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I. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the local lodge secretary's section of the guides for leadership. As secretary, you are in charge of keeping the important day to day operations of your lodge running smoothly: from the organization of lodge meetings to the ordering of supplies. You are also charged with keeping the records for your lodge accurate, organized and accessible to yourself, members, officers and Sons of Norway Headquarters staff. As secretary, you serve as the primary communicator between your lodge, its officers and members, Sons of Norway Headquarters and outside organizations.

II. DUTIES

As lodge secretary you have been entrusted with a variety of duties:

- A. Helping to organize and conduct meetings
- B. Recording, reading and distributing minutes
- C. Conducting lodge correspondence
- D. Ordering supplies
- E. Reporting lodge elections results (*D63*)
- F. Tracking fraternal and community events for the NFCA
- G. Completing Lodge of the Year form (*including the NFCA section*)
- H. Completing the Family Lodge of the Year form
- I. Keeping and preserving secretarial records

Additional duties may be assigned which would be outlined in your local lodge's bylaws.

A. LODGE MEETINGS

As secretary, you serve as the "right arm" to the president and share the responsibility for ensuring that meetings move quickly and smoothly. The following are some secretarial duties associated with lodge meetings:

1. You may help the president choose the order of business for an upcoming meeting. A pre-formulated format can be found in the Meeting Guidelines (*#D72*) or your lodge can create its own unique outline to follow.
2. Before the meetings, inform the president of any unfinished business that needs to be addressed. Along with the president, decide which communications recently received by the lodge should be shared with the membership.
3. Bring several reference documents along with you to the meeting, such as your local lodge's by-laws, the standing rules, the accepted order of business, the minutes of the previous meetings and a list of all standing committees and any special committees.

Though you are busy with minutes and other business, feel free to share your ideas and take part in any discussions during the meeting. Be prepared to answer any questions, which, as secretary, you may be able to provide particular insight.

B. MINUTES

The task traditionally associated with the office of secretary is the recording of meeting minutes. A review of the typical procedures for the recording and presentation of lodge business meeting minutes follows:

1. The minutes begin with a general statement detailing the kind of meeting (*regular or special*), name and number of the lodge, date, place and time of the meeting,
2. Conduct a roll call of officers, either verbally or silently. Record absentees on the Roll Call form (*#D71*).
3. Make note of visitors and guests introduced.
4. Include the election to membership for any new applicants, reporting the total number accepted. Acknowledge new members welcomed into Sons of Norway.
5. Present the minutes from the previous meetings for approval by the lodge. It is always best to provide a brief summary rather than read the minutes word for word.
6. Note whether the minutes from the previous meeting were approved. The minutes should be dated and signed by the secretary after approval by the lodge and then posted.
7. Present received communications to the membership. Lengthy submissions should be summarized. Record in the minutes.
8. Give a short summary of committee reports. Make sure these reports are included with the minutes.
9. Make notes on special lodge events or awards.
10. Report action taken on any unfinished business and record all new business conducted. Exact wording should be included.
11. Report action taken on expenses presented for approval by the treasurer and/or a summary of treasurer report of expenses paid. Include a statement covering the financial reports of the financial secretary and treasurer.

12. Record pertinent information presented during "Remarks for the Good of the Order." If a district or international officer (*in attendance as a visitor*) speaks briefly, this may be noted. If there is an entertainment program, provide a summary.
13. The minutes should close with a general statement indicating the time of adjournment and date, place and time of the next meeting.

Once approved, the minutes from the previous meeting can be posted in a variety of ways. They can be printed on hand-outs to be distributed during or after the meeting, included in the lodge newsletter, distributed via e-mail or posted on your local lodge website. If you post your minutes on the website, it should be in an area that is accessible to members only.

Remember to keep the minutes unbiased and brief. Personal opinions and discussions should not be included.

C. LODGE CORRESPONDENCE

An important task of a lodge secretary is conducting the official correspondence of the lodge, both incoming and outgoing. It is your job to disseminate any significant information received by the lodge to your membership and to promptly facilitate any responses required. You will also be in charge of mailing any official correspondence from the lodge to its members, other lodges, or outside organizations such as "Invitations to Welcome Ceremony" cards to new members and notices of executive committee, board and other meetings. Address labels for special mailings can be requested from Membership Services at Sons of Norway Headquarters. Be sure to keep a concise record of expenses associated with correspondence, such as the cost of postage, stationary, and supplies. These can be submitted to your treasurer for reimbursement.

D. SUPPLIES

The secretary orders the majority of the supplies for the lodge. Most of these items can be found in the "Lodge Supply Catalog" which is available from Headquarters. These items can be ordered using a Lodge Supply Requisition Form, e-mailing a request to supply@sofn.com or calling 1-800-945-8851. Several forms can also be downloaded from www.sonsofnorway.com. Any office supplies, such as paper, pens, staples etc., can be purchased from another source. Bills sent from Headquarters can be submitted to the treasurer for payment. Receipts from other sources can be submitted to your treasurer for reimbursement.

The duties of the financial secretary (*or membership secretary*) and the treasurer require the use of several forms that they may wish to order separately. Also, the financial or membership secretary typically orders anniversary pins and certificates.

Be cautious when ordering anything from an outside source that would involve the Sons of Norway Emblem or name, such as promotional products. The Sons of Norway Emblem and the name "Sons of Norway" have been duly registered and trademarked in the United States and Canada and no lodge or person has the right to use the name "Sons of Norway" or the emblem in connection with merchandising products for personal use or for any commercial enterprise without first obtaining the consent of the International Board of Sons of Norway. Please contact the Fraternal department at Sons of Norway Headquarters with any questions.

