

*Masters Wardens and  
Secretaries  
Associations  
A to Z*



*"Guidelines for starting an MWSA."*

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## *Masters, Wardens and Secretaries Associations - A to Z*

### **Introduction**

- ◆ Have you ever wondered why the members of your lodge did not know that another lodge in your district was conferring a Master's Degree on Thursday night? Maybe there were even two degrees scheduled for conferral on that same night. Perhaps you had knowledge of a District Workshop in your district but did not have information regarding the time and location. You may have also begun to notice new Masons in the district whom you have never met before and been embarrassed by the realization that you didn't even know that they were Masons. Are you "out of touch"? Do you wonder if the "right hand knows what the left hand is doing"? The answer to these questions may vary but the underlying truth is probably that there is a lack of communication between the members of your district. How do we overcome this lack of information and miscommunication? The answer to this question is very simple and does not vary .... your district needs a *Masters Wardens and Secretaries Association* (MWSA).

The purpose of this manual is to present a roadmap or blueprint designed to assist those who are interested in forming an MWSA and to provide suggestions for its maintenance and maximum utilization. If your district already has an MWSA that over the years has become inactive, the information contained in this manual may provide just the "spark" needed to revitalize your association.

This manual is arranged to allow those who have existing MWSA's to go directly to and concentrate on one or more particular aspects or topics. However, it is recommended that the manual be used in its entirety by those districts that are considering forming a new Masters Wardens and Secretaries Association. Not only does the manual present a "step-by-step" guide to forming and maintaining an MWSA, but it also contains a "Resources" section. This section contains sample by-laws (Form No. 23a), a questionnaire, a form for keeping the minutes of the meetings, suggested programs and fund-raising projects and an MWSA directory that lists several Associations existing in Texas.

Without question, the many rewards and benefits derived from the utilization of a Masters Wardens and Secretaries Association will be worth the effort required for the initial formation and development. It will definitely require dedication and commitment from all the members of your district, but the satisfaction received from bringing your district together as a team of friends and Brothers working for Masonry will be your "Masters Wages"... and is there anything more rewarding than that?

**Masons**

**Working**

**Serving**

**Achieving**

## *Purpose of a Masters Wardens and Secretaries Association*

- ♦ ***To assist the District Deputy Grand Master and members of any Grand Lodge Committee in the performance of their duties when requested***

An MWSA can provide the perfect arena in which the DDGM, Masonic Service Team and Grand Lodge Committee members may present special programs, within their respective areas of responsibility and expertise, to the members of the district as a group. It is a very convenient and efficient means of **presenting workshops, certificate classes and forums** or **Grand Lodge Programs** that would otherwise require a visit to each lodge in the district. The District Deputy Grand Master has various responsibilities to the Grand Master and quite often requires the assistance of the members of the district as a group in order to put forth his plans and objectives necessary to fulfill his duties. The MWSA provides a convenient vehicle for executing his plans. The District Deputy Grand Master realizes that information disseminated through the MWSA does not alleviate his responsibility to the individual lodges of the district as required by the Grand Master (such as official visits).

- ♦ ***To unify the lodges of the district***

- ♦ **Share calendar events:**

An active Masonic district usually has many activities occurring at the same time. Sometimes degrees are conferred on the same night, fund-raisers are held on the same weekend, awards are presented simultaneously and the activities of our appendant bodies conflict with blue lodge functions. This is quite disheartening to those who wish to attend as many Masonic functions as possible and enjoy Masonry to its fullest. However, these scheduling conflicts can be easily overcome by simply working together as a group (MWSA members) in an attempt to work around the schedules of other lodges. **Efficient Worshipful Masters plan their yearly calendars in advance. Most MWSA's allow time at the beginning of each year for the Masters of the lodges to meet and discuss their upcoming events for their respective lodges.** Quite often compromises are made, dates are changed and **agreements are made that benefit all the members of the district.** After the calendars of all lodges have been finalized, **a district wide calendar is printed and distributed** to all members of the association. Of course, not every event or degree can be anticipated so early in the year, but at least you're off to a good start. As events and degrees materialize later in the year, announcements are made at each MWSA meeting and the members are widely notified. There will still be some conflicts that cannot be overcome. The point is this: an **MWSA serves as a clearinghouse for plans, information and scheduling of events that would not otherwise be possible.**

- ♦ **Exchange ideas and information:**

Masonic Lodges in Texas are alike in many ways. Many look very similar from the outside as well as inside. Aprons, jewels, rods, stations, hats and gavels sometimes look just alike, but *what lodges do* and *how they do it* can be quite different. This is usually a result of the different personalities of the members involved. Some lodges hold very successful "Honor Widows" programs; some do an outstanding job hosting an official or unofficial visit of the Grand Master; some perform the ritual almost flawlessly and many have special programs at each stated meeting. Unfortunately, a few lodges do nothing at all but hold the monthly stated meeting. Perhaps these inactive and unfortunate lodges do very little because they need inspiration and new ideas. Maybe they do a poor job of managing their finances, training officers and teaching candidates (if they have any). An MWSA provides these lodges with a wealth of information available through sharing information and ideas with the other association members. **"What fund-raisers work and do not work? How does your**

**lodge keep the interest of its members? Show me how to prepare and plan a budget. How do you attract prospective members? Why does your lodge seem to have so many young members? How does your lodge select its first line officer? What is the A.L.L. program? I can't find a particular topic in the Constitution and Laws. I've heard we can hold our stated meetings on an EA lodge...??? I need some program ideas! Resolving lodge conflict ... what is that? Why is your lodge successful and mine is not?"** These are just a few questions and problems that can be answered and resolved by sharing information and ideas via a Masters Wardens and Secretaries Association. Good members love to share what they know, but unfortunately poor lodges don't seem to ask for help ... but they don't have to ask if they are members of an MWSA... they can see... they can hear... they will experience!

