

THE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
Of the
GENERAL GRAND COUNCIL of CRYPTIC MASONS, INTERNATIONAL
(Revised August 29, 2011, Amended September 29, 2014, Amended August 14, 2021)

PROPOSED

**REVISION OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE GENERAL GRAND
COUNCIL OF CRYPTIC MASONS, INTERNATIONAL**

WHEREAS, The Constitution of the General Grand Council of Cryptic Masons, International, was last fully revised in 2011 and amended twice in 2014 and 2021,


WHEREAS, The Constitution needs to be updated to conform to the changes in world Masonic conditions,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the General Grand Council in its 2023 Triennial Assembly rescind the present Constitution to be replaced with the attached:


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[REVISED 2023]

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that once adopted, the Committee on Cryptic Jurisprudence has the authority to edit and make corrections of spelling, punctuation, and grammar as required.

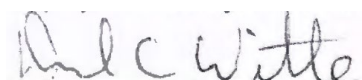
SUBMITTED BY:



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THE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
of the
GENERAL GRAND COUNCIL of CRYPTIC MASONS, INTERNATIONAL
(Revised August 14, 2023)

PART ONE - CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

In peace, love and unity, the General Grand Council of Cryptic Masons, International, (General Grand Council or GGC) is established to promote, preserve and protect the principles and Landmarks of Ancient Freemasonry and of the Cryptic Rite in particular as an essential and co-equal part of the American York Rite System throughout the Masonic World. To that end, we encourage adherence and preservation of those principles and Landmarks in the Cryptic Rite within the United States of America, and we require the establishment and continuation of those principles and Landmarks in the Cryptic Rite outside the United States of America, thereby ensuring the betterment of Freemasonry in all of Creation.

LANDMARKS AND MAXIMS OF CRYPTIC FREEMASONRY

The essential Degrees of Cryptic Masonry in the Universal or American York Rite are the degrees of Royal Master, Select Master, Super Excellent Master, along with the invitational Orders of the Silver Trowel or Thrice Illustrious Master and the Order of the Secret Vault.

All Degrees of Cryptic Masonry are held in trust by any chartered Council or Grand Council.

Concomitantly, any Council or Grand Council chartered by the General Grand Council of Cryptic Masons, International, is issued that charter as a trustee of the Universal or American Cryptic Rite and, as such, must conform to these Landmarks and Maxims to retain recognition by the General Grand Council and the issued charter.

All the Degrees of Cryptic Masonry may only be conferred by a chartered Council or Grand Council.

No Grand Lodge, Grand Chapter, Grand Commandery, Scottish Rite or other Appendant Body of Freemasonry of any jurisdiction may control, supervise, or confer the Degrees of Cryptic Masonry.

No Grand Lodge, Grand Chapter, Grand Commandery, Scottish Rite or other Appendant Body of Freemasonry of any jurisdiction may control, supervise, or dictate the governance of a chartered Council or Grand Council.

The governance of a chartered Council or Grand Council includes the maintenance and determination of membership data, financial revenues and obligations, conduct of elections and installations, and all regalia of the Cryptic Rite.

By affirmative vote of its membership, a Chartered Grand Council may enter into cooperative trust arrangements with either or both the Grand Chapter or Grand Commandery of its jurisdiction for joint administration of clerical services, accountable transfers of payments for necessary expenses including per capita due and owing to the chartering authorities of the General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, International, General Grand Council of Cryptic Masons, International, or Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America, provision of expenses for physical locations for use, records storage, or meeting sites, and membership database software systems, provided that the governance of that trust

arrangement includes representation of the Chartered Grand Council selected solely by the Chartered Grand Council.

A chartered Council or Grand Council is required to hold elections to fill the offices from qualified individuals as specified in a Constitution and Bylaws that has been approved and accepted by its chartering authority.

All chartered Councils or Grand Councils must be governed by the Solomonic Rule of Three, being the elected Cryptic Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master and Grand Principal Conductor of the Work and any action by its governing board must include the affirmative vote of at least two of those three officers.

