

Harmony Lodge No. 8 Free & Accepted Masons

Met in a Regular Communication in their hall at the Masonic Temple,
519 US Highway 206, Newton (Andover Township), NJ
On the 21st of November 2024 A.L. 6024

Officers Present

WB Daniel C Kaufman	X	Worshipful Master
RW Nicholas J Kaufman	X	Senior Warden
Bro Stephen J Dugan	X	Junior Warden
Bro Arjune M Sharma	Absent	Treasurer
Bro Barry W George	X	Secretary
RW Fred W Fox	X	Senior Deacon
Bro Brian J Ukson	Absent	Junior Deacon
WB Matthew C Kaufman	X	Senior Master of Ceremonies
Bro Robert Gerald	Absent	Junior Master of Ceremonies
Bro Connor M. Sokol	Absent	Senior Steward
Bro Scott M Waselik	Absent	Junior Steward
Bro Ryan M Carroll	Absent	Chaplain
WB Christopher A Bailey	X	Tyler
Bro Henry F Repp	Absent	Organist
Bro Curvey A Purkett, Jr	Absent	Marshal
Bro Johannes W DeWaal	Absent	Historian

Brothers Present

<u>Current Grand Officers</u>	<u>Past Grand Officers</u>	<u>Brothers Present</u>	
RW Nicholas J Kaufman DRI	RW Eric G Grove PDDGM	WB Clay Kraemer	Bro Robert Woldt, DB
	RW George J Stypolkowski PDRI		Bro Chris Brown
	RW Fred W Fox PGC		Bro Carlos Torres
			Bro Patrick Harrison

Joined this evening by visiting Bro Chris Blauvelt, Trinity Lodge No.152, Kalispell, MT (formerly of Harmony No.8)

WB Matt Kaufman sat in for the Junior Deacon, WB Clay Kraemer for the Chaplain and Bro Bob Woldt for the Historian.

There were 15 Master Masons present.

Opening:

The Lodge was opened in due and ancient form at 7:30 PM at labor on the Master Mason Degree, with a salute to the Flag of the United States of America.

The Worshipful Master called RW George Stypolkowski to the East with Bro Patrick Harrison for the purpose of performing the Master Mason proficiency exam. Bro Harrison did so in exemplary fashion. The Worshipful Master congratulated both brothers on a job well done.

Minutes:

The minutes of the Regular Communication of October 17th, 2024 that were distributed via email, were discussed. These minutes were approved as distributed.

Sickness and Distress:

None offered

Joys and Celebrations:

Bro Chris Brown was congratulated on the birth of his son (now 5 weeks old).

The Worshipful Master advised that he received honorable mention as Master of the Year at the Grand Lodge Annual Communication. He reflected that he was only mentioned due to the hard work of the brothers from our lodge that make it run as well as it does and offered his thanks.

Presentation of Bills:

<u>Bill For</u>		<u>Bill For</u>	
Completely Clean (Inv. 101-Nov)	\$292.80	JLM Property Svs (Inv. 1369- Oct)	\$115.00
Dan K. (dinner at GL annual comm.)	\$400.25	ShopRite (dinner at 10/17 communication)	\$38.40
Amazon (lighting project supplies)	\$142.97	Vista Print (new lodge banner)	\$85.28
Ebay (lighting project supplies)	\$31.99	Ebay (lighting project supplies)	\$30.92
Webstaurant Store (warming box)	\$1,489.97	Amazon (printing supplies)	\$67.16

The sum for bills this evening is \$2,694.74.

A Motion was made and seconded. Some discussion regarding the warming box bill was had. During which it was clarified that the final cost was offset by private donations and previous sale of other kitchen equipment. The motion was then carried to pay the bills, when properly audited.

Communications:

The lodge received a thank you note from the widow of deceased Bro Ronald Kubala for the beautiful funeral service the brethren performed at his wake.

The Secretary reviewed the recently approved legislation from the Grand Lodge Annual Communication for the brethren present.

The Secretary advised that the lodge received the formal request to demit from Bro Johannes DeWaal. With it he paid his 2024 dues in full and offer very kind words to the brethren. As required by the constitution, a manual sign vote was made, approving the request to demit.

Petitions:

N/A

Ballots:

The Secretary presented the list of (11) brethren that had yet to pay their 2024 dues. He advised the lodge that all necessary steps for notification had been taken and the following members remain in arrears: Bro Charles Gebhard, Bro Avelin Jacinto, Bro Paul Kaczkin, Bro Lawrence Lewis, Bro William Lunger, Bro Wayne McCabe, Bro Daniel McCole, Bro Scott Tinker, Bro Dhaval Trivedi, Bro Scott Wasilek, Bro Luke Wikander

A motion was made to ballot collectively for the suspension for non-payment of dues, which was seconded and carried by the lodge.

The Worshipful Master spread the ballot for the suspension of the list of brethren presented by the Secretary for non-payment of dues. The ballot, being clear in the South, West and East, the Worshipful Master declared the list of brothers to be suspended for non-payment of dues, effective at midnight of December 31, 2024. He also advised that should any listed brother remit payment of dues prior to that deadline, the NPD vote will be automatically rescinded for that brother.