◆ **Plan and work together as a district:**

An MWSA can perform many functions similar to those of individual lodges, but because of "strength in numbers" these activities can be even more successful. A district-wide fund-raiser earmarked for the Masonic Home and School can be much more productive than any attempt made by an individual lodge. Charitable fund-raisers for worthy causes such as "Coats For Kids", senior scholarships, food for the needy at Christmas or "Adopt A Highway" each provide an excellent opportunity for Masons to exemplify "strength in numbers" while performing good deeds.

Quite often MWSA's require fund-raisers to meet their own financial requirements. A crawfish boil, fish fry, barbecue or picnic for family and friends are good examples. Events such as these promote brotherly love and family involvement and also allow members to meet the newer members of the district and make them feel welcome. Open fund-raisers allow the public to see "Masons in action".

Many MWSA's hold an honor night for the outstanding Masons of the district. This could be a special banquet setting, open for the wives and family to enjoy as well. A plaque, certificate or other form of recognition should be presented to each recipient. A similar philosophy could be applied in recognizing the wives of Masons of the district. Wives usually appreciate a formal, elegant and even romantic presentation. An appropriate season for such a banquet might be during February and as close as possible to Valentine's Day.

Every MWSA desires to have a good attendance at stated meetings. An incentive to attend the meetings might be to present an attendance plaque to the lodge with the most members present. This approach usually promotes a friendly sense of competition and certainly increases the participation of the association members.

Probably the most rewarding benefit of a district planning and working together is the **sense of pride that develops among the members**. Each feels he has contributed to the success of the association because he has been involved in planning a function, served on a committee, held an office in the association or was recognized for his individual accomplishments and service to the district. Past Masters who no longer have a vital role in their lodges, new Master Masons who have not yet been given an opportunity to serve their lodge and even inactive members, each have a place of service in an MWSA. It provides an environment in which everyone is needed, an opportunity to achieve and be recognized and a chance to establish friendships that last forever.

♦ ***To provide Masonic education to the members of the district***

♦ **Programs and presentations from the District Deputy Grand Master:**

The DDGM should always be recognized and permitted the opportunity to present special programs, presentations or announcements that he feels are relevant to the members of the district. This might be information regarding a topic not covered in his official visits to the individual lodges. He may choose to present information concerning an up-coming state-wide event such as a Masonic Historical Observance, Grand Master conference, cornerstone, lodge anniversary or an official visit of the Grand Master. The DDGM should also be given the opportunity to openly discuss with the membership any problems or news relating specifically to his district.

♦ **Programs and presentations from the District Instructor:**

The District Instructor should also be recognized and allowed to present programs and information. Perhaps the Instructor would find it more efficient to present a certificate class/forum through the MWSA (with the approval of the Committee on Work) or to host a regularly scheduled instruction night for the members of the district, or even form a district degree team to assist those lodges that need ritualistic reinforcement.

♦ **Special speakers at MWSA meetings:**

Masonry is a very broad subject and there is much to be learned, even by those who have been members for many years. Masons who are new to the Fraternity are usually very eager to learn and really do not know how or where to begin. Often, lodges fail to consistently offer educational programs at stated meetings and new members lose interest even though they are hungry for information about the Fraternity. A proficient speaker or presenter at each MWSA meeting can fill the gap, inspire the tired and worn out and motivate the newcomer. Programs on history, customs and traditions, symbolism and ritual are good examples of topics that every Mason desires to know more about.

There are many good Masonic speakers throughout the state who love sharing their expertise and who would much prefer speaking to a larger crowd, such as an MWSA group, than to a smaller lodge. Sources for Masonic speakers are the Texas Lodge of Research and the Masonic Service Bureaus of the state. Don't forget to utilize the representatives of our various Masonic Youth Groups and Appendant Bodies, as well. Programs regarding non-Masonic topics might be of interest to the members also, such as civic awareness, local community activities or those from other charitable or fraternal organizations.

*Conclusion*

There are many reasons to utilize an MWSA in your district. A few have been mentioned in the above information, but there are many, many more. Just use your imagination and perhaps you will find the missing link needed to pull your district together, **work** together as a team and **lead** Masonry into the 21st century. **Who can start a Masters, Wardens, and Secretaries Association?**

**YOU CAN!**

## *Getting Started*

### ♦ **Soliciting Support**

"You" may be the "sparkplug" Mason of your district; it may be "you" who realizes the need and value of an MWSA; "you" may be the "brainchild" of the idea; but "you alone" cannot perform the task by yourself... you must seek the advice and support of the entire district membership... here's how to start.

### ♦ **District Deputy Grand Master:**

It is very important to discuss your plans to form an MWSA with the District Deputy Grand Master before any definite decisions are made. He is the representative of the Grand Master in his district and should always be informed and apprised of any developments in his district. The DDGM's role is also to provide advice and guidance regarding any plans made in the district. He can also be a good source for ideas and assistance in the planning process and may offer to help in gathering support for the program from the membership of the district. So, be sure to get his approval and seek his assistance in any way that he feels a willingness to contribute.

