



**BY-LAWS**

**MINNESOTA RIVER VALLEY LODGE NO. 6**

**A.F. & A.M.**

**SHAKOPEE, MINNESOTA**

**AS AMENDED AT A**

**STATED COMMUNICATION ON October 3, 2006**

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**ARTICLE I.**

**WARRANT, TITLE AND MEETINGS**

SECTION 1. The warrant of this Lodge is a charter granted by the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Minnesota, on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of May, A.D. 1999.

SECTION 2. This Lodge shall be known and hailed under the title of Minnesota River Valley Lodge No. 6 of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons.

SECTION 3. The Communications of this Lodge shall be either stated or special. Stated Communications shall be held on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. Special Communications shall be at the order of the W.M. If the meeting should fall on a holiday, the meeting may be changed to a different date at the discretion of the Lodge at a stated meeting.

SECTION 4. No meeting of the Lodge can be postponed beyond the day in which it was opened and the Lodge regularly closed before the brethren disperse.

**ARTICLE II.**

**MEMBERS, OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES**

SECTION 1. The members of this Lodge are such Master Masons as have been made in or affiliated with this Lodge, and have signed its By-Laws and have not been demitted or in any way excluded for unmasonic conduct, or stricken from the roll of membership for non-payment of dues.

SECTION 2. Among the duties of the members are to obey the Constitution and edicts of the Grand Lodge of Minnesota, and the By-Laws of this Lodge; to avoid all irregularity and intemperance, which may tend to bring the fraternity into disrepute; to aid a brother in the hour of difficulty; console him in the hour of grief; relieve him in distress; counsel him when astray; and to avoid every word or act that might injure him in person, character, purse or feeling.

SECTION 3. The officers shall be ranked as follows: W.M., S.W., J.W., Treasurer, Secretary, Lodge Education Officer, S.D., J.D., Chaplain, S.S., J.S., Marshall, and Tyler, all of whom shall be members of this Lodge.

SECTION 4. Elected officers are: W.M., S.W., J.W., Treasurer, and Secretary. Appointed officers are Lodge Education Officer, S.D., J.D., Chaplain, S.S., J.S., Marshall, and Tyler.

SECTION 5. The W.M. has the general supervision of the Lodge, and has charge of, and is responsible for the charter of the Lodge, which cannot be opened unless it is present. He has a vote on all questions, and in the event of a tie, a casting vote in addition. He is to instruct all the officers in their duties, and see that they perform them.

SECTION 6. In the absence of the W.M., the S.W., and in his absence, the J.W. opens and governs the Lodge, but either may call a P.M. to the east.

SECTION 7. The Lodge shall establish an annual operating budget, (to be prepared by the Treasurer and the Finance Committee) which shall be approved by a simple majority of the members present at the stated communication immediately following the submission of such budget to the Lodge.

The Treasurer shall receive and safely keep all moneys due the Lodge, pay them out as provided in (and consistent with) the budget thus created, make an annual report of all receipts and disbursements, and at such other times as requested by the W.M., shall turn over to his successor in office all moneys, books and papers, or other property in his hands belonging to the Lodge.

SECTION 8. The duties of the Secretary shall be: To observe the will and pleasure of the W.M.; to conduct the correspondence of the Lodge under direction of the W.M., except such correspondence as wholly belongs to the W.M.; to notify every candidate of his election; to furnish the chairman of every committee with the names of his associates, together with a memorandum, specifying the object for which it is appointed; to receive all fees for conferring of degrees; to collect all moneys due the Lodge; to keep a just and true account of the moneys so received and to pay the same into the hands of the Treasurer, taking his receipt therefor; to notify every member in arrears for dues.

