



# MINNEHAHA LODGE #5

Ancient Free & Accepted Masons  
520 S. 1st Ave  
Sioux Falls, SD 57104  
[sec@minnehaha5.com](mailto:sec@minnehaha5.com)  
(605) 351-5756

		SPECIAL MEETING ~ MASTER MASON			
<b>DECEMBER 18, 2024</b>		<b>WM</b>	<b>CARLOS COBOS</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>THOR BARDON</b>
Opened in Due Form 7:00p.m.		<b>SW</b>	<b>RYAN HARRISON</b>	<b>JD</b>	<b>MASON GOLDSMITH*</b>
Closed in Due Form 7:27p.m.		<b>JW</b>	<b>JAMES BYERS</b>	<b>SS</b>	<b>ADDISON STUBBE</b>
Attendance 22		<b>TRES</b>	-	<b>JS</b>	-
Visitors 3		<b>SEC</b>	<b>AARON ZAHN</b>	<b>MAR</b>	<b>MITCH AMAN</b>
		<b>C-AP</b>	<b>GEORGE HAHN*</b>	<b>TYLER</b>	<b>BRIAN PULLING*</b>

\*PRO-TEM

Worshipful Master Carlos opened a Special Meeting of Master Masons and greeted the Brethren in attendance. Worshipful Master Carlos thanked everyone for attending tonight under the circumstances appreciated their interest in the business of the lodge. WM Carlos gave the floor to Brother James Byers who opened with a scripture reading and words of encouragement for the proceedings of the evening.

## NEW BUSINESS

Worshipful Master Carlos explained that tonight's Special Meeting was called only for the purpose of Proceedings for the Trial of Unmasonic Conduct. Monday, noon of this week, our lodge received correspondence from Damian Vacin, a member of another lodge in Sioux Falls, in which he stated that he was going to be representing the accused in the upcoming Unmasonic Conduct Trial. The correspondence contained references to the Masonic Code and procedures used in Unity Lodge to conduct a trial in which it was implied to be used in the proceedings of the trial of Minnehaha's Unmasonic Conduct Trial. The Secretary, having received this correspondence, immediately acted upon the request, challenging the particular section referenced in the code and, ultimately, the involvement of another lodge in the business and proceedings of Minnehaha Lodge. The Secretary reached out to both the District Master and the Grand Master to provide counsel and bring awareness to the tampering of business of our lodge. In following conversations to bring this issue to light it was discovered and admitted that more members of Unity Lodge were aware of the upcoming trial and Damian's inclusion into the business of Minnehaha Lodge.

Over the course of Monday afternoon and all day Tuesday the officers of Minnehaha Lodge were involved in discussions on how to proceed with this trial knowing full well that the business of our lodge had been tampered with and to the point that it had crossed into another lodge's conversations and who knows what else beyond that. On Tuesday afternoon at 5:30pm Damian Vacin withdrew his representation of the accused. The officers continued talks with the Grand Master in which it was expressed Minnehaha Lodge our concerns about tampered business, information leaving the security of our lodge room, and, most importantly, that there seemed to be a significant disconnect in the harmony of which we were unaware.

On Wednesday around noon we received correspondence from the accused. Contrary to prior documented acceptance of notice, he now wanted to be present at the Unmasonic Conduct Trial after receiving messages of encouragement to be present. Conversations continued with the Grand Master, Secretary, and Worshipful Master Carlos that it is no doubt that outside influence is still present in the business of these proceedings and the officers within Minnehaha Lodge are not confident that the proceedings can take place to ensure a fair, confidential procedure for both parties involved as it is described in the Masonic Code to remain sealed and not made public. The officers of Minnehaha Lodge also do not want create any further disharmony amongst the various memberships of the different lodges in Sioux Falls as our business is to remain that way.

The conversation with the Grand Master, Secretary, and Worshipful Master Carlos concluded with the concept that Minnehaha Lodge would request that the Unmasonic Conduct trial be elevated to the Grand Lodge level and moved outside of Sioux Falls to ensure no interference. Also, the accuser will withdraw the charges within Minnehaha Lodge and then re-file the charges to the Grand Lodge for the same reasons and procedure. The provisions of this concept had been preliminarily ran by two members of Jurisprudence not involved in this matter and they did not see objection at this time.

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During the Special Meeting Worshipful Master Carlos formally requested that a letter be drafted to the Grand Master requesting that the case be elevated to the Grand Lodge level. MWB Secretary will proceed as such

MWB Aaron addressed the lodge as the accuser and agreed with everything WM Carlos had stated. The officers of Minnehaha Lodge were completely in sync and on the same page. All of this was completed with many hours of phone calls, emails, and painful conversations. The business of this lodge is necessary to complete on our own and we want to keep the confidentiality of the proceedings in house and not let outside influence prevail. Both parties are entitled to a fair and honest process as it is prescribed and should not be pressured and instead come to that conclusion on their own. Aaron's only regret is that his Brothers of Minnehaha Lodge will not be able to hear the entire testimony and see the evidence presented for himself and most especially RWB Derek Runge. Aaron agreed whole heartedly this is ultimately what is best for the craft and what is best for the harmony of all Brothers in Sioux Falls

Worshipful Brother Carlos closed by stating that everyone came this evening with a purpose, and he knows that it may be disappointing that the proceedings did not take place. We were literally on the phones this afternoon trying to sort through this matter and making the best decision for the lodge, and we did not want to make a rushed decision. Our decision was proven correct as we entered the room this evening. One of our Past Masters of the Lodge informed us of a very confidential piece of information conveyed to him that was only given to one other person outside of the Minnehaha Lodge Officer line. We will keep our heads-up and may the blessing of Heaven rest upon us and all regular Masons. May Brotherly Love prevail, and every moral and social virtue unite and cement us.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Aaron Zahn*  
**SECRETARY**



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