REPORTS

Treasurer's Report:

On behalf of the Treasurer and Worshipful Master, the Secretary offered the following financial updates- Account balances as of 11/21/24:

BOL acct: 2799 - \$730.00

GLNJ acct: 2802 - \$6,862.00

Foundation acct: 2772 - \$234.00

Layton Scholarship acct: 2780 - \$184.00

Primary Operating acct: 2426 - \$10,111.47

*After forecasted expenditures thru 12/31, we anticipate a remaining balance of approximately \$3,000.00 to begin the new year.

RW Eric Grove reported that the investment accounts are doing very well, that as of 11/20/24 our primary account was approximately \$329,000.00, up substantially for the year.

*The Worshipful Master commented that this result was aided by the fact that we had budgeted needing to withdraw at least \$14k from that account but have only taken out a total of \$5k for the year.

A motion was made, seconded and carried to accept the Treasurer's report.

Buildings & Grounds:

Bro Dugan took the opportunity to thank all those that have participated on the B&G committee and asked the Worshipful Master to comment on the status of the ongoing lodge lighting upgrade project.

The Worshipful Master advised that conversion of the lodge lighting to LED is in progress, but not yet completed. The lighting has been upgraded in the kitchen, banquet room, Jimmy's Lounge, vestibule and the illuminated sign in front of the building. Some work still remains in these areas. Still to be done is lodge room, hallway and restrooms. He advised the intent to purchase the remaining materials necessary under the current year's budget.

Charity:

The Worshipful Master advised that the Bread of Life charity is moving closer to finalizing all outstanding issues with the church. We are awaiting further guidance as to when we may resume activities in the church.

*We continue to seek out additional charitable endeavors that we can support going forward. Please advise the Secretary of any recommendations.

Rental Report:

WB Matt Kaufman advised that there has been a steady amount of inquiries for rentals over that past month. We have booked one new rental in May and have a rental this coming weekend with Scouts USA Troop 1150.

Unfinished Business:

The Worshipful Master put the lodge on a tiled refreshment to allow those present to make nominations for 2025 elected officers. After coming off refreshment, the Worshipful Master declared nominations closed. He appointed RW George Stypolkowski judge and Brothers Brown and Domingez as tellers.

The judge reported the following nominations for 2025 elected officers:

Worshipful Master- RW Fred Fox (accepted)

Senior Warden- Bro Stephen Dugan (accepted)

Junior Warden- WB Chris Bailey (accepted)

Secretary- Bro Barry George (accepted)

Treasurer- Bro Arjune Sharma (accepted via proxy), RW Nick Kaufman (declined), WB Dan Kaufman (declined)

Proxy to Grand Lodge- Bro Curvy Purkett (accepted via proxy), Bro Carlos Domingez (accepted),

Bro Patrick Harrison (accepted), Bro Chris Brown (accepted)

Trustee- Bro Robert Woldt, DB (accepted)

New Business:

RW George Stypolkowski addressed the lodge concerning the recently approved Grand Lodge legislation allowing blue lodges to accept long or short form proficiency exams for candidates. He advised that, although he is not endorsing one over the other, that it is this lodge's longstanding tradition to follow long form proficiency. The Worshipful Master agreed with this assertion.

The Worshipful Master opened a preliminary discussion on the topic of 2025 Annual Dues. It was his intention to begin a dialogue so as to work thru some of the questions or issues prior to the annual meeting where the dues are set for the year. With the current year's dues at \$220 and the GL assessment going up to \$76.00 per member for 2025, suggestions included \$250, \$300, even a dollar a day (\$365). However, it was noted that despite any dues amount selected, there are not restrictions on what a brother can donate. Anyone may donate as much as they want or can afford. However, it was also noted that with the loss of membership due to attrition and NPD, we will need to increase dues as much as possible.

The Worshipful Master offered comments on the topic of honorariums to be decided at the annual meeting. He stated that there had been stipends or other methods of compensation introduced in the past. However, he wanted to continue what was started last year. He advised that he would like to forgive the dues for the next Worshipful Master, Treasurer, Secretary, Rental Coordinator and Buildings & Grounds Chairman due to the huge investment of time each makes in the promoting the success of the lodge. Providing direct compensation to these brothers can present unwanted tax implications.

Program:

The Worshipful Master presented an audio podcast from the Midnight Masons entitled "Obligations". It reminded us of why our masonic obligations are important in our daily lives and the hard truths about them.

Announcements:

11/25- DLI Blirstown #165
12/2- Kittatinny #164 Installation
12/5- Harmony #8 Annual Meeting
12/7- Harmony #8 Installation
12/12- Blirstown #165 Installation
12/14- Musconetcong #42 Installation
12/14- Wreaths Across America- Old Newton Cemetery
12/19- Mansfield #36 Installation

Closing:

The Worshipful Master invited RW Nick Kaufman to the East to Close in short form.

Prior to closing, the Secretary advised that everyone needs to assist with cleanup from dinner to make the banquet room and kitchen presentable for a rental on Saturday.

RW Eric Grove reminded the brethren to make donations to the Toys for Tots box, located in the lodge vestibule.

As there was no further business, the Lodge was closed in harmony and good order at 9:50 pm by RW Nick Kaufman, assisted by WM Daniel Kaufman and Bro Chris Blauvelt.

Fraternally,

Bro Barry W George

Secretary 2024
Harmony Lodge No.8 F&AM

