

ARTICLE V

Initiation Fees

The fee for conferring the degrees shall be ~~\$100.00~~ **\$150.00**, of which ~~\$50~~ **\$100** shall accompany the petition, \$25 shall be paid before receiving the Fellow Craft Degree and \$25 before receiving the Master Mason Degree.

SECTION 1

No dues will be charged to the new Master Mason for the year in which he is raised. Annual dues will apply for the first year following and thereafter.

SECTION 2

The fee shall be apportioned according to the Bylaws of the Grand Lodge of South Dakota and the Budget of the Lodge.

RATIONALE:

Fees for initiation should be straightforward, easy to explain and cover the major cost the lodge incurs. Having the major portion paid with the petition, it would be hoped the candidate will be incented to continue with the ensuing degrees. Not requiring the entire amount up front might make it possible for the prospective candidate to fit the cost into his budget. Since the lodge incurs no assessments for candidates until they become Master Masons, the major portion of the lodge cost, e.g. GL and MBA assessments, are not billed until the year following his raising.

ARTICLE VI

Annual Dues

The annual dues of each member shall be **\$150.00**, payable in advance on or before the last day of December payable by cash, check, **credit/debit card** or bank ACH. The **\$150,00** payment may be scheduled in installments as arranged with the Secretary. Should an increase in per capita dues be duly voted on and approved in the Grand Lodge of South Dakota or the Masonic Building Association of Sioux Falls South Dakota, the annual dues for each member will be automatically increased to accommodate the per capita increase in the next calendar year..

SECTION 1

The dues for each member ~~raised or~~ affiliated during the year shall be prorated by the following formula: $1/12$ of the annual dues stipulated in Article VI, Section 1 for each whole month left in the calendar year on the date of being ~~raised or~~ affiliated. If that amount is not a whole dollar amount, it will be rounded up to the next whole dollar amount.

SECTION 2

Any member whose dues shall not have been paid at least to the beginning of the current year may be suspended by a majority vote of the members present. In no case shall the Lodge carry a delinquent member for more than two years as per Grand Lodge By-Laws, Section 4-84.

SECTION 3

The Lodge may remit the dues of a member by a majority vote of the members present under Grand Lodge By-laws Section 4-85.

RATIONALE:

The dues structure for Minnehaha Lodge #5 should not require mathematical gymnastics. The \$150 proposed is an increase of \$27.50, or 22.4%. We have external factors that will impact our annual dues; the Grand Lodge and MBA Per Capita fees that are incorporated into our dues structure, over which we have no control. Although it is hoped that no member of Unity Lodge 130 will be lost through its recent dissolution, that possibility still remains. The MBA assessment is a major concern, since any member of a Sioux Falls lodge pays the MBA fee for EACH BODY of Masonry (Scottish & York Rites, OES, Shrine, etc.) and those fees are compounded by Masons with multiple memberships. The cost of operation of the building will not be decreased by the loss of a lodge. They must be regained by increasing fees to those which remain. It is prudent to settle on a fixed, albeit higher amount rather than locking in perpetual increases that could have runaway costs. If the lodge has legitimate needs to support more activities, fundraisers can raise the money and provide an opportunity for increased Masonic fellowship. If future dues increases are needed, the By-laws offer the means to make future changes.

ARTICLE VIII Budget

This section was proposed, and perhaps passed at the September 4, 2025 Stated Meeting. It should be removed in its entirety.

SECTION 4

Life Members will be assessed any annual increases, including any per capita increases, beyond the total dues amount of \$122.50, which was established at the beginning of 2025. Any total increase that is not a whole dollar amount will be rounded up to the next whole dollar amount.

RATIONALE:

Brothers who purchased life memberships did so with the promise that it would eliminate annual dues payments and provide support to their lodge IN PERPTUITY after their passing. By passing this amendment, you have betrayed their trust, and subjected them to possible lodge discipline, including suspension. If the Grand Lodge investment portfolio values have not kept up with lodge budgets, the brother who bought the life membership in good faith should not be penalized. An appeal made to current life members might be in order, asking them to help make up the shortfall. The resulting response might be far more valuable than an unwanted dues assessment.

Presented by:

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