### ♦ **District Instructor:**

After receiving the approval of the District Deputy Grand Master, relay your plans to the District Instructor and solicit his support. Explain that the success of the association will largely depend upon their contribution and that they will have an active role in the planning process. Let him know that he will have an opportunity to present programs to the district through and with the assistance of the association, if he desires.

### ♦ **Lodges and Worshipful Masters:**

The next area of support required is that of the individual lodges and their Worshipful Masters. Each Worshipful Master is the leader of his lodge and is probably one of the more respected members. The lodge members depend on him for advice and respect his opinions greatly; you need him on your side! Take time to meet with each Worshipful Master privately and outline the purpose of the association. Explain how his lodge, as well as all lodges in the district, will benefit from the association. Be prepared and armed with the necessary information. Also, be open to any suggestions that he might inject or questions that he may pose.

### ♦ **Lodge Members:**

Assuming that the District Deputy Grand Master, District Instructor and the Worshipful Masters have joined the team, now the work really begins. Obviously, the support of the district leaders is of utmost importance, but this is a very small group in terms of numbers. The most important area of support for the formation and continuation of your MWSA must come from the membership of the district; without it, your time spent and effort expended will be in vain.

### ♦ **Lodge Visitations**

The best method of soliciting support for the formation of your MWSA is to visit each individual lodge in the district and ask the permission of the Worshipful Master to make a presentation. Have a well-planned program that explains the purpose and benefits of an MWSA. Keep your program as short as possible but thoroughly outline your plans and objectives. Be informative and enthusiastic in your presentation. Include in the presentation your vision of goals and rewards as well as brotherhood and fraternalism. Do not be too



concerned with details. It is important to remember that each lodge member will be involved in planning the details of programs and sharing in the initial success of the association. Ask the District Deputy Grand Master, District Instructor and Worshipful Master if they would like to participate in the presentation, as they have been involved in the planning process. Allow time at the end of your presentation for questions and answers.

### ♦ ***The Questionnaire***

Now is the time to put your plans thus far to the test. A good way to feel the "pulse" of the district and discover how receptive the members are to an MWSA is to give as many members as possible a questionnaire. Often, in open discussions, some members are hesitant to voice their opinions; but a written questionnaire, completed privately, usually produces honest and straightforward results. The format of the questionnaire should be brief and concise but detailed enough to find out what you're looking for. Simply put, "do you want an MWSA in the district?" Other questions might address such issues as a meeting schedule, program and activity ideas or general goals and objectives. It is quite costly and unproductive to attempt to mail the questionnaires to every member of the district. You are primarily interested in polling the "active" members only because they are the members who will be active in the MWSA. The most efficient method of distributing the questionnaire is to visit each lodge at the stated meeting or to pass them out when making your initial MWSA presentation to the lodge. A "sample" questionnaire is included in the "Resources" section of this manual. It is designed only as a guideline and may be changed to suit your specific need.

### ♦ ***Decision Time! ... Is it a "Go" or not?***

After discussing your plans with the leaders of the district and polling the membership by utilizing the questionnaire, you now have the information needed to make the decision: is it a "go" or not? If an overwhelming majority of the members surveyed respond favorably, then the decision is easy; however, if the results are not convincing, perhaps more explanation is needed to build support. In any event, the decision to form an MWSA is an important one and will demand much time, dedication and support from many members in order to produce the desired results. So, be realistic in the final decision to move forward. Hopefully, a large majority of the members will be supportive.

### ♦ ***Plan the First Meeting.***

Assuming that most of the responses from the questionnaires were favorable, and the decision is "it's a go", what's next? This is that crucial time in the planning process when everything thus far is put on the line ... you must make plans for the first meeting. Although the first MWSA meeting is considered "informal" because permission from The Grand Lodge of Texas has not been requested or granted, it is perhaps the most important meeting that your association will ever have. This meeting will provide the opportunity to impress and excite the membership of the district through your enthusiasm and presentation of a working plan... a roadmap... and a collection of ideas that will either provoke the district members to elevate Masonry to a new level of fraternalism, or simply return to their lodges wondering what the big "fuss" was all about. Your objective should be to cover all the bases, be organized and enthusiastic, and build support for the association. A formal letter of invitation should be mailed to each lodge in the district requesting the support and attendance of all members.



The following is a suggested list of "first meeting" considerations:

- Define the goals and objectives of the association.
- Adopt form 23a, the "By-Laws of the Masters, Wardens and Secretaries Association" from the Constitution and Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas, or develop your own based on the specific needs of your association. If the decision is made to adopt an original set of by-laws, the same must be submitted to the By-Laws Committee of The Grand Lodge of Texas for their final approval at the next annual communication. If the decision is made to use the prescribed form 23a, approval from Grand Lodge is also required but very easily granted. In either case, make a concerted effort to understand all elements of the by-laws, as they must be followed implicitly. (A copy of form 23a is included in the "Resource" section of this manual).
- Elect the officers of the association. It is recommended to use the officer positions as prescribed in form 23a or perhaps talk to other MWSA members from other districts to receive recommendations from them regarding association offices. A list of "Masters Wardens and Secretaries Associations in Texas" is also included in the "Resources" section of this manual. (If the idea of forming an association was yours, don't be surprised if you are elected President!)
- Set the dates, time and place of the meetings as prescribed in the association by-laws. Many associations move the meetings from lodge to lodge to make the meetings generally convenient for all members. Again, seek counsel from other MWSA members of the state.
- Set the dollar amount of dues, as prescribed in your by-laws, and when and how they will be collected. Many associations charge annual dues to each lodge based on the number of members on roll at the time of assessment. Again, ask other MWSA members how their dues are assessed. Financial assets are definitely necessary to support MWSA activities, especially at start-up. Later in the year fund-raising activities will produce the revenue necessary to subsidize future charities, banquets and other expenses. Dues are an ongoing "must". Also, plan to "pass the hat" at each stated meeting. Many Brothers do not mind contributing \$5.00 or more to the general fund. Make this a routine practice. Do not be surprised if the \$50.00 in donations received at each meeting totals \$200.00 to \$300.00 at the end of the year.
- Determine the activities for the upcoming year. These might include banquets, fundraisers, DDGM and District Service Team programs and stated meeting presentations.
- Appoint committees for each planned activity. This is usually the prerogative of the newly elected President. Committees are very useful in organizing and planning the details of an event and also allow the association members to play an important and active role.

## **Routine Operations**

Now that your MWSA is up and running you may be wondering "Now what do we do?" This is a time that requires commitment, perseverance and planning. However, the task may not be as complex as you think. Most MWSA functions and activities can be divided into three areas of consideration: 01) **What to do**, 02) **When to do it**, and 03) **How to get it done**.

### ♦ ***Plan the MWSA calendar for the year.***

By this time the goals and objectives of your association have been determined as well as many functions and activities. It's time to get them on the calendar. Careful consideration must be given to all other appendant body activities, the plans of other lodges in the district, Grand Lodge activities, events that have become "traditional", other organizations to which your members belong and special holidays. Avoiding possible conflicts is definitely the "name of the game" here, and working with them is far more rewarding than planning against others who compete for the same time.

- Determine each and every activity the association desires to have during the year.
- Give consideration to the plans of the Grand Lodge, Scottish Rite, York Rite, Shrine, Grotto, Masonic Youth Groups, Order of the Eastern Star, and any other appendant body to which your members are committed. Also, try to avoid Masonic activities that have become "traditional" such as mountain top degrees, fish-fry's and Memorial Day observances. Of course, give special consideration to national holiday observances.
- Plan to accommodate the desires of the lodges in the district when planning the MWSA calendar. A "calendar meeting" with the Worshipful Master of each lodge is highly recommended. A unified effort as a district to plan activities usually results in very few conflicts and is, of course, one of the primary benefits of sponsoring an MWSA.
- Compile a district calendar that lists the events of the MWSA and all activities of each lodge in the district. This calendar might include the stated meeting date of each lodge, special programs and degree dates.

### ♦ ***Form Committees***

Based on the goals and objectives established by the association, create committees to carry out each individual plan of action. Assign a well-qualified chairman and members based on their skills and interest. A good suggestion is to draft a questionnaire designed to determine the professional skills, hobbies and special interests of each member so that committee assignments will produce the best possible result. It would be unwise to ask an eighty-year old member to supervise a horseshoe tournament in one hundred degree temperatures and a twenty-one year old member to oversee a bingo game. Abilities and interests must be considered.

Make a special effort to involve as many members as possible to serve on committees. Each member wants to feel needed and participate; leave them out, and they will stay at home.

Don't forget to keep the Past Master involved. Even though an MWSA is not a lodge, it works very similarly. The Past Master has acquired knowledge and experience based on his history as a Worshipful Master. He has probably already experienced most of the challenges that the President will encounter during his year of service to the MWSA. Do not hesitate to call upon the Past Master for advice and service to the association.

### ♦ ***Holding an MWSA Meeting***

Holding an MWSA meeting is very similar to that of a regular lodge meeting in that several common features are shared. Officers perform specific duties, committee's give their reports to the membership, protocol and an order of business are followed, parliamentary procedure is observed and both old and new business considered. The following addresses these issues:

### ♦ **Officer Duties:**

#### **President**

The President of the association must either be a Worshipful Master, Warden or Secretary of his lodge and, depending upon the by-laws of the association, may be a Junior Past Master. His lodge office is typically Junior Past Master or Worshipful Master. His duties are to preside over all meetings when he is present, serve on all committees, make committee appointments, make necessary reports to Grand Lodge, require that all Grand Lodge Laws and by-laws of the association are observed and to ascertain the will of the membership. These represent the basic duties of the President and are not all-inclusive.

#### ***Vice-President***

The Vice-President of the association must either be a Worshipful Master, Warden or Secretary of his lodge and, depending upon the by-laws of the association, may be a Junior Past Master. His lodge office is typically Worshipful Master or Senior Warden. His duties are to preside over the meetings of the association in the absence of the President and to serve the association in any capacity to which the President has given him authority. His duties might include introducing visiting Brethren, making arrangements for the meetings with the "host lodges" and notifying members of upcoming events of the association.

#### ***Secretary/Treasurer***

The Secretary and Treasurers' offices can be separate or held jointly, depending upon the by-laws of the association. The Secretary/Treasurer of the association must either be a Worshipful Master, Warden or Secretary of his lodge and, depending upon the by-laws of the association, may be a Junior Past Master. His lodge office is typically Junior Warden or Secretary. His duties are to record the minutes of the meetings, collect and record all monies received by the association and to pay all bills. The President may assign other specific duties.