The Secretary shall keep a book in which to enter the proceedings of the Lodge; a book in which to enroll the names of the members, and also their ages, occupation, residence, birth place, date of initiation, passing and raising, adjoining, Lodge in which initiated, also date of withdrawal, suspension, expulsion or death; a book for entering the names, grades, and Lodges of all visitors, and date of visitation; also a dues book in which to keep the accounts of dues to the Lodge and dates when payments are made. Has the custody of the seal; to make out all reports to the G.L.; to file and preserve all petitions, bills, reports, communications received, and to deliver to his successor in office all books, papers, or other property of the Lodge that may be in his possession, and for his services may receive such sum as may be allowed by the Lodge.

SECTION 9. The Tyler shall serve all notices, summonses or citations issued by order of the W.M.; shall keep the room, furniture and clothing clean and ready for use; and may receive for his services such sum as may be allowed by the Lodge.

SECTION 10. All officers shall be elected at the Stated Communication in December of each year, and hold their position until the new officers are installed.

SECTION 11. All officers shall be installed on the same evening at the next stated meeting, or as soon thereafter as practicable and within the time prescribed by the M.W.G.L. Constitution.

SECTION 12. As provided in the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Minnesota, 2004 revision, Section G13.20 (a), the Master and Wardens of each Lodge shall be the Trustees thereof, unless provision is made in the By-laws to the contrary. The duties of the Trustees shall be to act as legal representatives of the Lodge in the purchase and ownership of property, or in leasing or insuring same, and all such other matters as the Lodge may direct; provided that the Lodge cannot divert from the Master his constitutional and traditional responsibility for the control of the Lodge hall and the property thereof, as it relates to the work of the Lodge.

The Trustees shall be responsible to the members of the Lodge for nonfeasance, misfeasance, or malfeasance in office and their actions shall be specifically governed by the Articles of these by-laws relating to unmasonic conduct. Should any Trustee refuse to sign any document directed by the Lodge to be signed, this fact shall be made known to the Lodge by the Worshipful Master and he may be removed from office by a simple majority vote of those present at a stated communication, and a successor elected to fill his unexpired term.

### **ARTICLE III.**

SECTION 1. All petitions by candidates or for membership must be presented at a Stated Communication only. Candidates must state age, occupation, residence, where born, and be signed by the applicant's own hand. Twenty-five dollars must accompany the petition.

If for membership, must in addition state name and number of Lodge where initiated, passed, and raised.

SECTION 2. Petitions must be recommended and vouched for by two M.M., members of the Lodge.

SECTION 3. Petitions, if accepted by the Lodge, must be referred to an investigating committee consisting of three M.M., members of the Lodge, who shall diligently investigate the character and standing of the applicant, and report at the next Stated Communication of the Lodge, unless further time be required; but a report can only be made at a Stated Communication.

SECTION 4. After a petition for initiation has been referred to the committee, it cannot be withdrawn until after it has been reported upon, and then only when the report is favorable, and by a unanimous consent of the Lodge.

SECTION 5. Petitions for membership must take the same course as those of candidates, except in cases of M.M.'s who are well known to the members.

SECTION 6. In case of rejection, the fee shall be returned.

## **ARTICLE IV.**

### **BALLOTING OR VOTING**

SECTION 1. Two methods of determining questions are known in Masonic Lodges. First, ballots; second, the ancient sign of a Mason. Ballots are of two kinds: first, written; second, use of colored balls.

SECTION 2. Officers are elected by written ballots and a majority of the whole number cast shall be necessary to a choice.

SECTION 3. The vote upon application for initiation or membership shall be by colored ballots, as also for the degree of punishment, after conviction, for unmasonic conduct.

SECTION 4. All other questions shall be decided by the ancient sign of a Mason.

SECTION 5. In balloting, if more than one negative vote appear, the balloting shall cease, and the candidate declared rejected; but if only one appears on the first ballot, a second shall be immediately had, and if one negative still appears, the candidate shall be declared rejected.

SECTION 6. No one shall inspect the ballots other than the J.W., S.W., and W.M.

