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Tacoma, WA 98409

Steilacoom Lodge No. 2

Free and Accepted Masons of Washington

Long Range Plan



This document is intended to spark discussion among the 2010 officers and should be seen as a dialogue beginning point only. It is a work in progress and a living document. Once we've all had a chance to review and provide feedback, we should all sign it to signify our collective acknowledgement and buy in of our direction.



Steilacoom Lodge No. 2

Long Range Plan

Vision

To provide for the sustainable growth of Steilacoom Lodge so that the Lodge can continue its work, provide charity to the community, and support its members. We will leave the Lodge stronger than when we found it.

Mission

We will have an active and engaged membership of brothers joined in sincere bonds of brotherly love. We will be a known force for good in the community. We will sustain and actively promote the personal growth of our members. Our ritual work and hospitality will be legendary throughout the jurisdiction. When brothers from other lodges visit our lodge, they will have a wonderful, powerful, and moving experience. They will want to come back and bring others with them. Good men will know about us and want to join us in our labors. Families (including widows) will be actively encouraged to attend and feel welcome at our dinners and events.

Financial Philosophy

Our financial philosophy is relatively conservative. We will have budgets established for the coming year before the end of the current term. Our budgets will balance. We will rely on our investments for both growth and income. We will preserve the capital we have, accepting a lower rate of returns in exchange for greater security. We will not, however, be afraid to invest our money wisely.

Ritual and Degree Work

Ritual and degree work, carefully done, is a large part as to how we educate our brethren, new and existing, about our Masonic philosophy. We treat the ceremonies with dignity and respect. We do not rush through our ritual work, but instead think of our ritual as an opportunity to teach and instruct. We never tease the candidate before his degree about anything that might or might not occur.

Practice Sessions and Ritual Education

We practice our degrees and maintain good relations with other lodges so that we can call on them (and they on us) if needed to fill a hole in a degree. We sponsor regular practice sessions to improve our proficiency. These practice sessions will be institutionalized as reserved for the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month. The presence of at least one Lodge officer at these sessions will be required.

All officers in the line will complete their Lodge Officers Proficiency examination. Any other interested brethren will be encouraged to take the exam as well.

We will build and maintain a strong mentorship program in Steilacoom Lodge. Mentors will be accountable for assisting the Worshipful Master and Senior Warden in scheduling degree work for their candidates.

Degree Work

Degrees are organized by the Worshipful Master and the Senior Warden. We prefer that all line officers should take part in the ritual work of the degrees. We will mix in other brethren who are not currently part of the line and encourage their participation in our degree work as well. The integration of our newer brethren into our ritual work is an important part of our strengthening our lodge.

- The Senior Deacon should confer at least one Entered Apprentice degree during his tenure.
- The Junior Warden should confer at least one Fellowcraft degree.
- The Senior Warden should confer at least one Master Mason degree.
- The Worshipful Master should encourage participation of all interested brethren in degree work, and be ready to step in and confer any degree if the need arises.

Degree work should be in dark suits, white gloves, and bow ties if possible.

Lodge Ritual Work (Stated Meetings)

The Deacons, along with the Senior Warden, are responsible for making sure that the Lodge is set up. The Senior Warden is responsible for the upkeep of the preparation room and the organization of the contents therein and should instruct the Deacons, Stewards, and others in the proper placement and care of lodge ritual property (in conjunction with the Treasurer).

The Worshipful Master, Senior Warden, and Junior Warden should be proficient in opening and closing the Lodge, calling from Refreshment to Labor/Labor to Refreshment, and calling up/calling down on all three degrees. All other officers should know their parts by memory. Unless a brother is serving *pro-tempore* and on a short term basis (single meeting), the standard work should not be open in the Lodge room while the Lodge is at labor with the exception of mentors and their students and one designated prompter.

Meeting attire should be dark suits and white gloves unless there is a special program that precludes it. We should, however, remember that we are happy to have a brother in Lodge because of his internal rather than external qualifications.

An agenda should be prepared by the Worshipful Master and the Secretary and should be reviewed by the Senior Warden, Junior Warden, and Senior Deacon prior to the meeting. The agenda should be ready and prepared a week in advance, if at all possible. This will allow everyone to prepare in case of memorials, balloting, or other special business.

Courtesy Work

We should provide help if asked. We are not to become a traveling degree team, but will likely find that others will seek us out. We are willing to help, coach, and provide practice opportunities, but we should not become an impediment to the progression or development of the work of the other lodges.

