

# THE MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND LODGE

OF ANCIENT FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS

OF THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

### BALLOTING – SUGGESTED METHODS

#### Applicability and Responsibility

This procedure is suggested for use by all constituent Lodges when necessary to conduct a secret ballot, such as on the application of a candidate for membership.

Responsibility for maintaining this document rests with the Committee on Masonic Education, with the approval of the Grand Master.

#### References

**Sections 4200 through 4208**

**Section 4120**

#### Discussion

Aside from the requirements noted in the references, there is no specified procedure for balloting in Connecticut. The procedures described herein are suggested methods, which may be used. Lodges may have long established methods, which they use, and this is in no way intended to prescribe a different way. There are, however, certain minimum requirements, which must be observed. These are:

- The ballot box is inspected by the three principal officers prior to voting;
- The lodge is instructed upon whom they are voting;
- The lodge is instructed on the method of casting their ballot;
- The ballot is declared open;
- All members of the lodge who are present **must** vote (**4200**);
- The three principal officers are the only ones who may inspect the ballot (**4202**);

- The Worshipful Master must declare the ballot closed and the result thereof.

### **Procedure**

The following is an example of a procedure to follow when balloting on a candidate or affiliation for membership. It was compiled from procedures used in various Lodges. It is not intended to be used as the only proper way to ballot, rather utilize this as only a guideline.

Balloting starts when the Secretary rises, salutes the Worshipful Master and says: "Worshipful Master, I have a petition for degrees to be balloted upon in the name of Mr. (Full Name). His place of residence is (street address) in (Town, State). He was born on (Date) in (Town, State). He is (age) years old. He is (occupation), He is employed by (employer). His recommender is Brother (Name) of this Lodge and his avoucher is Brother (Name) of (Lodge Name and number). The Committee on Investigation has reported favorable."

The Secretary then presents the petition and the investigation form to the Worshipful Master.

- Master instructs the Senior Deacon (S.D.) to prepare the ballot box.
- S.D. opens ballot box to ensure that it is empty
- S.D. carries ballot box to Master for Inspection (empties ballot drawer, verifies that both black and white balls/cubes are present for selection).
- The Master declares the balloting open and announces, "Brethren, you are about to ballot on the petition of Mr. A B, White balls elect, black cubes reject" and informs the Lodge members to "vote for the good of the Lodge and Fraternity and that all must vote.
- S.D. then turns the ballot box around so the opening faces away from him. In most Lodges voters are required to stand when balloting.
- S.D. carries the ballot box to the Master, who casts the first ballot.
- S.D. then carries the box to the S.W. then J.W. before general membership is asked to ballot.
- The S.D. may carry the ballot box to each member who should stand when voting or place it on the Altar and have each member come to the Altar to ballot.

- When S.D. observes that all Lodge members have balloted (including the Tiler who should have been relieved by someone appointed by the Master, usually the Junior Deacon) he presents the ballot box back at the altar.
- The Master then ascertains if all have balloted who are eligible to do so. Hearing no dissent, he declares the balloting closed at which point the S.D. turns the ballot box so the opening facing him. The Master directs the S.D. to carry the ballot box to Junior Warden and Senior Warden for inspection.
- The S.D. carries the balloting box to the J.W. who inspects it then proceeds to the S.W. who also inspects it and carries it to the Master for final inspection.
- The Master after inspecting the ballot box asks the J.W. how he finds the ballot.
- The J.W. replies either “sunny” (or clear) or “cloudy”. This is repeated to the S.W. and finally the Master declares his findings.
- If the findings are “sunny” or “clear” the Master declares the candidate duly elected to receive the 3 degrees of Masonry. If the findings are “cloudy” the Master may decide to spread another ballot on the candidate.

**Note:** you may vote on more than one candidate at once. However if the findings are “cloudy” then individual balloting must take place.

**Note 2:** If there is a brother present who is unable to approach the ballot box, the S.D. would reply that there is one brother who has not balloted. The Worshipful Master would then direct the Senior Deacon to carry the ballot box to the brother so that he may cast his ballot.

Once the candidate has been declared elected or rejected by the Master, the result is final and the ballot cannot be reconsidered or set aside. **4201.** A rejected candidate must wait at least six months before renewing his petition. **4206.**

After the ballot is closed, the Worshipful Master must clear the ballot box. He returns the petition and the investigation form to the Secretary.

An alternate form of balloting is for the SD to carry the ballot box west of the altar and places it thereon in such a manner that the brethren can approach the ballot box and cast his ballot.

A new ballot shall be required upon the request of any member before the candidate takes the Entered Apprentice obligation. **4120, 4203, 4204.**