SECTION 7. The right of ballot is unquestioned; no one has the right to express how he voted upon admission of members or for initiation; all must acquiesce, as this law is unalterable, except that a brother, of his own volition, may give his reasons for rejection, but that only in cases of misapprehension. Provided that nothing contained in this section shall preclude a brother from making known to the Lodge such facts as he may be in possession of, before balloting, that the Lodge may act understandingly. Subject to the provisions of the Minnesota Masonic Code - Section G14.06.

SECTION 8. Every member present must vote upon all questions, except excused by the W.M. or the Lodge.

## **ARTICLE V.**

### **FEES AND DUES**

SECTION 1. The fees for the degrees conferred by this Lodge shall be eighty-five dollars, as follows:

- o Fee accompanying petition, twenty-five dollars
- o Fee for degree of E.A., twenty dollars
- o Fee for degree of F.C., twenty dollars
- o Fee for degree to M.M., twenty dollars

SECTION 2. Fees must be paid in advance of receiving degrees.

SECTION 3. This lodge shall set the annual dues by a favorable majority vote of the members present at a regular stated communication, at which time it shall be reduced to writing and sent to all members informing them when a second reading and ballot will take place. Any Grand Lodge Per Capita assessment shall be added to this dues amount.

If it is then passed by a majority at that time, it would take effect after written notice is mailed to, and confirmed as received, by the Grand Lodge of Minnesota.

Dues are payable in advance. Newly raised or admitted brothers dues shall be prorated from the date of raising or admittance.

SECTION 4. Any brother neglecting to pay his dues for two years may be stricken from the roll at the discretion of the Lodge. Provided, the Lodge may remit the dues of any brother for services or for inability to pay.

SECTION 5. Any brother of this Lodge who has attained 50 years of cumulative paid membership to this Lodge (or any other Masonic Lodge), shall be exempt from paying further annual dues to this Lodge.

## **ARTICLE VI.**

### **COMMITTEES AND THEIR DUTIES**

SECTION 1. The Lodge shall have 2 Standing Committees, as follows:

A. A Steering Committee composed of the WM, Wardens, Deacons, LEO, all committee members, and other lodge members as appropriate. Their duties are to establish goals for the lodge consistent with the lodge's mission statement, and to plan all social and educational events.

B. A Finance Committee consisting of five (5) lodge members, plus the Treasurer as an ex- officio member. The 5 members shall be elected annually, at the stated communication in December. Current Finance Committee members will be eligible for re-election, if they desire.

Their duties are to manage the investments of the lodge, to assist the Treasurer in the preparation and submission to the lodge of financial statements and budgets, annually and otherwise throughout the year as the the W.M. may direct.

SECTION 2. The Master and Wardens of this Lodge shall constitute its Committee on Charity, and is authorized to spend, between Stated Communications in any emergency requiring it, an amount not exceeding \$250.00.

SECTION 3. The WM may appoint additional committees he deems necessary to assist him in carrying out his duties.

## **ARTICLE VII.**

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

SECTION 1. Non-affiliated or sojourning Masons are amenable to this Lodge for unmasonic conduct, and shall be proceeded against the same as members.

SECTION 2. Divulging the transactions of the Lodge to any but a members thereof or grand officers, violating the secrecy of the ballot box, contumacy in refusing obedience to a Lodge summons, habitual profanity, intoxication or gambling, speaking evil of a brother, retailing slander of him or his family, rude behavior in the Lodge, cheating, wronging or defrauding a brother, are especially declared unmasonic, and shall subject the offender to Masonic discipline.

SECTION 3. Proceedings had for violation of Masonic law, the Constitution of the Grand Lodge, or the By-Laws of this Lodge, shall be conducted as per Title 6 of the Grand Lodge Constitution.

SECTION 4. The W.M. may declare vacant any office in this Lodge, except the first three, whenever the incumbent of said office shall absent himself from three consecutive Stated Communications without giving a satisfactory excuse at the next Stated Communication thereafter, or as soon thereafter as possible, either in person or by a brother, and also for incompetency or neglect to fit himself for the discharge of its duties.