E. LODGE OFFICER UPDATE (D63)

Every November, local lodges hold their elections for new officers for the upcoming year. It is vital that the results of your election be communicated to Sons of Norway Headquarters quickly and efficiently. This ensures the accuracy of records at Headquarters and the veracity of your lodge's entry on the Sons of Norway website and in the district and international lodge directories.

Preceding the election, Membership Services will mail you a D63/Lodge Officer update packet. This will include information on how and when to file your new roster of officers. There are two primary ways to update your officers: online (*recommended*) through the membership portal on our website www.sonsofnorway.com or by filling out a D63 form included in the packet and mailing or faxing it to Headquarters. Your new officer roster can also be sent to Membership Services by e-mail. Changes in meeting locations and times can also be communicated through these channels.

Sons of Norway Headquarters only tracks certain offices in your lodge. These are president, vice president, secretary, financial or membership secretary, treasurer, social director, cultural director, editor, publicity director, foundation director, youth director, sports/recreation director and counselor. You do not need to report information about your greeters, historian, musicians or any other officers in your lodge to Headquarters.

Your list of officers for the upcoming year will not be 'live' in Headquarters' system until mid-January or early February. This means that any reports sent out during November or December will be correctly mailed to your current/outgoing officers rather than to the new officers who have yet to be installed.

Some districts require that a separate district-specific form or copy of the D63 form be mailed to the district secretary for their own records. Information about how to advise your district secretary of your roster changes (*if necessary*) will be included in the D63/Lodge Officer update packet received from Headquarters.

Please contact Membership Services with any questions.

F. TRACKING FRATERNAL AND COMMUNITY EVENTS FOR THE NFCA

As a member of the National Fraternal Congress of America (NFCA), Sons of Norway Headquarters is asked to provide information about the overall number of events, hours and monies our lodges dedicate to community and fraternal services each year. Reporting this information is vital because it helps Sons of Norway retain its non-profit status.

As secretary, you will regularly track the fraternal and community events sponsored by your lodge using the "Local Lodge NFCA Fraternal Support Worksheet" and the "Local Lodge NFCA Community Support Worksheet" which are provided by Membership Services. It is suggested that you bring these worksheets to each board meeting so that fellow officers can help record the events that took place over the previous month. These forms are meant to only track events sponsored and organized by your lodge, district or Sons of Norway International. You do not need to record any of the many volunteer activities your members are involved with outside of Sons of Norway official programs or events.

The end-of-year numbers totaled up from these forms are to be recorded on page 2 of the Lodge of the Year form (*as described below*). Please contact Membership Services with any questions.

G. COMPLETING THE LODGE OF THE YEAR FORM

Every year, Sons of Norway determines "Lodge of the Year" award winners for lodge and small lodges at both district and international levels. The winners of this distinction are announced at the biennial conventions. Several factors go into determining which lodges are named "Lodge of the Year", including membership growth totals, insurance participation and the timely filing of important reports, such as Lodge Officer Updates (D63) and the yearly Financial Statement (*form #17*). However, most of the points for Lodge of the Year are earned by the completion of the

“Lodge of the Year” (LOY) form. This form is mailed out by Membership Services in November or December of each year to the lodge secretaries. As secretary, you will fill out this form (*including page 2 for the NFCA*) and then forward it on to your zone director. The NFCA section must be completed for your lodge to qualify for Lodge of the Year and any Gold, Silver or Bronze Merit Awards. More details can be found on Lodge of the Year form cover sheet. The name and address of your zone director can be found on your district’s website, in your district lodge directory or by contacting your district secretary or Sons of Norway Headquarters.

H. COMPLETING THE FAMILY LODGE OF THE YEAR FORM

Sons of Norway also awards the “Family Lodge of the Year” distinction annually. This program is currently offered only at a district level. A “Family Lodge of the Year” (FLOY) form is mailed out to the lodge secretary along with the LOY form. After completing the FLOY, forward it on to your zone director along with the Lodge of the Year form.

F. KEEPING AND PRESERVING SECRETARIAL RECORDS

As secretary, you are the custodian of all secretarial records. You will want to keep copies of your meeting minutes, correspondences and other important forms in either a paper or electronic format. At the end of your term as secretary, please hand over your complete lodge records over to your successor.

As secretary, you may occasionally need a list of your current members. An up-to-date membership list can be downloaded from www.sonsofnorway.com or requested from Membership Services.

III. ROLE OF AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY

Some lodges include an assistant secretary in their officer roster. Sometimes the duties are divided so that either the primary or assistant secretary serves as the recording secretary while the other acts as corresponding secretary. In other lodges, the assistant secretary handles the more routine tasks, such as the ordering of supplies, while the primary secretary focuses on more the more complex aspects of the position. If the primary secretary is unable to attend a lodge meeting, the assistant secretary can take his or her place in the proceedings. It is important that the two secretaries establish a good working relationship and have a clear understanding of their responsibilities.

IV. CONCLUSION

As lodge secretary, you are an active contributor to your Sons of Norway at all levels. You serve a crucial role at meetings by helping your president determine the best order of business and by keeping accurate minutes. You supervise all lodge communications with members, officers, sister lodges, Sons of Norway Headquarters and outside organizations. Also, the specialized information you provide through the completion of your Lodge Officer Update and the LOY/FOY forms allows Sons of Norway Headquarters to provide services to its members worldwide. Thank you for all your work as a local lodge secretary for Sons of Norway.

