



Grand Chapter of Kansas Order of the Eastern Star

July 23, 2020

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

This letter is to address the questions, misunderstandings, and disinformation about the 2020 election of officers.

You may have heard that Brother David and I had planned to hold a Special Session on July 25 for the purpose of holding the 2020 election. Our state's Covid-19 recovery plan at that time put July 25 well past Phase Out, even allowing for several extensions. We expected to have no restrictions on our ability to have a large number of members assembled for this event.

While still making plans for this Special Session, it was becoming apparent that bringing our membership together for a day-long Special Session might no longer be practical. However, the need to move forward to complete the line of elected officers remained a necessity for the continued Good of the Order. Our Constitution and Bylaws provide guidance for election to be conducted in person. So now, how do we proceed?

Jurisprudence was asked to confer with the General Grand Chapter Parliamentarian to determine if Robert's Rules of Order might have the answer. Armed with our Kansas Constitution and Bylaws and his years of experience applying Robert's Rules, the Parliamentarian was able to walk our Council of Administration through the process.

To summarize the Parliamentarian's reply, the extraordinary circumstances of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic have made it impossible for us to move forward using the "contract" (our Constitution and Bylaws) as written. While maintaining the intent of our Kansas Constitution and Bylaws, he led us through this one-time process of deviating from our normal in-person procedures, to develop a ballot by mail. So now, who would receive the ballot?

At Grand Chapter we all understand that we must be registered and present to receive and cast a ballot. Applying Robert's Rules, it was "reasonable" to expect that those who had registered for the 2020 Session had intended to be present to vote. How do we accommodate those who would register in person?

The requirement remains that members must be registered and present to vote. Those listed in the 2019-2020 Itinerary, if not already registered, were determined to be the most likely to be walk in registrations. In this circumstance, adding these members was considered "not unreasonable". What about every member's right to vote?

The right of every member to vote has not been taken away. Every member of this Jurisdiction in good standing was allowed to register for the 2020 Session, yet most did not. This is not unusual or abnormal. Therefore, to include all members was deemed "unreasonable" and outside the parameters and intent of our normal election process. Thus, the Council of Administration determined that those members who had registered and/or were listed in the 2019/2020 Itinerary would be considered "registered and present" for the 2020 Session election.

This same intent applies to who can be considered as a candidate on the ballot. If meeting in person for elections, anyone being considered for Grand Secretary, Grand Treasurer, Associate Grand Conductress, or Grand Trustee must advance to the Worthy Grand Matron's podium, i.e. be registered and present. Thus, the above registered and present criteria is again required (registered for the 2020 Session and/or listed in the 2019-2020 Itinerary).

Information for ballot nominees has been provided in accordance with our normal guidelines. Verbal and visual requirements were provided in written format. In lieu of the in-person Special Session election, ballots postmarked by July 18 will be tallied on the morning of July 25. Tellers have been appointed to tally this July 25 mail-in ballot. Installation of the newly elected Grand Officers and Grand Trustee will be held via teleconference at 4pm on July 25. Attendance will be limited to those participating in the ceremony.

We hope this has helped to alleviate concerns and to explain the process by which we arrived at this mail-in ballot. No system is perfect, neither the "normal" blue book version nor the modifications that were made to provide voting delegates with the ability to ballot while sheltering in place.

Fraternally,

Karen Monteith

Karen Monteith
Worthy Grand Matron

David Blocher

David Blocher
Worthy Grand Patron