#### ***Chaplain***

The office of Chaplain is optional and may be appointed by the President. His duties are to lead the association in all prayers or devotionals.

♦ **Protocol:**

The protocol of an MWSA meeting is very similar to that of a regular lodge meeting. Politeness should be extended to the officers and members alike. Respect to the President should be exhibited in all circumstances. The standard rules of Masonic Parliamentary Procedure should be observed in order to present and dispose of the business of the association in an orderly manner. These rules should include standing when addressing the President or other members and recognition from the President before speaking. Business brought before the association and motions presented should be "discussed" and not "debated". Motions may only be presented and voted on by the regular members *of the association*. Grand Lodge Law defines a regular member as a Worshipful Master, Warden or Secretary of his lodge. The by-laws of the association may provide that the Junior Past Master be a regular member as well. All other Past Masters and Affiliated Past Masters are considered honorary members and are not permitted to present motions or vote.

♦ **Order-of-Business:**

The "Model" By-Laws of an MWSA (form no. 23a) is included in the "forms" section of the Grand Lodge Law Book. If adopted, the order of business is as follows:

- Opening Prayer
- Roll Call of Lodges
- Reading Minutes of Preceding Meeting
- Reports of Committees
- Unfinished Business
- New Business
- Announcements
- Program
- Closing Prayer

♦ **Programs:**

All MWSA meetings should include a program. The special program does not have to be serious in nature. Fun and entertainment can be emphasized in an attempt to keep interest thriving. However, a serious program on Masonic education presented by a well-versed speaker can be equally inspiring. The object of the program should always be to educate, entertain or motivate and inspire. Also, don't forget the food; all Masons love to eat.

♦ **Analyze Your Performance.**

Periodically grade the performance of the MW SA by answering the following questions:

- Are we assisting the District Deputy Grand Master and the Masonic Service Team?
- Are we unifying the lodges of the district?
- Do we work together as a district?
- Are our members known across the state as members of our particular district?
- Do we teach and promote Masonic education to our members?
- Do we share information and ideas?
- Do we meet the financial requirements of the association?
- Do we promote peace and harmony?
- Are our members representative of what Masonry truly is to the profane?
- Are our members visible in the community?

- Is our association active in the community?
- How are our lodges performing regarding membership, finances, ritual and fellowship?

# **Proposed Masters Wardens & Secretaries Association** **Masonic District No. \_\_\_\_\_**

## **Questionnaire**

(To be completed by the members of the district)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
01) Do you usually receive advance notice of degrees and special activities held by the other lodges of your district?	_____	_____
02) Do you recognize a possible conflict in scheduling the various activities of the lodges in your district?	_____	_____
03) Do the members of the lodges in your district share information and ideas regarding topics such as Masonic education, ritual, customs and traditions, fund-raising ideas, ideas for increasing membership and membership maintenance?	_____	_____
04) Do you feel as though a competition exists between the lodges for fund-raising opportunities?	_____	_____
05) Do all of the lodges in your district support the District Deputy Grand Master and the Masonic Service Team and their programs?	_____	_____
06) Do you personally know by name most of the active members in your district?	_____	_____
07) Do the members of your district spend time together other than the time engaged in Masonic activities?	_____	_____
08) Do the wives of the district members share time together outside the Masonic environment?	_____	_____
09) If a Masters, Wardens and Secretaries Association could resolve many of the problems mentioned above, would you consider the Association to be of value in your district?	_____	_____
10) Would you support an MWSA in your district?	_____	_____
11) Would you be willing to serve as an officer of the Association?	_____	_____
12) If an MWSA were formed in your district, what programs would you consider to be of value?		
_____		
_____		
13) What are your suggestions for fund-raising projects?		
_____		
_____		
14) How do you think an active membership in the Association can be achieved?		
_____		
_____		
15) Other Comments:		
_____		
_____		
_____		

**(Form No. 23a)**  
**By-Laws of the**  
**Masters Wardens and Secretaries Association**

**Article I.**  
**NAME**

Section A - The name of this Association shall be "The Masters, Wardens and Secretaries Association, A.F.&A.M. of the Masonic District of Texas", and this Association exists only at the will and pleasure of the Grand Lodge of Texas, acting through the Grand Master and in turn through the District Deputy Grand Master in the District.

**Article II.**  
**PURPOSE**

Section A - This Association is a cooperative service organization dependent upon the Masonic Lodges of the Masonic District of Texas for support and has no authority or right to concern itself in any manner with the business or other affairs of the Lodges of this District, or of any member thereof. All members of this Association shall retain all rights and privileges invested in them as Master Masons under the Constitution and Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas and nothing herein shall ever be construed to restrict such rights in any manner.

Section B - The purpose of this Association shall be:

- (1) To assist the District Deputy Grand Masters and members of any Grand Lodge Committee in the performance of their duties when requested.
- (2) To promote a cooperative plan of attendance when all the Lodges of the Masonic District act as host to the M: W: Grand Master and visiting Masons when in attendance at the annual Regional or District meetings.
- (3) To foster and encourage ideas and plans determined to promoting better spirit of Brotherhood and widen acquaintances among the Brethren of this District.
- (4) To promote and support educational meetings designed to bring more light to all Master Masons.

**Article III.**  
**MEMBERSHIP**

Section A - All Worshipful Masters, Wardens and Secretaries of Lodges in the \_\_\_\_\_Masonic District shall by virtue of their respective offices be regular members of the Association. This Association may, at its option, include Junior Past Masters as regular members.

