

BYLAWS OF
ISLE OF PATMOS LODGE NO. 17, F. & A. M.

PREAMBLE

This lodge shall be governed by the law of the land; the landmarks, articles of incorporation, and constitution of The Grand Lodge of The Most Ancient And Honorable Society of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of Vermont; bylaws of the Vermont Masonic Code; and these bylaws not inconsistent therewith.

ARTICLE 1

Name & Charter

§1.1 Name. The name of this lodge is Isle of Patmos Lodge. No. 17, F. & A. M.

§1.2 Charter. The Grand Lodge of the Most Ancient and Honorable Society of Free and Accepted Masons for the State of Vermont, having exclusive and sovereign authority over all matters pertaining to Ancient Craft Masonry therein, did, on October 10, 1821, A..L. 5821, charter and constitute this lodge by patent under its seal.

ARTICLE 2

Communications

§2.1 Required Officers. This lodge cannot be opened, do any work, or transact any business, unless at least the Master or one of the wardens is present. However, if one of these officers is present, he may call upon another brother for assistance and to preside as he may desire, remaining himself always responsible.

§2.2 Regular Communication. This lodge shall hold ten or more regular communications each year at its Masonic Hall in South Hero, Vermont, at such times and dates as set by the members at the annual communication of the lodge. If, however, there is no vote taken at the annual communication, the time and date of each regular communication will remain the same as the previous year. The order of business, in general, is as follows: (a) reading and approval of minutes of the last regular communication and intervening special communications, if any; (b) unfinished business of last regular communication; (c) reports of committees; (d) balloting upon petitions; (e) reception of petitions; (f) appointment of committees; (g) conferring degrees; and (h) new business.

§2.3 Annual Communication. The annual communication shall be the regular communication in April. At the annual communication the lodge will vote whether to suspend any regular communications during the year.

§2.4 Special Communication. A special communication may be called by the Master for conferring degrees, Masonic funerals and burial services, and public ceremonies. He may also call a special communication to conduct business if the Grand Master grants a dispensation therefore. In such event, only such business as authorized by the dispensation may be conducted thereat.

§2.5 Notice of Communication. Resident members should be notified of all regular and special communications.

§2.6 Rules of Order and Procedure. All questions of order shall be decided by the presiding officer, and without debate. All other questions shall be determined by a majority vote of the members present.

§2.7 Resolution. Any resolution offered for consideration by the lodge shall be presented to the presiding officer in writing. In the discussion of any questions before the lodge, no member shall be allowed to speak more than twice on the same subject, without the permission of the presiding officer.

§2.8 Attire. The brethren are to be suitably attired when attending a communication or ceremonial (shorts are not acceptable) with appropriate aprons, worn on the outside of the jacket. The Master may, for good cause, relax the attire at a given communication or ceremonial.

§2.9 Food. No food shall be allowed in the lodge except by order of the Master.

§2.6 Prayer. No communication shall be opened or closed without solemn prayer to Almighty God.

§2.6

ARTICLE 3

Officers

§3.1 Officers.

(a) **Elected officers.** The elected officers are the Master, Senior Warden, Junior Warden, Treasurer and Secretary.

(b) **Appointed officers.** The appointed officers are the Senior Deacon, Junior Deacon, Senior Steward, Junior Steward, Chaplain, Marshal, Organist, Tyler, Assistant Treasurer and Assistant Secretary, and such others as may be appointed by the Master.

§3.2 Time of Election or Appointment. The officers are to be elected or appointed, as appropriate, at the last regular communication prior to the annual communication. The appointment of the appointed officers shall be by the Master, in consultation with the Senior Warden and Junior Warden. The appointment of the Assistant Treasurer and Assistant Secretary shall be approved by the Treasurer and Secretary, respectively, and must be confirmed by a majority of the brethren in attendance.

§3.3 Installation. Unless the lodge votes otherwise, the installation of the officers shall be at the annual communication, but in no case later than the fifteenth day of May following the election. The installation may be held in open lodge or, if so desired, in a public assembly. If held in a public assembly, the covenant shall be given privately and the private grand honors omitted.

§3.4 Duties. The duties of the officers are governed by the provisions of the Vermont Masonic Code and as follows:

(a) **Jewels and Investments.** The jewels and investments of the lodge are in the charge of the Master and Wardens.

