



PROTOCOL & ETIQUETTE ESSENTIALS

Prepared by the Grand Lodge P. & E. Committee

Issue No. 7 (Rev. 1) – June 2010

Greetings from Your P. & E. Committee

Welcome to the seventh issue of “*P&E Essentials*”. It is anticipated that these informative and easy-to-read newsletters will be published several times a year.

“*P&E Essentials*” is intended to be an interactive instrument, designed to help you make a daily advancement in Masonic knowledge. The Committee welcomes questions and/or suggestions for topics that could be addressed in future issues. Questions or suggestions not related to Protocol and Etiquette will be forwarded to the appropriate G.L. Committee for response.

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Committee Members:

The current Protocol & Etiquette Committee members are:

Gordon Crutcher (*Chairman*); Keith Anderson; William Chatwell; Robert Day; William Elliott; Dennis Hawman; Terrance Van Horne, Ian LaFleur; Terry Lanning; Robert Manz; George McCowan (*Secretary*); David Mead; Terry Pachal; James Pearson; Mark Stoiko, and Garnet Schenk (*Editor of P&E Essentials*).

Any member would be happy to make a presentation about P&E in your lodge, or at a District Meeting

PRONOUNCING GLOSSARY

MASONRY - MAY SON REE PIETY - PIE ET EE

MOSAIC - MOH ZAY ICK DILATE - DIE LATE

ARCHITECTURAL - ARE KIT TECK CHOOR AL

The **Book of the Work** was revised in 2009.
Every Mason should have a copy of this revised edition.
It is well worth the **Investment**.
(The enhanced rubrics provide clarity and standardization.)

THE BALLOT – Part One

Before discussing the ballot itself, there are five points to bring to your attention.

1. Balloting is the last item on the Worshipful Master's agenda before the conferring of degrees. (Book of Constitution, Section 335)
2. No one is allowed to enter or leave the Lodge Room during the taking of a ballot, except to receive the ballot of the Tyler. (Book of Constitution, Section 337)
3. A collective ballot may be taken for two or more applicants only with the unanimous consent of all the Brethren. (Book of Constitution, Section 348)
4. The ballot must be distributed to and collected from the Tyler – and, of course, the Deacons.
5. All Members present in the lodge room must cast a ballot. (Book of Constitution, Section 344)

HOW TO CONDUCT THE BALLOT

The W.M. begins by informing the Brethren as follows:

- (a) A ballot is about to be taken.
- (b) He directs the Junior Warden to notify any members of the lodge, who may be in the ante-room, that a ballot is about to be taken. **Note:** *It is not mandatory that all members must then enter the lodge to ballot. All Section 337 of the Constitution states is that "...after all members desirous of balloting have entered..."* So members are given the opportunity to come into the lodge and ballot – but they could decline to take advantage of the opportunity, for whatever reason.
- (c) The W.M. informs all members about the particulars of each applicant.
- (d) If a collective ballot is intended, Robert's Rules of Order provide for an alternative way to expedite this without the formality of a motion and a vote. The W.M. could say, "If there is no objection, we shall proceed with a collective ballot". If no member objects, the W.M. declares that a collective ballot has been agreed to and proceeds accordingly.
- (e) Except for collecting the Tyler's ballot, **NO ONE** shall be allowed to enter or leave the lodge room until balloting is complete. Nor shall the ballot boxes ever leave the lodge room.

Please share this newsletter with other members of your Lodge – and your Masonic friends

The Deacons are requested to prepare the ballot. One suggested method is that the empty ballot boxes and balloting materials are placed on the Secretary's desk.

The Senior Deacon picks up the container which holds the white balls and the Junior Deacon takes the one with the black balls.

In the exceptional circumstances when visitors may be present, it would be helpful at this time if the W.M. would ask all MEMBERS to stand.

The W.M. instructs the Deacons to distribute the ballot to all members. While our Constitution does not specifically state the order in which the ballot is to be distributed, many lodges have adopted the custom of starting with the W.M. and concluding with the I.P.M.

During the process, the Deacons can provide the Tyler with his ballot material without ceremony. After all the ballots have been distributed, the Deacons should give themselves a white ball and a black ball.

After the distribution of the ballots, the W.M. will ask "Have all members received one white and one black ball?" (Book of Constitution, Section 340) The correct response by the Brethren is, "I have." (One can only answer for himself.)

The W.M. then instructs the Senior Deacon as follows: "Bro. Senior Deacon, you will present the white ballot box for inspection." (This is done to ensure that there are no black balls in the white ballot box before balloting begins.)

As is the case with the distribution of the ballot, the Constitution does not specify the order in which the white box is to be presented. A common custom is for the Senior Deacon to present the ballot box first to the Junior Warden, then to the Senior Warden and lastly to the W.M. The Junior Deacon remains stationary, (usually at the N/E corner), during this examination.

The W.M. then cautions the Brethren along the following lines, "White balls in the white box elect; black balls in the white box reject. Look well to your ballot."

If the W.M. intends to follow the method of balloting wherein the Deacons collect the ballots while the members remain in their place, the W.M. will so instruct the Deacons to collect the ballots. (An alternative method, that of balloting at the altar, will be discussed in our next issue.)

The Senior Deacon leads the way (**at all times**) with the white box.

As was the case previously, the Constitution does not specify the order in which the ballot is to be collected. Many lodges collect the ballot first from the W.M. and conclude with the I.P.M. The Junior Deacon follows with the black box, collecting all the remaining ballots. All members present must cast a ballot.

During the collection of the ballot, the Deacons carry the box over their left arm. When they present the box, (with the

drawer closed), to each member, they avert their heads, looking away from the member, to preserve privacy.

When the Deacons reach the West, and after they have collected the Inner Guard's ballot, the W.M. will direct the Junior Warden to permit the Inner Guard to retire and to admit the Tyler.

(The Tyler must vote in a formal manner. Do not just open the door and request him to ballot from outside the door of the Lodge. He must ballot in full view of all members present.)

After the Tyler enters the Lodge, the W.M. repeats the same information and caution, for the benefit of the Tyler, as he did for the membership previously.

After the Tyler has cast his ballot, the W.M. directs the Junior Warden to allow the Tyler to return to his station and to readmit the Inner Guard.

After all the ballots have been collected, the W.M. enquires of the Brethren, "Has every member of the Lodge balloted?" The correct response again is, "I have."

The W.M. then states, "I declare the ballot closed."

The W.M. now instructs the Senior Deacon to present the white ballot box for inspection. The Junior Deacon remains standing while this is happening, usually at the N/E corner, continuing to hold the black box until the W.M. eventually orders that the ballot be destroyed.

As per Section 345 of the Constitution, the Senior Deacon proceeds to show the white ballot box first to the Junior Warden, then to the Senior Warden and finally to the W.M..

TIPS

- (1) When distributing or collecting the ballot **BALLS**, typically start with the W.M.
- (2) When the white ballot **BOX** is to be inspected (both before and after the ballot), typically start with the J.W.

After he has seen the ballot and if it appears something is amiss, the W.M. may declare it null and void and direct the Deacons to destroy the ballot. He can then order another ballot to be taken, as per Section 347 of the Constitution.

Note that the W.M. can only declare the first ballot null and void if he has not already declared the applicant rejected.

He cannot subsequently declare the second ballot null and void, (unless the first ballot was a collective ballot).

The Conclusion of "Conducting The Ballot"
will appear in our next issue.