Section B - All Past Masters and affiliated Past Masters of Lodges in the \_\_\_\_\_Masonic District shall be honorary members of the Association.

Section C - Each regular member present shall be entitled to one vote in the transaction of business. Honorary members shall have no vote in the transaction of business, but may offer suggestions for consideration, and may serve on committees when properly appointed.

**Article IV.**  
**OFFICERS**



Section A - The officers of this Association shall be a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary and a Treasurer. All of whom shall be elected from the regular membership and by a majority vote of the regular members present. The office of the Secretary and Treasurer may be combined at the discretion of this Association.

Section B - No President shall succeed himself in office.

Section C - In case of the death, resignation, inability or refusal to serve of the President, the Vice-President shall assume the duties of that office until the next regular meeting of the Association at which time that office shall be filled by election. In the event a vacancy occurs in the office of Vice-President, Secretary or Treasurer, the President may appoint a pro-tem officer until the next regular meeting of the Association at which time that office will be filled by election.

## **Article V. MEETINGS**

Section A - Not less than four meetings shall be held per annum.

Section B - The regular meetings of this Association shall be held on \_\_\_\_\_.

Section C - The election of officers shall be held at the first regular or called meeting after June 24<sup>th</sup> and prior to August 1<sup>st</sup>.

Section D - Called meetings may be held at any time on written notice mailed to all regular members by the President at least five days prior to such meeting.

Section E - Any business proper to be transacted by this Association may be transacted at either a regular or called meeting, except amendments to these By-Laws.

Section F - All meetings of this Association shall be opened and closed with prayer.

## **Article VI. ORDER OF BUSINESS**

Section A - The order of business at regular or called meetings shall be as follows, unless otherwise ordered by the President:

- |   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| 1. Opening Prayer                       | 6. New Business   |
| 2. Roll Call of Lodges                  | 7. Announcements  |
| 3. Reading Minutes of Preceding Meeting | 8. Program        |
| 4. Reports of Committees                | 9. Closing Prayer |
| 5. Unfinished Business                  |                   |

## **Article VII. COMMITTEES**

Section A - The President may appoint such committees as he deems desirable and necessary to carry out the various activities of the Association.

## **Article VIII. FINANCE**

Section A - The work of this Association shall be carried on only by voluntary contributions, in a manner to be determined by the Association.

## **Article IX. AMENDMENTS**

Section A - No amendments to the By-Laws, either by alteration or addition, shall be made, unless in the following manner:

(1) The proposed amendment must be in writing, signed by the proposers, and presented and read at a regular meeting of this Association, at which time it may be discussed and amended, if necessary.

(2) At the next regular meeting of this Association, it shall again be considered and voted upon without further amendment and approved by a two-thirds majority of the regular members present.

(3) With approval of the Grand Lodge, the proposed amendment shall become a part of the by-laws of this Association.

Your Committee recommends that the Grand Secretary mail to each existing Association in the Grand Jurisdiction one copy, of these By-Laws and that they in turn adopt these By-Laws if they so desire, make any necessary additions, and file the complete set of By-Laws with the Grand Secretary. Existing Association not desiring to adopt this set of By-Laws shall forward a complete set of their By-Laws to this Grand Lodge for approval. All subsequent amendments to Association By-Laws shall be submitted to this Grand Lodge for approval. Your Committee further recommends that each Association Secretary be required to file with the Grand Secretary a list of present Association Officers no later than January 15<sup>th</sup> of each year and a list of new Association Officers no later than August 15<sup>th</sup> of each year.

**Masters Wardens and Secretaries Association**  
**Masonic District No. \_\_\_\_\_**  
**Minutes of Meeting**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Stated \_\_\_\_\_ Called \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Time of opening: \_\_\_\_\_AM PM.

Presiding Officer: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Invocation given:

By: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Pledges to the US and Texas Flags:

**By:** \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Masonic Dignitaries introduced:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Minutes of the \_\_\_\_\_ meeting were approved/amended and approved.

- ☐ The attendance plaque and special recognition given to:

\_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Program presented on:

**By:** \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ The following announcements were made:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Benediction given:

By: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Meeting Closed at: \_\_\_\_\_AM PM

- ☐ Other Notes:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## *Suggested Programs and Activities*

### **Masonic Education:**

Allocate time for a **"5 minute short-talk program"** on any Masonic subject at each stated meeting.

Ask **the DDGM to present** a program relating to any interest or concern of the Grand Master.

Ask the **District Instructor** to present his program at a "special" meeting.

Invite a **qualified Brother to present** a program on Masonic history, customs and traditions or symbolism.

Hold an open meeting and present a **Masonic Play** (i.e. 'Rose on the Altar').

Form and maintain a **District Degree Team**.

Assist the district lodges in their execution of the **L.I.F.E. and A.L.L. programs**.

Ask a **Grand Lodge Committee Member** or **Grand Lodge Officer** for a program presentation.

Invite the representative of an **Appendant Body or Masonic Youth Group** to speak to the Association at an open meeting (i.e. Scottish Rite, York Rite, Shrine, DeMolay, Jobs', Rainbow or OES).

Utilize presenters from the **Masonic Service and Speakers Bureaus** and **other MWSA's**.

Institute and maintain a regular **"group visitation"** to other MWSA's at their stated meetings.

### **Honor and Recognition:**

**Host an official or unofficial** visit of the Grand Master **to the district**.

**Honor the DDGM and/or the Masonic Service Team**.

Host an open banquet honoring the **officers of each lodge** in the district.