Committees

Much of the good work of the Lodge must take place during times other than the stated or special meetings. Many critical duties must be taken care of by the work of brethren gathered onto committees.

We would propose the following committees:

- Finance Committee (Finance Committee required by the By Laws of Steilacoom Lodge)
 - Composed of the WM, SW, and JW
 - Must approve all expenditures not provided for in the annual budget.
 - Responsible, along with the Treasurer and Secretary, for preparing and submitting a budget to the Brethren of the Lodge.
- Sickness and Distress / Widow's Committee (Widow's Committee required by the By Laws of Steilacoom Lodge)
 - Responsible for reporting on status of sick or distressed brethren
 - Responsible for organizing visits, cards, or other relief to the brethren or their families
 - This also includes organization of the care package program for our deployed brethren.
 - Responsible for keeping contact with our Widows and ensuring that they are informed of Lodge activities where appropriate.
 - Responsible for contacting and organizing Steilacoom's participation in the Widow's Brunch and Memorial Service.
- Cemetery Committee - (Cemetery Committee required by the By Laws of Steilacoom Lodge)
 - Responsible for organizing the maintenance and upkeep of the cemetery.
 - Responsible, along with the Secretary, for developing a plan of action for the use of the cemetery.
- Charity Committee
 - Responsible for the administration of the Bikes for Books program.
 - Also responsible for organizing at least one other charity event during the year.
- Masonic Relations and Youth Committee
 - Brethren that will form a core group who will support visitation or other Lodges and Youth Groups

- Will help to organize visitation to sister lodges, Tri-Lodge, and the Joint Church Service.
- Community Relations
 - Responsible for helping to organize the Joint Church Service
 - Also responsible for organizing Show/Fair events such as the Steilacoom Freedom Fair
 - Responsible for keeping in contact with the South Tacoma Business District activity.
 - All events should have adequate support and planning
 - Planning should begin 3 months in advance
 - Logistics (where, when, objective)
 - Volunteers
 - Funding
 - Publicity
- Fellowship Committee – Sponsoring social events outside the lodge
 - Informal
 - Appropriate
 - Must not be exclusive – must engage all members
 - Poker night
 - Bowling
 - Puyallup Fair
 - Sporting Events
 - Coffee Klatch
 - Responsible for helping to plan/organize/implement the Sweetheart Dinner, the July 4th Picnic, and the Christmas at Fort Nisqually events.
- Masonic Education Committee
 - Responsible for presenting at one educational program each quarter
 - Must not simply be read – must be understood and researched
 - Can make use of Research and Education Committee members

Hospitality

Our hospitality allows us to meet each other on the level and helps to establish the fellowship that binds us together.

Refreshments

The quality and quantity of refreshments brings us together both before and after the meetings. The dinners provide an opportunity for the brethren to gather with their families and potential candidates in a celebratory fashion. The main course for the dinners is provided by the Lodge, with the remainder provided by the Lodge members via a potluck.

Preparation before the dinner is essential. The set up should begin at a minimum of 5:45 and available to set up tables, put out place settings, condiments, pitchers of water, etc. This service should include helping the widows, disabled brethren, and families with small children. The takedown should begin as soon as the diners are finishing up. Refreshments for degrees should be simple and easy to prepare, and should not require extensive clean up. Coffee should be ready at a minimum of a half an hour before the dinner or the degree.

Conduct

Hospitality is more than food. The Senior Deacon and the Tyler should greet all guests and brethren before they even make it in the door. The Worshipful Master should be in the hallway, greeting every member and family member who walks into the door. The stewards should ensure that no one is sitting alone, especially the visitors. ***No one should ever be left standing in the hallway.*** Brethren, and preferably officers, should ensure that no one sits alone in the dining hall.

Communication

Communication is the key to active participation and effective organization. The principle officers are responsible for making sure communication is clear, concise, and timely. We will utilize our trestle board for event planning, ensuring that everything is accurate. We'll publish the Directory and By Laws of Steilacoom Lodge in the first quarter of 2010.

We will publish the Moonlighter quarterly and have articles from all of the elected officers. We'll also solicit articles from the brethren, reporting on recent events that we've participated in. The Moonlighter will be in a standard format that translates easily onto the web.

We will utilize an opt-in calling tree to remind brethren of events and to help drum up volunteers when needed.

Our web site will be relevant and up to date. We will keep a current calendar on our website.

We will not be afraid to talk to the public in regards to our external events and our charity work. We will engage the Tacoma Volcano, the Fort Lewis Ranger, and the Tacoma News Tribune in letting them know what we do.