SECTION 5. Any vacancy in office except W.M., S.W., and J.W., Treasurer and Secretary, may be filled at the next Stated Communication thereafter by appointment, notice being given to the members.

SECTION 6. A candidate elected in this Lodge shall be considered elected to the three degrees, but the advancement of any candidate may be retarded or stopped:

o 1<sup>st</sup> For non-proficiency in the degree taken.

o 2<sup>nd</sup> Unmasonic conduct.

o 3<sup>rd</sup> Knowledge of matters which, if known, would have caused his rejection.

SECTION 7. Each candidate for advancement must be proficient in the preceding degree, which proficiency must be proved by examination in open Lodge.

SECTION 8. Objections to advancement may be made in open Lodge or privately to the W.M.

## **ARTICLE VIII.**

### **AMENDMENTS**

SECTION 1. No alteration or amendment can be made to these By-Laws, unless reduced to writing, read at some Stated Communication, and laid over until the next

Stated Communication, or some subsequent one, and agreed to by at least two-thirds of the members present.

## **ARTICLE IX.**

### **RULES OF ORDER**

SECTION 1. The order of business at every Stated Communication of this Lodge shall be at the discretion of the W.M.

SECTION 2. When the Lodge is closed or called from labor to refreshment, all brethren shall seat themselves in their respective places until the W.M. shall have left his station, and the S.W. will see this rule enforced.

SECTION 3. No member but one voting in the majority, when a question is decided, can move a reconsideration of the same question.

SECTION 4. When the W.M. takes the chair, the brethren shall repair to their respective places and upon proper notice shall observe profound silence. No brother shall leave his work or move from his place except such as may be required to do so in the performance of their duty, without the permission of the W.M.

SECTION 5. Every brother shall stand up when he speaks, and shall address himself to the W.M. in a respectful and decorous manner, he shall speak but once on any subject unless merely to explain, until every member present has spoken who chooses to avail himself of the privilege. But no member shall be permitted to speak more than twice upon any one subject. He shall not be suffered to say anything which will have a tendency wantonly to wound or irritate the feelings of a brother, as the sole object of debate (regard being had for precious time) is to enlighten and expand the mind and elucidate the subject under consideration.

SECTION 6. In all debates, motions, and so forth, the rules usually practiced in the Grand Lodge shall be observed as near as may be.

SECTION 7. The W.M. shall discontinue tedious debate as an injurious hindrance to the regular work of the Lodge, and shall hasten to put a stop to it.

SECTION 8. For gross violation of the rules of the Lodge, the W.M. may direct the offending brother to withdraw for the evening, and refer the matter to the Lodge.

SECTION 9. Every member, when a question is put, shall vote thereon, unless for special reasons he shall be excused by the Lodge.

SECTION 10. In all cases where there is an equality of votes, the W.M. shall have the deciding vote, and the vote on any question shall be taken by ballot at the request of three members.

SECTION 11. No visitor, however skilled in Masonry, shall take any part in debate or in the business of the Lodge, without permission from the W.M., except the Grand Officers for the time being.

SECTION 12. The degree of every visitor, his name, the name and number of the Lodge whereof he is, or was last a member, shall be noted by the Secretary.

SECTION 13. No member shall be permitted to walk in procession with this Lodge unless clothed with the Masonic clothing adopted by the Lodge and no visiting brother, unless properly clothed with the insignia of the Order.

SECTION 14. Whenever the W.M. rises, all debate shall cease and strict silence be observed. The dignity of the Oriental Chair must always be supported. The W.M. shall cause these Rules of Order, together with the By-Laws of the Lodge, to be read at least once every three months, if time will permit.

SECTION 15. If any alteration be proposed to these Rules of Order, such alteration must be submitted in writing, and read at some stated meeting. At the next stated meeting they may be called up, and if agreed to by two-thirds of the members present, they shall become a part of the same.