



Maine Masonic College Board of Regents Meeting

August 3, 2008

The Board of Regents met at Meridian Splendor Lodge #49 in Newport, Maine with the following Regents present: Richard Bowden, Edward King, Walter Macdougall, Donald McDougal, John Nickerson, David Richardson, A. James Ross and Chairman Stephen Nichols presiding sans epiphany this morning. The meeting opened at 9:02am.

The minutes of the preceding meeting having been distributed via e-mail to the Regents, they were approved as distributed. A brief discussion about creating an Amazon affiliate account ensued and it was voted to do so. Ed King explained his thoughts about a web redesign and indicated he was working on it now but it was slow going.

We then moved into a discussion of course status. First up was our ongoing quest to address 'current topics'. It was noted that we still don't have either a name for or a firm grasp of the contents in such a project. The ad hoc committee which was suggested previously had not met as there were major 'means of working' issues amongst those we'd hoped might be involved. After considerable discussion and some judicious arm twisting, John Nickerson agreed to try and formulate both name and content so that we might have a better grasp on our objective.

Moving further on course matters, it was reported that the MEALS Committee was requesting the College again provide the two courses we'd done last year: speech and adult education training. Walter Macdougall will make contact with UMO again to examine the possibilities. MEALS had also asked that we be prepared to do the 'Secrets of a Master Mason' course as part of the coming year's Lodge Officer Training seminars.

The discussion around items mentioned in the two preceding paragraphs led to a broader discussion of Regent (body) management. It was again suggested that we are, as a group, simply micro-managing with considerable time being wasted on details which could easily be handled by one person rather than consuming the efforts of the entire group. Walter reemphasized his suggestion from our last meeting that what we truly need is a Dean of Academic Studies and he outlined what role that person might fulfill. This led even further to the concept of a College Librarian, a job for which Ed readily volunteered suggesting that it could handily be combined with the 'Director of Electronic Media' title he'd been given at the last meeting. It was also noted by Walter that that if we are to have this broader scope of individual responsibility, the tasks now being performed by (in particular) Ed need to be moved to others. Ed suggested that the role of Registrar and Secretary be separated noting that the registration for physical courses could be easily combined with that of DVD sales. The Secretary would then concentrate on minutes, correspondence, and other matters more specific to that office. This would enable him to move more into the electronic media/library functions. Walter allowed that he would be willing to undertake the responsibility for the Dean of Academic Studies position which was met with considerable delight by the Regents. Names were suggested for the office of Secretary. David, although desirous of doing so, is simply unable to take on additional roles due to his heavy civic responsibilities now.

Maine Masonic College – Board of Regents Minutes

Ed suggested that he would readily give up his title as Regent as an inducement to some non-college affiliate willing to take on these tasks. Walter embraced this idea as well, hoping that by so doing, a newer member would feel more immediately a part of the College Regents rather than just somebody dragged in to do slug work. Both Ed and Walter gave their assurances that lack of a title would not be a deterrent to their full participation with gusto.

Don noted that he had plans to expand the ‘Secrets of a Master Mason’ course further and we discussed at some length how Freemasonry taps into ancient streams of wisdom but that presenting that concept to a skeptical and sensitive modern world would require considerable tact and understanding. Along these lines, we discussed how the creation of DVDs on various topics might be good entry points into more serious thinking by Masons and this led, inevitably, to discussion of the ‘best modality’ for teaching. Ideally, a classroom presentation with a DVD take-away could give a tremendous ‘punch’ and this might be our ultimate means of dissemination. (A separate discussion of the impact on gas prices also played into this topic!)

We then touched a topic that always seems to lurk beneath the surface, especially for some: that of discouragement and failure. It is particularly difficult in times when there’s precious little physical progress. During a bit of hand-wringing, Steve did have an epiphany however and noted that what the College is doing is akin to having a dome and now trying to build a building under it. We have been and are, **building a building from the roof down!**

Returning to the pragmatic, our policy on DVD sales was discussed and agreed upon:

1. All sales will be ‘cash on the barrelhead’. If someone wants copies to take to sell somewhere (lodge, event, whatever), they will pay for the DVDs taken and be able to receive a refund for those not used. The (Registrar) will not unduly trouble himself with sales details but will regularly report on and hand to the Treasurer funds for said sales.
2. The Registrar, Secretary, and Chairman will provide free copies to ‘persons of interest’ as they see fit to further the cause/purpose of the College. This may include local libraries, community groups, Masonic leaders (with a focus more on out-of-state) and others.

We discussed whether we should come together to view the Parthenon video but scheduling concerns left us without a conclusion. The next meeting, however, was set for September 7th.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 11:45am and was followed by a delicious lunch and great discussion.

Respectfully submitted,

Edward L. King

Secretary (until you can find my replacement!), Board of Regents, Maine Masonic College