

Chandler Lodge #138 F &AM  
Lodge Education Program

Subject: The importance of Committees

Date: 24 Feb 09

The Masonic organization is only as strong as its committees. It is the Masters requirement to appoint various committees upon his election to office to serve during that Masonic term; likewise our Grand Lodge has the same requirement. Some committees are mandatory and others are at the discretion of the master but committees exist because the Master or Grand Master is only one individual and cannot effectively manage the organization single-handedly. Just as large corporations are divided into departments of specialization, so should the master divide his membership into specialized areas, these are his committees, and ensure the success of the organization.

Committees and the importance of them should not be overlooked. Think for a moment how we all got here, our 'unanimous vote' was based on the report given by the investigation committee. With the petition signer, this important committee literally guards the door of masonry and what the future masons will bring to our lodge. If our state Code places this amount of trust in a committee then we should all see the importance and value of our committees and not so easily dismiss them, their tasks, and the reporting to the lodges.

The master is the overseer of the work of a lodge, and he should desire to not only effectively manage, but continually improve the condition of his lodge, albeit the structure, the membership, the ritual work, or just the bookkeeping. When the lodge becomes stagnant it is the beginning of its death. Members will lose interest, the building will crumble, ritual work will falter, and records will be incomplete. This is the importance of the committee, and the master's appointments. They are his eyes and ears reaching farther out into the membership, the building, and the records. The committee's job is to perform all the necessary budgeting, investigation, and other groundwork for making reports to the lodge, and ensuring their assignments and projects proceed smoothly. One thing a committee does not do; is make a decision. They are responsible for gathering all the information and making recommendations to the lodge and master on how to proceed, they may even manage the assigned task however they should always be conscious of the fact they are working for the lodge, representing the master and the decisions should be that of the lodge; the committee is just another tool of masonry.

Each committee has a specialized area and its strength is in the members appointed to the committee. A good committee will enjoy their task, enjoy working together, and their skills will reflect the specialty of their assignment. The finance committee should contain proven businessmen, the temple committee should have a good maintenance man and building manager, talented ritualist should administer the craft team and lectures. Some committees are extremely important to the members of the lodge i.e. the investigation committee. Other committees are more important to the master i.e. fundraising and ritual. And others still are most important to the business of the lodge i.e. the inventory, and finance committees. Also committees operate on different schedules. The fundraising committee may need to act quickly for a festival or special event. The finance committee may take its time and schedule audits and budget meetings at its discretion. Something like a ritual committee will be most active around inspection time, while six months later another committee will be doing inventory for the Masonic year-end.

The master should not overlook the importance of committees during his term, they are his contact to the membership, and will make his year much less stressful. The committee and its members should not overlook the importance of their task for the master and the lodge. They should not only assemble the best possible product, but also be thinking of other ways to improve. And most of all our members should not overlook the importance of the committee in the overall scheme of the lodge. The committee is the wheel the master turns to direct the lodge. If there is a new member initiated it is because of a committee, if we get an official lodge communication it is because of a committee, our special events, our budget, even the history and records of our lodge are all in the hands of a committee. We should desire these positions, value their work, and never overlook their importance.