

ByLaws of Tabula Rasa Lodge No. 357, AF & AM, of Lincoln, Nebraska

Article I Name

The name of the Lodge shall be Tabula Rasa No. 357, AF & AM, of Lincoln, Nebraska.

Article II Composition

The Lodge shall consist of as many members as is convenient. Eight members shall be a constitutional number for the transaction of business except for the purposes of consolidation as provided in Grand Lodge law.

Article III Officers

Elective and Appointed Officers of the Lodge. The elective officers of the Lodge shall be a Master, Senior and Junior Wardens, Treasurer and Secretary. One officer may hold both offices of Treasurer and Secretary. The appointed officers shall be a Chaplain, Senior and Junior Deacons, Senior and Junior Stewards and Tyler. The Master may also appoint a Marshal and an Organist.

The elected officers shall be elected by a majority secret written ballot at the first regular meeting in November of each year. No officer may be elected or appointed who has not complied with the Grand Lodge proficiency requirements.

Article IV Powers and Duties of Officers

Section 1. Worshipful Master.

- A. The powers of the Master are absolute in the Lodge.
- B. The Master shall perform the following duties of his office:
 - 1. Prior to his installation, prepare and present a budget to the Budget and Audit Committee and obtain approval thereof at his first regular communication;
 - 2. Prior to his installation, prepare and present three-, five- and seven-year strategic plans to the Planning Committee and obtain approval thereof at his first regular communication;
 - 3. Maintain order in the Lodge;
 - 4. Protect the Lodge against improper propositions;
 - 5. Submit and explain amendments to the Grand Lodge Constitution that are to be voted upon by the membership;
 - 6. When an officer is absent, fill such office by temporary appointment from meeting to meeting;
 - 7. Decide when to accept Masonic charges against a member;
 - 8. Keep copies of the bound volumes of the Grand Lodge, the annual proceedings and the Law of Freemasonry in a place where they may be accessible at every communication;

9. Confer with the family of a deceased brother and learn whether a Masonic funeral service is desired;
 10. Visit members of the Lodge who are ill, feeble or disabled and who are in hospitals, care facilities or at their residences. The Master may designate such members of the Lodge to assist in making these visits; and
 11. Install his successor in office.
- C. The Master may:
1. Summon any officer or committee to appear before the Lodge with the books and accounts, and
 2. Require them to make a statement of the matters submitted to them at any regular communication.
- D. The Master shall appoint the following Committees:
1. Sustaining Membership,
 2. Budget and Audit,
 3. Planning,
 4. Inquiry,
 5. Ritual,
 6. Masonic Education,
 7. Promotions,
 8. Mentor,
 9. Relief and Visitation,
 9. Dining and Social, and
 10. Any others deemed necessary.

The Master may preside as chairman over each committee whose meeting he attends.

Section 2. Secretary.

- A. The Secretary, in addition to the usual duties incident to such office, shall perform the following duties of his office:
1. Prior to each regular meeting, provide for review by the members present: all correspondence, committee reports, Treasurer's report, report on receipts and disbursements, minutes of the last regular and all subsequent communications and bills to be paid; these documents along with an agenda for the upcoming meeting, will be sent by e-mail to the members one week prior to the next regular meeting.
 2. Record all transactions of the Lodge;
 3. Receive all dues, fees and other moneys belonging to the Lodge upon receipt of a petition for membership in the Lodge deposit the accompanying fee at once into the funds of the Lodge, keep in stub book form the receipts for all moneys received for demits and diplomas, keep an exact

account of the amount and source of all moneys received, the amount and payee of all moneys paid out, append the same to the minutes of each regular communication and transfer such moneys to the Treasurer;

4. Obtain regular vouchers for, and report to the Treasurer, all sums appropriated for his own compensation or incidental expenses, and shall not retain them from funds received by him;
 5. Include in the minutes of the Lodge, the reports of the investigation committees on petitions with the names of all persons rejected, suspended and expelled and promptly notify the Grand Secretary of all expulsions or suspensions of members of the Lodge, giving the date and cause thereof;
 6. Keep in the records of the Lodge copies of the annual report of the Budget and Finance Committee, report of the Audit Committee, the annual returns to the Grand Lodge, and such other reports as are necessary to make the Secretaries record complete as to the proceedings of the Lodge;
 7. Make proper certificates of good standing upon proper request from a member, a Chapter of the Order of Eastern Star, or any regular Masonic body and keep in stub book form the records of demits and diplomas;
 8. Within five days after the approval of the minutes of the last regular communication of the year, deliver to the Auditing Committee all the books, documents and papers of the office;
 9. Prepare the annual returns to the Grand Lodge, forwarding them with the necessary funds at such times as may be required;
 10. Prepare the monthly and annual reports of statistical information of the Lodge on forms provided by the Grand Secretary, and shall forward the monthly reports to the Grand Secretary not later than the 10th day of each following month and shall forward the annual report on or before the 10th day of February following the close of each year;
 11. Furnish the chairman of each committee the names of committee members, together with a copy of the resolutions or subject matter to be acted on by them;
 12. Prepare an application for the Rock Maul Award, on forms provided by the Grand Secretary, and shall forward such application to the Grand Secretary not later than the 15th day of November of each calendar year;
 13. Keep a ledger detailing the records and accounts of each member;
 14. No later than the first day of January of each year, he shall charge each member in good standing with the Lodge dues in the amounts specified by the Bylaws of the Lodge and Grand Lodge law;
 15. On June 1, of each year, notify in writing each member that is in arrears for dues of the current year of such fact and request payment thereof on or before September 30, of the same year; and
 16. After September 30, notify, in writing, each member who has been automatically suspended for nonpayment of dues for failure to pay dues on or before September 30.
- B. The Secretary shall receive for his services such compensation as the Lodge may from time to time determine.