§3.5 Compensation. The officers, other than the treasurer and secretary, shall serve without compensation. The lodge may determine whether the treasurer and secretary shall receive any compensation and, if so, the amount thereof.

§3.4 Indemnification. All officers and committeemen shall be indemnified by the lodge for all expenses reasonably incurred by them in defending themselves from any proceedings instituted or threatened against them, provided the lodge votes that they have acted within the scope of their authority and are not guilty of misfeasance or malfeasance.

ARTICLE 4

Fees, Dues & Assessments

§4.1 Degrees. The fees for the petition and the degrees are the amounts presently in effect or as may be subsequently revised.

§4.2 Rejection or dismissal. If the candidate is rejected or his petition dismissed, the deposit fee shall be returned.

§4.3 Non-appearance. If the candidate is elected and fails to present himself for initiation within one year after he is notified thereof, he shall forfeit his deposit fee unless remitted by a two-thirds vote of the lodge. In such event, he must present a new petition for the degrees and have a ballot taken thereon as an initial petition.

§4.4 Affiliation. The fee for affiliation is the amount in effect or as may be subsequently revised.

§4.5 Dues. The annual dues are the amount presently in effect or as may be subsequently revised.

(a) **Life Member.** A member who has been constituted a life member, as authorized by the provisions of the Vermont Masonic Code, is exempt from annual lodge dues.

(b) **Exemption.** Members who are 70 years of age or older or who have paid dues for 40 years, are exempt from payment of dues. However, if their finances permit, they are to pay the annual per capita tax to the Grand Lodge.

§4.6 Per Capita Tax. Each member of this lodge, except those who are exempt as provided by the bylaws of the Vermont Masonic Code, are liable for the annual per capita tax to the Grand Lodge.

§4.7 Assessments. A proposal for an assessment shall be presented at a regular communication. The proposal is then laid over to the next regular communication or a special communication called for action thereon. The notice of the communication must be sent to every member of the lodge and must recite the text or substance of the proposed assessment.

§4.8 Remission. By affirmative vote at a regular communication, the lodge may remit the dues of

a brother, or extend the time for payment, for good cause shown either to the lodge or a committee selected for that purpose.

§4.9 Change in Fees And Dues. The fees for the petition, degrees, affiliation and annual dues may be changed by vote of the lodge, at a regular or special communication, provided notice of the intended change is sent at least one week in advance to each member of the lodge.

ARTICLE 5

Lodge Membership

§5.1 Petitions. The procedures for petitions for the degrees, advancement, affiliation, transfer of membership, dual membership and demit are governed by the provisions of the Vermont Masonic Code.

If the candidate is elected and fails to present himself for initiation within one year after he is notified thereof, he shall forfeit his deposit fee unless remitted by a two-thirds vote of the lodge. In such event, he must present a new petition for the degrees and have a ballot taken thereon as an initial petition.

A petition for the degrees shall be entered on the Secretary's book at a regular communication. If the ballot is favorable, he may receive the degrees at a regular or special communication of the lodge. However, a period of four weeks must elapse between degrees unless the brethren, by their majority vote, approve a lesser time.

Each applicant for advancement to another degree is required to pass a credible examination of the preceding degree before a committee appointed for that purpose, or in open lodge, before he can advance to the next degree, unless excused by the Master or by vote of the lodge. This paragraph shall be read in open lodge at each initiation.

§5.2 Disclosure. No brother, whether or not a member of the lodge, shall inform a rejected petitioner, directly or indirectly, how a member of the lodge voted or how he believes a member of the lodge voted, on his petition.

§5.3 Discipline. A brother violating the preceding section is guilty of unmasonic conduct.

§5.4 Admonition. The preceding two sections shall be read by the Master to the brethren prior to balloting on petitions for the degrees.

§5.5 Admonition, Suspension, Termination, Expulsion, Reinstatement and Restoration. These are governed by the provisions of the Vermont Masonic Code.

ARTICLE 6

Standing and Special Committees

§6.1 Committees. The Master, with the advice and consent of the Wardens, shall appoint the standing committees immediately after his installation and announce the members thereof at the first regular communication thereafter.

(a) **Standing Committees.**

(1) Masonic Assistant and Relief Committee. It shall consist of the Master, Senior Warden, Junior Warden and Secretary. Any request for Masonic assistance or relief shall be referred to this committee. The committee shall carefully and sensitively investigate the worthiness of the request and the availability of funds and present a report with recommendations to the brethren at a regular communication. The lodge shall then take such action on the request as it deems appropriate.