Beyond these Landmarks and Maxims, a chartered Council or Grand Council is to follow the customs and usages of the recognized Grand Lodge or recognized Grand Lodges with joint authority by recognized treaties over its territorial jurisdiction.

ARTICLE I - NAME AND LOCATION

The name of this organization shall be known as the **General Grand Council of Cryptic Masons, International (GGCCMI or General Grand Council)**, and it shall be incorporated as a **Not-For-Profit Corporation** in a State of the United States of America (USA) as approved by the Board of Trustees.

The principal office of the General Grand Council shall be maintained in a locale as approved by the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

The General Grand Council shall be the only source of, and has supreme power and legislative, executive, and judicial authority over Cryptic Masons within its Jurisdiction, with all the attributes of sovereignty and government, limited only by the Ancient Landmarks and the laws and usages of Freemasonry, this Constitution, and the Bylaws adopted in conformity therewith.

ARTICLE III - SEAL OF THE GENERAL GRAND COUNCIL

The Corporate Seal of the General Grand Council shall be as follows:

A. Description

An outer circle, one and seven-eighths inches ($1 \frac{7}{8}$) in diameter, with two inner concentric circles, a double inner circle, one and five-eighths ($1 \frac{5}{8}$) in diameter, a second inner circle, one and three-eighths ($1 \frac{3}{8}$). The area between the outer circle and first inner circle is filled with a rope image. Between the inner circles shall appear the words in capital block sans-serif letters "GENERAL GRAND COUNCIL OF CRYPTIC MASONS" on the upper curve and "INTERNATIONAL" on the lower curve. Within the innermost circle is a square containing a circle which contains an equilateral Council triangle. Below the square within the inner circle shall appear the words "INSTITUTED Aug 25, 1880. The letter "A" for "Alas" is placed to the left of the Square, the Letter "P" for "Poor" above the square and the letter "H" for Hiram" to the right of the square.

Within the triangle is placed a left angle on which are the Hebrew letters of the Tetragrammaton Yod, He, Vev, He (יהוה)

$1 \frac{7}{8}$ INCHES DIAMETER



B. Custody And Usage

The General Grand Recorder shall maintain custody of the Seal to be used only for official purposes as authorized by the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the General Grand Council shall consist of companions with active membership in the Constituent Grand Councils and the Subordinate Councils of General Grand Council that are:

- A. Past Grand Masters, as determined by the Affiliated or Constituent Grand Council
- B. The Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, and the Grand Principal Conductor of the Work of Affiliated and Constituent Grand Councils
- C. The Illustrious Master, Deputy Master and Principal Conductor of the Work of Subordinate Councils
- D. Grand Council Delegates as defined in Bylaws Article VII, Section 704.

ARTICLE V - GENERAL GRAND COUNCIL OFFICERS

Section 501. Elected Officers.

- A. At each Triennial Assembly, the General Grand Council shall elect the following officers by a majority of all ballots cast. All shall be Past Grand Masters of an Affiliated or a Constituent Grand Council except for the General Grand Recorder.
 1. A Deputy General Grand Master
 2. A General Grand Principal Conductor of the Work
 3. A General Grand Treasurer
 4. A General Grand Recorder (Must be a voting member of an Affiliated or Constituent Grand Council)
- B. The Deputy General Grand Master will be considered the General Grand Master-elect and will be installed as the General Grand Master at the succeeding Triennial Assembly.
- C. At the succeeding Triennial Assembly, should the Deputy General Grand Master (General Grand Master-elect) be unable, for any reason, to be installed to the office of General Grand Master, there shall be elected by ballot from the eligible Companions, a General Grand Master plus the Officers listed in Section A.1. thru 4. Above.

Section 502. Appointed Officers

At the Triennial Assembly of the General Grand Council, the General Grand Master-Elect shall appoint the following Officers, all of which shall be Past Grand Masters except for the General Grand Chaplain, General Grand Ambassadors, or Special Representatives of the General Grand Master, or any Non-U.S. Regional Deputy General Grand Master:

- A. Regional Deputy General Grand Masters
- B. General Grand Chaplain
- C. General Grand Captain of the Guard
- D. General Grand Conductor of the Council
- E. General Grand Marshal
- F. General Grand Steward
- G. General Grand Sentinel
- H. General Grand Ambassadors (Must be a Dais Officer or Past Grand Master of an Affiliated or Constituent Grand Council)
- I. Special Representatives of the General Grand Master (Liaison with Non-Constituent Grand Councils.)