Section 3. Duties of the Senior and Junior Wardens.

- A. The Senior Warden shall:
 1. Be chairman of the Ritual and Masonic Education committees;

2. Be a member of the Relief and Visitation Committee; and
3. Be a member of the Mentor Committee.

B. The Junior Warden shall:

1. Arrange the trestle board for the Degrees of Masonry;
2. Be chairman of the Inquiry Committee;
3. Be a member of the Relief and Visitation Committee;
4. Be a member of the Dining and Social Committee; and
5. In the absence of other accusers; the Junior Warden may file charges against a brother offending Civil or Masonic Law. Such charges, when filed, shall be filed with the Secretary of the Lodge to be read in accordance with Grand Lodge law.

Section 4. Duties of the Senior and Junior Deacons.

A. The Senior Deacon shall:

1. Have careful supervision of the visitors register;
2. Instruct the Tyler to see that every Brother visiting the Lodge registers his name, date of visitation, name, number and location of his Lodge, official position, and the name of the Brother who vouches for him and inform the Secretary thereof prior to the beginning of each communication; and
3. Be chairman of the Dining and Social Committee and make arrangements for the Festive Boards held by the Lodge.

B. The Junior Deacon shall:

1. Assist the Senior Deacon in supervision of the visitors register;
2. Have charge of the clothing and paraphernalia of the lodge; and
3. Be a member of the Dining and Social Committee.

Section 5. Duties of Senior and Junior Stewards.

The Stewards shall provide and have charge of the refreshments for the Craft.

Article V. Communications

Section 1. Regular Communications.

Each regular communication of this Lodge may be held at Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, Valley of Lincoln Building, Lincoln, Nebraska, on the 4th Tuesday of each calendar month beginning at 6 p.m. When such date falls on a national or state holiday, then the regular communication shall be held on the 3rd Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. The

regular communication of the Lodge shall be conducted in the Entered Apprentice Degree; provided, however, that eight (8) Master Masons must be present at all regular communications.

Section 2. Special or Emergent Communications.

A special or emergent communication may be called at any time by the Worshipful Master. The only business that shall be transacted at a special or emergent communication is a Masonic funeral, installation, the conferring of degrees, examination for proficiency in the degrees, business authorized by the Grand Lodge law or referred by the Grand Master.

Section 3. Installation.

The officers shall be installed at any regular or special communication, called by the Master for that purpose, within the time fixed by the Grand Lodge for the installation of officers of chartered lodges.

Section 4. Order of Business

- A. Prior to the opening of a regular or special communication, the Master shall announce the visiting brethren, determine if such visitor is vouched and have all unvouched visitors examined.
- B. After Lodge is opened in regular communication, the following shall be the regular order of business, subject to the will and pleasure of the Master.
 - 1. Motion to approve the reports, receipts and disbursements, the minutes of the last regular and all subsequent communications and bills to be paid as posted with the Secretary.
 - 2. Reports of Investigation committees on petitions.
 - 3. Balloting on petitions. None but Master Masons may vote.
 - 4. Receiving, reading and referring petitions.
 - 5. Examination of candidates for proficiency.
 - 6. Masonic Education Committee.
 - 7. Masonic Education Discussion Session.
 - 8. Unfinished business.
 - 9. New business.
 - 10. Miscellaneous business for the good of the Fraternity.

Section 4. Disbursement of Funds by Officers.

The funds of the Lodge shall be disbursed only on the signature of the Treasurer at the request of the Secretary, and with the consent of the Worshipful Master and the Lodge.

**Article VI
Committees**

Section 1. Committee on Sustaining Membership shall:

- A. Consist of five members appointed by the Worshipful Master;

- B. Assist the Secretary in the collection of dues;
- C. Make an effort to secure the reinstatement of Brethren suspended for nonpayment of dues;
- D. Make personal investigation whenever possible of the cases of all Brethren to be suspended;
- E. Use such influence as may be necessary to make such delinquent Brethren see the value of maintaining their good standing; and
- F. Where appropriate, make recommendations to the Lodge for the remission of dues prior to time set for final action on suspensions.