Recognize and honor the **MWSA Officers** at the last stated meeting of the year.

Honor a **distinguished Mason from the district**.

Honor one **outstanding Mason from each lodge** annually.

Host a banquet honoring the **wives of the district members** (i.e. Valentines' Day Banquet).

Have a district-wide **"Honor Widows Night"**.

Hold a **"Father/Son Night"**.

### **Charity and Community Involvement:**

Sponsor the **"Take Time To Read"**, **"Together Against Drug Abuse"** or **"Gift of Life"** program.

Sponsor and subsidize a **scholarship program**.

Assist **those who are "in need"** regularly throughout the year (i.e. canned food, clothing, transportation to and from the Shrine or Scottish Rite Hospitals or home maintenance).

Participate in **parades** and **other annual local township observances**.

Support the **local law enforcement agencies** and **fire departments** financially or by a recognition program hosted by the Association and held at a lodge in the district.

Invite the **Mayor** or a **city official** to speak at an open program.

### **Fellowship:**

Have a **non-Masonic event** for the Association members and their families that are designed to focus on an activity other than Masonry (i.e. a picnic, fishing trip, bowling, bingo, movie, trip to a park, zoo or flower garden).

Use **artistic entertainment**, whenever appropriate, (i.e. singers, bands, magicians, story-tellers/comedians).

Always **provide good food** at meetings and special programs.

## *Suggested Fund-Raising Activities*

### **Food Related:**

Breakfast  
Barbecue  
Salad Supper  
Spaghetti Dinner  
Turkey Fry  
Fish Fry  
Crawfish Boil  
Shrimp Peel  
Covered Dish  
Gumbo  
Pig-in-the-ground  
Dove Mulligan  
Hamburger/Hotdog Dinner  
Ice Cream Social

### **Sports/Competition Related:**

Golf Tournament  
Fishing Tournament  
Horseshoe Tournament  
Softball Tournament  
Basketball Tournament  
Trap Shoot  
Skeet Shoot  
Turkey Shoot  
Bingo Game  
Cards/Dominos/Chess

### **Entertainment/Arts Related:**

Musical Concert  
Dance  
Magician  
Play/Theater/Story Teller  
Talent Show  
Children's Musical Recital

### **Seasonal:**

Thanksgiving/Christmas/New Years Party  
Haunted House for Kids at Halloween  
Carnival/Masonic Exposition  
Valentine Party/Dance  
4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration  
Memorial Day Celebration  
Park Cars for State or County Fair

*Suggested Installation Ceremony*  
**For Masters Wardens and Secretaries Associations**

**Officers Required:**

Installing Officer  
Installing Marshal  
Installing Chaplain

(Begin the ceremony with the officers to be installed seated in a semi-circle on the west side of the altar. The Installing Marshal should stand next to the President elect and the Installing Chaplain should be seated in his designated place. The Installing Officer presides from the East).

**Ceremony**

**Installing Officer:**

The Masters, Wardens and Secretaries Association of Masonic District No. \_\_\_\_\_ is a Masonic organization composed of the principal officers of the Masonic Lodges of Masonic District No. \_\_\_\_\_. Its purposes are to provide a forum for the discussion of common problems and ideas, to promote Masonic education and to sponsor and coordinate certain Masonic activities involving the lodges of this Masonic district.

The officers of this association freely accept the responsibilities of office of this association. They serve voluntarily to provide a service for the Masonic Fraternity of this area. They are elected from among the active membership of the association, and serve for a period of one year. To those Brethren who have accepted the challenge and mantle of leadership, a debt of gratitude is due from each member of the association, from each lodge and from the Masonic Fraternity at large.

It is a distinct pleasure for those of us who will participate in this service to install these officers into their elected and appointed positions of leadership.

Before proceeding with the installation, it is appropriate that we seek the blessings of the Supreme Being.

Brother Installing Chaplain, you will lead our devotions at this time.

(\* \* \* Gavel)

**Installing Chaplain:**

Supreme Architect of the Universe, we humbly invoke Thy blessings on this convention here assembled. We gratefully express our appreciation for Thy bounty, which brings joy into our lives. We are grateful for those who will, on this occasion, assume additional burdens of leadership, for we know that they occupy positions of responsibility in their individual lodges. We pray that you would grant unto each of them that humility of spirit so essential to the successful completion of their assumed duties and that additional strength required to enable them to carry out their extra burdens so that when this year is passed, they may look back upon a year in which their works may have something of that beauty in all duties well done. Let them ever be mindful of Thy will and lead them in exemplifying the principles of this great Masonic Fraternity. May all of our actions be pleasing in Thy sight so that it may be said of each of us that we have walked humbly with our God. (Amen)

(\* Gavel)

**Installing Officer:**

Brother Marshal, you will present the President-elect for installation.

**Installing Marshal:**

Brother Installing Officer, I present Brother \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ Lodge No. \_\_\_\_\_ Ancient Free and Accepted Masons who has been elected President of this association for the ensuing Masonic year. The Brethren are confident that he has the necessary qualifications to perform the duties of that office. I therefore ask that he be duly installed therein.