These Appointed Officers serve at the pleasure of the General Grand Master for the Triennium and may be removed by the General Grand Master when he deems necessary.

Section 503. Installation

The elected and appointed officers of this General Grand Council shall be installed at the

completion of the Triennial Assembly, or as soon thereafter as practicable, and shall immediately assume the responsibilities of their office.

Section 504. Committee Members

Committee Members may be chosen from any member of Affiliated or Constituent Grand Councils or Subordinate Councils.

ARTICLE VI - POWERS OF THE GENERAL GRAND COUNCIL

The General Grand Council shall watch over and protect the interest of Cryptic Masonry in the States, Districts, Territories, or Countries which recognize its jurisdiction or where there is no regularly established Grand Council of Cryptic Masonry. It shall give such advice and instruction as may seem most conducive to the peace, advancement and perpetuation of Cryptic Masonry, and to settle all difficulties which may arise and be referred to it.

- A. General Powers - To do whatsoever may be considered necessary to the well-being and perpetuation of Cryptic Masonry, subject to the provisions contained in its own Constitution and Bylaws
- B. Executive Powers – To enforce this Constitution, and legislation in conformity thereto, shall be carried out by the General Grand Master unless this General Grand Council has specifically provided otherwise
- C. Legislative Powers - To extend to every matter not herein expressly delegated to its Constituent Grand Councils and Subordinate Councils
- D. Judicial powers of this General Grand Council are:
 - 1. Original - embracing all controversies between Grand Councils, or between Grand Councils and its members, or between members of different Councils, and the enforcement of discipline upon its members and Councils, and upon all other Cryptic Masons under its jurisdiction; provided, that this clause shall not be construed to deprive an Affiliated or a Constituent Grand Council of the right to enforce discipline upon any of its own members wherever they may be.
 - 2. Appellate - embracing all matters of controversy or discipline arising in any council, and over which it has not exercised original jurisdiction
- E. Formation of Provinces or Additional General Grand Councils – It has the sole authority to form and grant Charters to Provinces or additional General Grand Councils throughout its area of jurisdiction.
- F. Dispensations and Charters – It has the sole authority to grant Dispensations and Charters for Constituent Grand Councils, and Subordinate Councils, which shall be empowered to confer the Cryptic Degrees of Royal Master, Select Master and Super Excellent Master. Dispensations will be signed by the General Grand Master and attested by the General Grand Recorder. Charters will be signed by the three General Grand Dais Officers and attested by the General Grand Recorder.
- G. Ritualistic - To establish and maintain uniform ritualistic work and lectures within the Customs and usages of Cryptic Masonry as the required work of Subordinate Councils and elective work of any Constituent Grand Council.
- H. Assessments – To annually assess and collect from the Constituent Grand Councils and Subordinate Councils under its immediate jurisdiction, as may be provided for by law, to support and maintain the activities of the General Grand Council membership

- I. Assessment for Specific Purposes – To levy and collect special assessments from Affiliated and Constituent Grand Councils and Subordinate Councils under its immediate jurisdiction for specific purposes, when authorized by vote of the General Grand Council membership at Triennial Assembly
- J. Supervision of Finances – To supervise the state and condition of its own finances, and adopt such measures in relation thereto as may be deemed necessary
- K. Formation of Associations - To authorize or sponsor the establishment of additional corporate or unincorporated entities as it deems necessary for the betterment and furtherance of the Cryptic Craft, including but not limited to, the formation of associations for Grand Recorders, Grand Treasurers, or Thrice Illustrious Masters. Such associations may be formed independently or in cooperation with the General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, International or the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America as well as any recognized Grand Lodge.
- L. Powers Not Limited – The powers herein expressed, whether general or special, shall not limit or control any power or function so expressed, but each clause shall be construed in furtherance, and in limitation, of powers anciently or otherwise exercised.