Section 2. Budget and Audit Committee shall:

- A. Consist of three members appointed by the Worshipful Master;
- B. Exercise a general supervision of the finances of the Lodge;
- C. Annually review the Worshipful Master-elect's budget to ensure the Lodge finances are in order to meet its obligations and make its recommendations to the members at the time of the vote of approval of such budget; and
- D. Annually examine the records, books, accounts and vouchers of the Secretary and Treasurer, and audit all bills and accounts, making a written report thereof at the first regular communication of the Masonic year.

When accepted by the Lodge, the annual audit is to be spread upon the minutes.

Section 3. Planning Committee shall:

- A. Consist of the Worshipful Master, the Immediate Past Master, the Senior and Junior Wardens and the Senior Deacon;
- B. Hold a strategic planning meeting during the Masonic year with all of the officers and chairmen of the Committees;
- C. Develop written three-, five- and seven-year goals and operational plans for the Lodge; and
- D. Make its recommendations to the members at the time of the vote of approval of such three-, five- and seven-year strategic plans.

Section 4. Inquiry Committee shall:

- A. Consist of three members appointed by the Worshipful Master;
- B. Investigate proposed candidates for the mysteries of Masonry;
- C. Determine when candidates are prepared for their proficiency examinations; and
- D. Recommend when a candidate is ready to be promoted to a higher degree.

Section 5. Ritual Committee shall:

- A. Consist of three members appointed by the Master of which the Senior Warden is the chairman;

- B. Arrange practices and instruction of the Masonic Work and Degree ceremonies to ensure the Lodge has proficient members who can perform the ritual in a dignified and passionate manner;
- C. In conjunction with the Promotions Committee, conduct tryouts of the Brethren who desire to hold a station or place in the Lodge.

Section 6. Masonic Education Committee shall:

- A. Consist of five members appointed by the Master of which the as appointed by the Master is the chairman;
- B. Conduct Masonic Education presentations and discussions; and
- C. Arrange places and materials for the study and discussion of the principles of Masonry to ensure that the candidates and members thoroughly understand the teachings of each degree.

Section 7. Promotion Committee shall:

- A. Consist of three members appointed by the Master;
- B. Recommend to the Lodge in November of each year, the members who meet the requirements of the Grand Lodge law for each station or place, who have demonstrated proficiency in the Masonic ritual for such station or place and who merit consideration for election or appointment;
- C. In conjunction with the Ritual and Masonic Education committees, conduct tryouts for the Brethren who desire to hold a station or place in the Lodge; and
- D. Submit a report on the attendance of the members at all functions of the Lodge at the November meeting each year.

Section 8. The Mentor Committee shall:

- A. Consist of two Past Masters appointed by the Master;
- B. Appoint a member of the Lodge as a mentor for each candidate; and
- C. Oversee the training of the mentors and the progress of the candidates in their Masonic education.

Section 9. The Dining and Social Committee shall:

- A. Consist of Junior Warden, Senior Deacon and Senior and Junior Stewards of which the Senior Deacon shall be the chairman;
- B. Be responsible for the selection of restaurants and all matters related to lodge dinners and social functions; and
- C. In conjunction with the Master-elect, annually determine and include in the Master-elect's budget, the amount of the dining and social fee to be paid by each member and any visiting Brethren who attend a dinner or social event.

**Article VII
Fees and Dues**

Section 1. Entered Apprentice Degree.

The fee for initiation into the Entered Apprentice degree shall be \$100. Such fee shall accompany the petition and such degree shall not be conferred until the fee is actually paid to the Secretary.

Section 2. Fellowcraft Degree.

The fee for passing to the Fellowcraft degree shall be \$100. Such fee shall accompany the petition and such degree shall not be conferred until the fee is actually paid to the Secretary.

Section 3. Master Mason Degree.

The fee for raising to the Master Mason degree shall be \$100. Such fee shall accompany the petition and such degree shall be conferred until the fee is actually paid to the Secretary.

Section 4. Annual Dues.

Each Master Mason in good standing beginning in the year 2005 shall pay dues in the amount of \$200 per annum, which such amount shall be automatically increased each year at the rate of inflation, but such increase not to exceed 4 percent per annum, plus the Grand Lodge per capita tax. The dues shall become due and payable on the first day of January of each year.

Section 5. Dining and Social

Each member shall pay annually a dining and social fee as approved by the members of the Lodge. Each attending visiting Brethren shall pay a dining or social fee as approved by the members of the Lodge for each diner attended. This fee is due on the first day of January of each year.

**Article VIII
Amendments**

These Bylaws may be amended in the following manner only:

- A. The amendment must be in written or typewritten form and offered at a regular communication by a member of the Lodge.
- B. The amendment shall then be entered upon the records and lie over until the next regular communication.
- C. If adopted by a two-thirds vote of the members present, it shall become a law and in effect when approved by the Grand Master of Masons of Nebraska.

We hereby certify that the foregoing Bylaws are true copies of the Bylaws as adopted by _____, _____ AF& AM of Lincoln, Nebraska, on _____, 2005.

Secretary

Master

Lodge Seal

The above Bylaws are hereby _____ by the Grand Lodge

AF& AM of Nebraska, this _____ day of _____, 20_____.

Seal

Grand Master