

GRAND LODGE OF MARK MASTER MASONS OF DYFED – 11 July 2020

The Minutes of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of Dyfed held as a Virtual Business Meeting at 11am on Saturday 11th July 2020.

The Provincial Grand Master, R.W.Bro. Gareth Raymond Hicks declared the meeting open and welcomed all to the meeting. He then requested the Provincial Grand Secretary to read the Exemption from the Notice of General Suspension.

Dear W.Bro. Griffith,

Request for an Exemption from the General Suspension of Masonic Activity. Having successfully represented to Grand Lodge the necessity of holding a Provincial virtual business meeting for the purpose of transacting overdue administrative business you are hereby granted permission to hold the said meeting by exemption from the Notice of General Suspension of Masonic Activity issued on 17th March 2020.

You will cause this letter to be read aloud at the appointed Virtual Business Meeting immediately after it has been declared open and recorded in the Minutes thereof.

With fraternal regards and best wishes,

R.W.Bro. Ryan A. Williams, P.G.J.W.

Grand Secretary 24th June 2020.

Approval of Minutes - The Provincial Grand Master explained that the minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 29th June 2019 were available on the Provincial Website. The Provincial Grand Secretary had not received any corrections after their publication. The Provincial Grand Master then proposed that the minutes be accepted and called for a show of hands from those who supported the proposition. The minutes were approved.

General Purposes Committee – The report and recommendations of the General Purposes Committee which was held by video conference on Saturday 20th June 2020 was received.

Resolutions

The following resolutions were then put to the vote and carried:

1. That the Treasurer's Report and Audited Accounts be received and passed for approval at the Annual Meeting.
2. That W.Bro. Eric Mock, the only candidate, be declared as Treasurer.
3. That the Auditors be as follows: For the General Fund, W. Bro. Alan Waters and Brother Marley Davies, both of Picton Castle Lodge, and for the Benevolent Fund, W. Bro Vernon Edwards of Mansel Lodge and W.Bro Roger Gealy of Lliedi Lodge
4. That the Provincial Dues for the year 2019 – 2020, payable on 31st August 2020 be set at £0.00 per member, for both Mark and RAM Lodges, subject to Lodges using these savings to assist in safeguarding their lodge finances.
5. That the Charity Stewards Report and Annual Accounts for the Provincial Benevolent Fund be received and passed for approval at the Annual Meeting.

To Confirm Provincial Appointments and Promotions.

The Provincial Grand Master stated he was delighted to confirm the reappointment of W. Bro Martin Lowe as Deputy Provincial Grand Master. He added that at a digital conference held on Saturday 27th June 2020 he had the opportunity to say a few words to

the Brethren appointed and promoted to Provincial Grand Lodge. He then asked the Provincial Grand Secretary to read the list, (as set out on page 9 of this document.) The Provincial Grand Master then confirmed those appointments and promotions.

Provincial Grand Masters Address 2020.

Good Morning Brethren,

In just a few months our whole world has been turned upside down by something so small that we can't even see it with the naked eye, yet it has the power to wreak havoc on our lives. Covid – 19 has impacted on us all, it has changed the way we live and the ways in which we conduct our masonic business.

For me, the highlight of being your Provincial Grand Master is meeting you regularly in your individual lodges and then welcoming you in person to our Annual Meeting at Trinity College. Although meeting by Video Conference is no substitute for seeing you face to face it does at least give me an opportunity to see a screen full of friendly faces, and it brings home just how much I miss your friendly companionship.

On Friday 26th June we should have been rehearsing for the Annual Meeting instead we held a video conference with the retiring Provincial Officers which provided me with an opportunity to thank them all and to chat to those present. I now reiterate my thanks to all the active officers of last year for the excellent support given to me, and the Deputy Provincial Grand Master, during the period up to the lockdown. I do hope that once our business resumes, they will find time to attend installation meetings in support of the new Provincial Team, and perhaps take part in the ceremonial.

My grateful thanks go to all the Provincial Executive Officers, the Secretariat, our Treasurer, Almoner, Registrar, Charity Steward and the Director of Ceremonies and his team for their hard work much of it behind the scenes. During this difficult time their advice, hard work and support has been particularly important.