ARTICLE VII - BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE GENERAL GRAND COUNCIL

- A. The General Grand Master, Deputy General Grand Master, and General Grand Principal Conductor of the Work shall constitute the Board of Trustees of the General Grand Council.
- B. The Board of Trustees shall have the executive power to act on all the business affairs of the General Grand Council during the Triennium so far as they shall conform to the Constitution and By-Laws of the General Grand Council. The business transactions of the Board of Trustees shall be a part of the General Grand Master's Triennial report.
- C. The Board of Trustees shall empower the General Grand Treasurer to hold in trust all funds of the General Grand Council and report on the finances of all funds held by the General Grand Council to the Board of Trustees at their meetings.
- D. The Board of Trustees shall empower the General Grand Recorder to make a record of all the proceedings of the Board of Trustee meetings. The Chairman of the Jurisprudence and the Finance and Accounts Committees may attend in an advisory capacity.
- E. A quorum of the Trustees shall meet twice each year upon the call of the General Grand Master.
- F. The Board of Trustees shall establish and adopt Administrative and Fiscal Policies for the transaction of the General Grand Council's business consistent with established business practices and the Constitution and Bylaws of General Grand Council.
- G. In the matters of finances, the Board of Trustees may include the vote or recommendation of the General Grand Treasurer and/or the General Grand Recorder as deemed appropriate by the Board.

ARTICLE VIII ASSEMBLIES

- A. TYPES - The Meetings of this General Grand Council shall be as follows:
 - 1. TRIENNIAL ASSEMBLIES - The General Grand Council shall meet in Triennial Assemblies at such time and place as shall be determined by the General Grand

Master, or in case of his incapacity, then the Deputy General Grand Master shall make the determination.

2. SPECIAL ASSEMBLIES - The General Grand Master and the Deputy General Grand Master shall have the authority to call a Special Assembly of the General Grand Council whenever and wherever they consider it expedient or necessary, and it shall be their further duty to do so when properly requested by nine (9) Constituent Grand Councils, of which three (3) months notice shall be stated in the call and no business other than that for which it is called shall be transacted.
 3. OCCASIONAL ASSEMBLES - The General Grand Master may call an Occasional Assembly for the purpose of participating in Masonic Ceremonies or for special occasions. There shall be no business conducted or acted on at any occasional assembly.
 4. VIRTUAL/ELECTRONIC ASSEMBLIES – Triennial, Special, and Occasional Assemblies may be conducted using technology to facilitate virtual/electronic assemblies by unanimous decision of the Board of Trustees and due notice to the voting membership. Electronic means for all balloting and votes shall also be permitted in any Assembly by unanimous decision of the Board of Trustees with due notice to the voting membership. No Cryptic Ritual will be used without due safeguards and unanimous approval of the Board of Trustees. (Added August 14, 2021)
- B. QUORUMS - A quorum shall consist of the voting members of nine (9) Affiliated or Constituent Grand Councils who must be present for the Triennial Assembly or any Special Assembly of the General Grand Council to be opened, or if any business is transacted therein. A quorum is not required to hold an Occasional Assembly.
- C. VOTING IN GENERAL GRAND COUNCIL
1. The usual method of taking the vote is *viva voce* (by the voice) or by show of hands. Voting by rising; by ballot; by roll call, or "yeas and nays," may be called for by general consent. All matters shall be settled by majority vote unless otherwise specified.
 2. A member of the General Grand Council, and/or Affiliated or Constituent Grand Council, as defined in ARTICLE IV - Membership, Subdivisions A, through D inclusive, shall be entitled to one vote by virtue of such membership.
 3. A Subordinate Council shall be entitled to one vote, the majority of such representatives present determining how the vote shall be cast.
 4. PROXIES - The three elected Dais Officers of any **Affiliated or Constituent** Grand Council shall each be entitled to a proxy if unable to attend. The proxy shall be in writing on the prescribed form and signed by the requesting Officer, attested by the Grand Recorder, and under seal of the member Grand Council. The proxy may be assigned to any member of such Grand Council **that does not already qualify as a member of General Grand Council, i.e. the Dais Officers and Past Grand Masters may not carry proxies**. No other proxies shall be recognized.
 5. No member shall have more than **one (1)** vote.
 6. No member shall represent more than one Grand Council or Subordinate Council.

