

Minutes of the Alwarestoch General purposes committee meeting, held on Thursday 5th December 2024.

1. The meeting was opened by the Worshipful Master, W. Bro Terry Coatsworth, at 19.05hrs.
2. The minutes of the previous GP meeting held on Tuesday 5th November 2024, having been circulated electronically to the Brethren, were subject to a couple of corrections and clarifications, and so will be signed at the next GP meeting after said corrections are made.
3. There was no correspondence. Apologies were heard from W. Bro's, Sydney Aynsworth, Gerry Mansell, Mikey Abban, and Malcolm Berry.
4. The arrangements for the December meeting and Christmas festive board were discussed. The meeting is to be a short business meeting only. There are two ballots to carry out, one for an initiate, and one for two joining members. If there is no call for separate ballots, it is the intention to ballot for both joining members together. The Master will aim to close the meeting by 19.45, so that the Brethren can retire to the festive board. All arrangements for the festive board have been finalised.
5. Under this heading, the Secretary, W. Bro Jason Davey, spoke about the role of the secretary and outside influences on the Lodge meetings. He pointed out that at the last few meetings, he was often the last to know if Provincial or Grand officers were attending, and any

arrangements for items during the meeting that should be on the agenda. It should be common courtesy to inform the secretary of any arrangements that are made that affect the Lodge meetings, and items that should be on the agenda should not be arranged without the knowledge of the Secretary. There was an instance where W. Bro Ray Bezani attended the November meeting and had arranged with somebody to present a 40 year long service certificate to a member, and did so during the risings at the end of a long meeting. Not only should this have been an agenda item, the secretary should have been notified, who would then have arranged the presentation at the next short meeting. As it was, the after a long ceremony, the presentation, and W. Bro John Duggan giving a talk, the meeting ran on till later than is acceptable.

In the future, it should be the job of the Secretary to arrange the meetings and set the agenda, as per the book of Constitutions.

To this end, he asked that if any Brother wishes to take over as Secretary, let him know, and he will work with them throughout this masonic year to hand over the office.

6. The Treasurer, W. Bro Paul Speak, gave a report on the state of the Lodge Accounts, and informed the committee that they had been sent out electronically to the Brethren.

He gave an update on his dealings with the Provincial Treasurer, and said that they were progressing at a slow

pace. The latest issue, was that Province had no record of, and did not recognise the Tom Savage bequest to the Lodge funds, despite them having been shown on all previous accounts, and the monies from the bequest having been used for Lodge purposes for many years. He is waiting for a letter from the estate of the Late Tom Savage, confirming the terms of the bequest so he can present it to the Provincial Treasurer. After much conversation with Lloyds bank, the holder of the Lodge accounts, they have informed W. Bro Paul, that from 1st January 2025, there will be a monthly charge of £4.25 on each of them. This is in line with their policy on all business accounts, although this does not affect the Lodge benevolent account, as this is classed as a charity account.

W. Bro Paul put forward an idea to close the benevolent account, and transfer it to the Masonic Relief chest account. It can be managed there, and would also benefit from earning interest. The details will be worked out and put to a future committee meeting for a ballot.

7. Under the heading of Any Other Business, the Director of Ceremonies, W. Bro Cyril Davey, said he was pleased with the progress made in the quality of the ceremonies being carried out by the Lodge, and said he would like to continue with the arrangement of sharing out the ritual between several of the members, rather than the Master having to do everything.

W. Bro Chris Vaughan, said that he thought the interview process for potential candidates, had become to

informal, and the candidate should wait in the bar area until called into the interview panel, rather than mingle with the Brethren. It was decided by the committee to revert to a more formal format.

The Visiting Officer, W. Bro Ian Moore, informed the committee that there was a Ruling Master's dinner being held at the Fareham Masonic centre on February 1st 2025, and asked if the Worshipful Master would be attending. The invitation also extended to his Wardens. The Lodge Webmaster, W. Bro Maurice Freeman, gave an update on the Lodge website. Footfall across the site has increased, and there has been a marked increase in the number of Brethren using the site to book in for the festive board. He has also started building a new Lodge database, keeping a record of all members attending meetings, and which office they may have taken. It is hoped that this may prove useful if Province request Lodge records etc. As such, he will be sending out online forms to the Brethren with their details, and asking for any corrections to be returned to him, so that he can update the records.

The Worshipful Master, in his capacity as Almoner, told the committee that the Lodge widows had received their Christmas cards and gifts from the Lodge, but unfortunately, none would be attending the Christmas festive board this year.

8. After having seen that the business of GP had been transacted, and there were no other matters arising, the

Worshipful Master closed the Meeting in Peace Love & Harmony at 20.25hrs.

Worshipful Master

Secretary