(2) Nominating Committee. It shall consist of three members of the lodge, one of whom shall be a past master. The committee shall meet not less than once every three months in a continuing effort to identify members of the lodge who are qualified for elective office by their leadership, integrity, virtue and dedication. Then, at the annual communication, or communication at which elections are held, the committee shall present nominations for each elective office. Other members may be placed in nomination from the floor.

(3) Membership Committee. It shall consist of three members of the lodge, one of whom shall be a past master. The committee shall meet not less than once each month. It shall create a list of individuals in the community who they believe possess the prerequisites for membership in Freemasonry. The committee, or their designees, shall then personally and discreetly approach these individuals, discuss Freemasonry with them, and encourage them to submit petitions for the degrees. This committee shall be in addition to, and not to the exclusion of, the right of each brother to encourage qualified individuals to submit petitions for the degrees.

(4) Committee on Finance. It shall consist of three members of the lodge. The committee shall review all requests for contributions and bills presented to the lodge and report its recommendations at a regular communication, and it shall act as an audit committee and, in such capacity, review the accounts of the treasurer and secretary at least once a year, and make a report to the lodge at each annual meeting and oftener if required or requested.

(5) Committee on Grievances. It shall consist of three members of the lodge. The committee shall take cognizance of the conduct of the brethren within the jurisdiction of the lodge, reconcile difficulties that may occur whenever reasonable, and file a complaint with the Grand Secretary, when necessary, against any brother in violation of Masonic law or for conducting himself in a manner unbecoming a Mason.

(6) Committee on Giving. It shall consist of the Master, Senior Warden, Junior Warden, Treasurer and Secretary. Any request for a financial grant, gift, contribution or donation shall be referred to this committee. The committee shall carefully investigate the worthiness of the request, the availability of funds, and its consistency with the operating budget of the lodge, and present a report, with recommendations, to the brethren at the next regular communication. The lodge shall then take such action on the request as it deems appropriate.

(b) Special Committees. The Master may appoint such special committees as he deems appropriate, designating the members thereof and their duties.

ARTICLE 7

Budget and Revenue

§7.1 Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of the lodge shall commence on the first day of April and end on the last day of March of each year.

§7.2 Membership Year. The membership year of this lodge shall end on the last day of March of each year. On or before the tenth day of April of each year, the Secretary shall return to the Grand

Secretary his report of lodge membership as of the last day of March, and such other information as may be required, on forms to be furnished by The Grand Lodge.

§7.3 Budget. The treasurer and secretary shall prepare and complete a proposed lodge budget for the ensuing year in time for submission at the lodge annual communication.

No money shall be drawn from the Treasurer except by order of the Master and vote of the lodge.

§7.4 Adoption. The annual budget shall be adopted at the annual communication or at a special communication called for that purpose.

§7.5 Fidelity Bond. The trustees of the Grand Lodge have purchased and carry a blanket position fidelity bond covering the officers of the lodge and indemnifying the lodge against loss resulting from infidelity, defalcation or misappropriation by the officers, employees or members of its funds, assets or property. The lodge is assessed and required to pay to the Grand Lodge its proportionate share of the premium annually, based on coverage provided.

ARTICLE 8

Amendments

§8.1 Amendments. These bylaws may be amended as provided in the Vermont Masonic Code.

§8.2 Code. If a change is made in the Vermont Masonic Code, and that change affects the bylaws of this lodge, these bylaws are amended, *ipso facto*, to conform to the code.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that a proposal to adopt the foregoing bylaws was presented to the regular communication of _____ Lodge No. ____, F. & A.M. on _____, 200__. The proposal was then laid over to the next regular communication on _____, 200__, at which time the proposal was approved by at least two-thirds of the members present at the communication.

Dated this ____ day of _____, 200__.

- Secretary

APPROVAL

We have reviewed and considered the foregoing revised bylaws and find them in proper form and consistent with the provisions of the Vermont Masonic Code.

Cortland Corsones - Chair
Jurisprudence Committee

The foregoing revised bylaws of _____ Lodge No. _____, F. & A.M. are effective this ____ day of _____, 200__.

- M. W. Grand Master

ATTEST: _____
- R. W. Grand Secretary