ARTICLE IX – BYLAWS

A set of Bylaws shall be adopted by this General Grand Council to enforce the provisions of this Constitution, define the duties of officers and committees and to regulate such other matters which the General Grand Council may deem pertinent.

ARTICLE X – AMENDMENTS

Section 1001. This Constitution may be amended at any Triennial or Special Assembly by a three-fourths (3/4) vote provided the procedures of Section 1002 for submitting the Amendment are followed. Amendments will become effective at the end of the Assembly unless moved to take effect immediately by a unanimous vote.

Section 1002.

- A. By a General Revision—By a general revision of the Constitution/Bylaws when ordered by the General Grand Master who will appoint Special Committee. This Committee shall submit its report upon completion to the Jurisprudence Committee at least 12 months prior to a legislative session of the General Grand Council. Jurisprudence shall report thereon at the General Grand Council. At least eight (8) months prior to the Assembly, this revision will then be submitted to the Grand Recorders of the Constituent Grand Councils and the Recorders of the Constituent Councils for distribution to the General Grand Council Membership.
- B. By Amendment to Specific Articles or Subdivisions of the Constitution/Bylaws—By an amendment proposed in writing, submitted in triplicate, and signed by three (3) members of the General Grand Council of Cryptic Masons, International. These Amendments will be submitted to the General Grand Recorder and the Jurisprudence Committee a minimum of six (6) months prior to the Assembly. At least five (5) months prior to the Assembly, these Amendments will then be submitted to the Grand Recorders of the Constituent Grand Councils and the Recorders of the Constituent Councils for distribution to the General Grand Council Membership. (Floor motions to confer honorary membership or of gratitude for services rendered and/or acts performed are not required to follow these procedures.)
- C. By Emergent Resolution—By an emergent resolution generated from a recommendation in an Officer or Committee Report, these amendments would not have been processed according to the required submission time. These amendments must be submitted to Jurisprudence Committee for consideration. These may be presented to the General Grand Master during the Assembly for consideration. They must pass a four fifths (4/5) ballot to be brought to the floor for debate.
- D. By Housekeeping Changes—Spelling, Grammar, or Reference Errors will be corrected as they are noted, and a complete list of these changes will be kept by the General Grand Recorder. In preparation for a Triennial Assembly, the list of these changes will be provided to the Jurisprudence Committee two (2) months prior to the Assembly for inclusion in their report.
- E. Format for Proposed Amendments
 1. Proposed legislation will start with a heading that cites the Title of the Section of the Constitution proposed for change, and the Triennial year it is to be considered.
 2. Those proposing amendments then would provide a “Rationale” portion to the proposal explaining the reasons for the proposed change.
 3. The legislation will then list the “Now Reads” portion of the proposal with the entire Section as is currently written in the Code.

4. Legislation will then present the “Proposed to Read” portion in the following manner.
 - a. The “Proposed to Read” will again list the entire Section under consideration.
 - b. If there will be no changes to a paragraph or subdivision the text of that paragraph or subdivision will NOT be written out as in the “Now Reads” portion. Instead, the number of the paragraph or subdivision will be listed and the notation, “No change to this paragraph” or “No change to this subdivision” will be made.
 - c. If a change within a paragraph or subdivision deletes any text the existing text with strikethrough. [example]
 - d. If a change within a paragraph or subdivision adds text to the existing text, indicate said change by underlining the new text. [new example]
 - e. The strikethrough and underlining will not appear in the revised Constitution if the legislation passes. These formats are utilized only to facilitate understanding of the proposed change to the Section of the Constitution/Bylaws.
5. Legislation will then present an “As Intended to Read Section” as it will be in the final document.