiction and in accordance with the rules governing the certification examinations, all parts of the Bahnsen Manual used in the ritualistic work and pertaining to the subjects listed in the certification exam outline must be repeated from memory. This does not include the opening and closing prayers, charges, or scripture readings of the three symbolic degrees, which may be read if desired.
6. Certified Lecturer Emeritus status may be granted to a brother who has at least twenty-five years of service, who is not currently certified, and who is experiencing significant health and/or memory problems.
7. According to the CODE (REG 29-07.4), a brother must give a valid reason for not appearing for recertification when directed to do so by the Board. There can be no automatic extensions for non-appearance.
8. When dignitaries are received, the Deacons do not give Private Grand Honors.
9. When conferring the Second Section of the Master Masons degree it is acceptable for the twelve Fellow Crafts, two Searchers and three Ruffians to wear their aprons as a Fellow Craft since they would be playing their specific parts as such. It would also be acceptable for any of the regular officers playing these roles to be allowed to wear white cloth aprons in lieu of their officer’s apron in order to facilitate the ease of wearing their aprons as Fellow Crafts.
10. The words “Book of Faith”, “Holy Book” or “Holy Writings” may be substituted for the words “Holy Bible” when appropriate if performing any of the three symbolic degrees for a candidate whose faith that does not adhere specifically to the Holy Bible.
11. In accordance with current OSW as adopted by the delegates at the annual communication in 2001, and until such time as it may be revised, the Board of Custodians fully supports the General Rules which on page seven allows for labor to be dispensed with for admission of non-masons into the lodge room provided the lodge is purged prior to resuming labor. Since exact wording for this procedure is not listed in the OSW, the preferred alternative, if exact wording is desired, would be to Call from Labor to Refreshment and then from Refreshment back to Labor as found on pages nine through fourteen in the OSW.
12. To clarify the definition of the word “Work”, as referenced on page six of the General Rules, it is the official Opinion of the Board of Custodians, that any activity performed between the time the lodge is officially opened until the lodge is officially closed is considered “Work”. If a lodge desires to use the OSW for the purposes of Masonic Education or Instruction, the options for these activities would be 1.) prior to opening 2.) after closing or 3.) calling from Labor to Refreshment and then from Refreshment back to Labor after the use of the OSW, for these purposes, have been completed.
13. The presiding officer of a lodge shall uncover during all prayers (unless his personal faith prohibits him from doing so).

7-8-22

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