I thank our retiring Charity Steward W.Bro. Bob Davies for his unstinting service over the last 6 years, and for the support he is already giving to his replacement.

I also thank our retiring Chaplain, W.Bro. Tom Evans for his 4 years in that role, and I am delighted that he has accepted the role as Deputy Chaplain, and I look forward to his company on many future occasions.

Brethren, this year's Provincial Luncheon scheduled for May obviously had to be cancelled, I thank the Wardens, W.Bro. Roger Gealy and W.Bro. Iwan Jenkins for their support during the year and for all the hard work in organising that luncheon. Roger don't throw the paperwork away as next May the luncheon will be open to officers from both last year and this year. I look forward to a bumper turnout!

On Saturday 27th June to mark the date of our postponed Annual Meeting yet another video conference gave me an opportunity to say a few words to those brethren I had appointed or promoted in Provincial Grand Lodge, and I look forward to formally investing those brethren as soon as we can safely meet again.

Earlier this year we were delighted to learn that the Grand Master had seen fit to appoint to Grand Rank as Past Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies two of our brethren W.Bro. Alan Davies, Aberystwyth Mark Lodge and W.Bro. Geoff Hall, Penfro Mark Lodge, although the investiture meeting could not take place the appointments take effect from 9th June 2020. I look forward to seeing them soon, resplendent in their new regalia.

Brethren, although lodge meetings have not taken place the business of the Province continues, During the current emergency we have supported organisations such as Food Banks across the Province as well as individual brethren in need. My main concern is that we maintain contact with all our Mark Master Masons, remember in any case of difficulty, or need please get in touch with our Almoner, Charity Steward, or any of the Executive Officers.

Brethren, please remember that without regular lodge meetings the income through alms collections, raffles, and donations to the Provincial Benevolent Fund is very much reduced. Over the coming months many of our brethren will be exposed to financial hardship and it is expected that calls on the Mark Benevolent Fund will increase. Our newly appointed Charity Steward, W.Bro. David Griffiths will be working hard to ensure that our funds are maintained in a healthy condition. Donating just a few pounds each month makes a tremendous difference. Please set up a regular donation by Standing Order and help us to maintain our support for brethren and local good causes.

Throughout the difficulties the Grand Secretary has convened fortnightly video conference meetings for Provincial Grand Masters and District Grand Masters from England, Wales and the Districts Overseas. Each meeting is well attended with representatives from as far away as South Africa, Singapore, Cyprus, Greece, and the Isle of Man. These meetings have provided an opportunity to ensure that we can learn from best practise as we move forward. You will be interested to learn that some meetings overseas have already recommenced, albeit with some restrictions. Next week we will receive detailed guidance from Mark Masons Hall on how we can move slowly and safely towards a resumption of masonic business, but I must stress that there will be no pressure on brethren, or lodges to meet until it is safe to do so. The Provincial Executive will be on hand throughout to guide you through that process.

Brethren sadly during the past year we have lost several well-known and respected brethren, their names have already been circulated with the minutes of the General Purposes Committee, several of our brethren have also lost close family members. Our thoughts are with everyone who has lost loved ones. I would now ask that we have a moments silence to remember all those brethren, friends and family we have lost during the last year.

THANK YOU, BRETHREN.

Moving onwards Brethren I look forward to the time when we can once again meet up in person, enjoy our shared masonic experience, renew old friendships, share a meal and hopefully a glass or two, and even shake a brother's hand.

Until then remember that this is the friendly degree, please maintain regular contact with all your brethren, if you need a video conferencing platform please contact me, I will be happy to assist.

Finally, brethren of Dyfed it's a real privilege, and an honour to lead this lovely province, and I look forward to seeing you all in person before too long.

Brethren, May the Great Overseer of the Universe guide us, keep us on the right path and be ever in our hearts and minds.

Closing the Meeting. The Provincial Grand Master, R.W.Bro. Gareth Raymond Hicks then declared the meeting closed.