**Installing Officer:**

Brother \_\_\_\_\_, the office of President of this association is not an exalted position. It carries no honor except the privilege of service, and has few prerogatives. From the nature of this association, your service is to be to each member lodge, to the Grand Lodge of Texas and to the Masonic Fraternity as a whole. As one of the principal officers of your Masonic Lodge, you are, or should be well versed in the rules and regulations of our Fraternity. I need only remind you that the same apply equally to the conduct of the business of this association, to see that its business is properly conducted and that the activities for which the association is responsible are properly planned and completed. As its leader, you are to see that this association is active in promoting Masonic education and provides a forum for fellowship among the principal officers of its member lodges, and that the principles of Freemasonry are reflected in every activity. In view of your past activities in behalf of this great Fraternity, we entertain no doubt but that your performance in this office will result in added luster to your honored name.

Brother Marshal, you will seat the President on my right, and present the Vice President-elect for installation.

**Installing Marshal:**

Brother Installing Officer, I present Brother \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ Lodge No. \_\_\_\_\_ who has been elected Vice-President of this association for the ensuing Masonic year. The Brethren are confident that he has the necessary qualifications to perform the duties of that office. I therefore ask that he be duly installed therein.

**Installing Officer:**

Brother \_\_\_\_\_, the members of this association, having confidence in your zeal for the institution of Freemasonry and your continued interest in the affairs of this association, have elected you as their Vice-President. It will be your duty to assist the President in the discharge of his duties, and in his absence, to preside over this association. We trust you will not be found wanting in your efforts to promote the purposes of this organization.

Brother Marshal, you will seat the Vice-President on my left and present the Treasurer and Secretary-elect for installation.

**Installing Marshal:**

Brother Installing Officer, I present Brother \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ Lodge No. \_\_\_\_\_ who has been elected Treasurer and Brother \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ Lodge No. \_\_\_\_\_ who has been elected Secretary of this association for the ensuing Masonic year. The Brethren are



confident that each has the necessary qualifications to perform the duties of these offices. I therefore ask that each be duly installed therein.

**Installing Officer:**

Brother \_\_\_\_\_, as Treasurer, it is your duty to receive all moneys due and to properly safeguard all the property of the association that we may have the necessary means to perform our functions and to meet our necessary expenses.

Brother \_\_\_\_\_, as Secretary, it is your duty to carefully observe the proceedings of this association and to make a correct record of the transactions. Brother Marshal, you will seat the Treasurer and Secretary to the left of the Vice President and present the Chaplain appointive for installation.

**Installing Marshal:**

Brother Installing Officer, I present Brother \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ Lodge No. \_\_\_\_\_ who has been appointed Chaplain of this association for the ensuing Masonic year. I therefore ask that he be duly installed therein.

**Installing Officer:**

Brother \_\_\_\_\_, the President, having full confidence that you place the proper emphasis on things spiritual, has appointed you Chaplain of this Association. It will be your duty to lead us in our devotions to Deity and to invoke His blessings upon our labors that we may do only that, which is pleasing in His sight. Be diligent in your efforts that we may obtain the needed grace to do our work well.

Brother Marshal, you will seat the Chaplain to the right of the President.

**Installing Officer:**

Brethren, the officers of the Masters, Wardens and Secretaries Association of Masonic District No. \_\_\_\_\_ of the Grand Lodge of Texas are now seated. They will govern this association in accordance with your expressed wishes for the coming year. We trust that your continued interest in our Fraternity will prompt you to render them whatever assistance may be required, in proportion to your ability and talent to perform, and may it be said of us when this year is done, that we have truly united in "The Grand Design of Being Happy, and Communicating Happiness".

Brother Marshal, you will declare the officers of this association duly installed.

**Installing Marshal:**

By the authority vested in me by this association, I now proclaim the officers of the Masters, Wardens and Secretaries Association of Masonic District No. \_\_\_\_\_, duly installed.

**Installing Officer:**

Brother President, I extend to you the gavel of office and present you the **association** over which you are to preside.



**Suggested Contacts for Finding  
More Information About  
Masters Wardens and Secretaries Associations**

District 8 MWSA  
Contacts:  
Caddo Lodge No. 581

*Phone Number: (903) 527-6018*

Joe Gilmore – Secretary Caddo Lodge No. 581  
Phone Number: 903-527-3320

District 14 MWSA  
Web Site: [www.14thmwsa.tx-earthlink.net](http://www.14thmwsa.tx-earthlink.net)  
Contacts:  
Tim Cutts 卹 2004-Pres.  
Phone Number: (c) 214-697-3495  
Rex S. Lewis 卹 2004  
Phone Number: 972-240-1126

District 30 MWSA  
Web Site: [www.dissys.com/gray329/](http://www.dissys.com/gray329/)  
Contact:  
Gray Lodge No. 329  
Phone Number: (713) 782-9651

District 39 MWSA  
Contact:  
James Rodriquez 卹 2004 Pres.  
Phone Numbers: (O) (210) 222-0133, (H) (210) 737-1950

District 51 MWSA  
Web Site: [www.district-51.tx-mm.org](http://www.district-51.tx-mm.org)  
Contact:  
Kerrville Lodge No. 697  
Phone Number: 697-895-3848  
E-mail: [afam697@ktc.com](mailto:afam697@ktc.com)

District 60 MWSA  
Contact:  
El Paso Scottish Rite  
Phone Number: (915) 533-4409

District 64 MWSA  
Contacts:  
Steve Jones - 2004 Pres.  
Phone Number: (817) 282-4548  
Secondary Contact:  
Fort Worth Scottish Rite  
Phone Number: (817) 335-6004