

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FOURTH
JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR
DUVAL COUNTY, FLORIDA.

CASE NO.: 16-2012-CA-8054-MA
DIVISION: CV-E

WALTER HAMMOND, an individual;
JOHN HANSFORD JOINER, an individual
and a Representative of the Class,
and HUGH A. WILSON, an individual
and a Representative of the Class,

Plaintiffs,

vs.

THE MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND LODGE
OF FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF
FLORIDA, a non-profit corporation,
and ROBERT P. HARRY, JR.,

Defendants.

DEPOSITION OF:
GRAND MASTER DANNY R. GRIFFITH

Taken on behalf of the Plaintiffs

DATE TAKEN: Wednesday, December 11, 2013
TIME: 10:10 AM - 12:40 PM
PLACE: Grand Lodge Building
220 North Ocean Street
Second Floor Conference Room
Jacksonville, Florida 32202

Examination of the witness taken before:
Laurie J. Miller, Court Reporter and Notary Public in and
for the State of Florida at Large.

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A P P E A R A N C E S

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Appearing on behalf of the Plaintiffs.

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Appearing on behalf of John R. Stokes.

ALSO PRESENT: Walter M. Hammond
and Richard E. Lynn.

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1 GRAND MASTER DANNY R. GRIFFITH,
2 having been produced and first duly sworn as a witness on
3 behalf of the Plaintiff, then testified as follows:

4 THE WITNESS: I do.

5 DIRECT EXAMINATION

6 BY MR. SANDERS:

7 Q Before we get started, I'd just like to lay down
8 a few -- not technically rules, but just some things that I
9 abide by.

10 First, let me just go ahead and get you to
11 identify yourself officially on the record.

12 A Danny R. Griffith, Grand Master, Grand Lodge of
13 Florida.

14 Q Okay. And I will try to give you the respect
15 that you're due. I will try to call you either "Most
16 Worshipful Griffith" or "Most Worshipful Danny," or I'll
17 try to do something. If I forget, I apologize in advance.

18 A That's fine.

19 Q It's not, by any means, a slight to you or your
20 position.

21 Have you ever had your deposition taken before?

22 A No.

23 Q Okay. That's why I like to do a little impromptu
24 kind of forward. A deposition is essentially a
25 question-and-answer session. I get to ask all the

1 questions; you get to provide all the answers.

2 If you don't understand the question, let me
3 know; and, that way, I'll do my best to try to clarify what
4 the question is or what it's about. If you answer the
5 question, I'm going to assume that you understood the
6 question and you answered it within the best of your
7 recollection.

8 Are you on any medications or anything today that
9 would impair your ability to think or respond or answer any
10 questions?

11 A Not that I know of.

12 Q Okay. So, this is not a contest of wills. I'm
13 not going to force you to stay here. If you have any
14 problems, you have to go use the restroom, or you just need
15 to take a break, you want to stand, all you need to do is
16 let me know, and we will accommodate whatever you need to
17 do at that particular point in time.

18 So, with that said -- oh, all answers must be
19 verbal. And, of course, I'm Southern; so, a lot of times,
20 I'll say words like "huh-uh" and "uh-huh." And, when you
21 hear them, it's clear that I mean an affirmative or a
22 negative; but, when they're written down, sometimes judges
23 get confused as to whether or not it was intended to be an
24 affirmative or a negative. So I will try to prompt you if
25 you do that. But anything that you might want to just give

1 a simple answer of a yes or no, just answer "yes" or "no,"
2 and then that will avoid that situation.

3 Okay. Just some preliminary information: What
4 is your current home address?

5 A 1059 Birchwood Drive, B-I-R-C-H, Orange Park,
6 Florida, 30065.

7 Q And how long have you lived there?

8 A I've got to count it up -- 18, 13 -- 31 years.

9 Q And are you employed still?

10 A No.

11 Q You're retired, then?

12 A Yes, sir.

13 Q And what did you retire from?

14 A Civil service, Naval -- U.S. Navy.

15 Q And how long were you in the Navy?

16 A Now, this is two -- I've got two different
17 retirements.

18 Q Okay.

19 A Okay. I've got one; I retired in -- let me
20 think -- 1980, from the Navy, after 22 years, and then I
21 retired civil service in 2006, after 24 and a half years.

22 Q That's a long time to work.

23 A (Witness indicating affirmatively.)

24 Q And when did you officially become Most
25 Worshipful Danny Griffith?

1 A May 29th, 2013.

2 Q Could you give me a description, as best you can,
3 of what it means to be the Grand Master or Most Worshipful;
4 i.e., what your job is, your responsibilities, your duties
5 and your authority, if you can.

6 A That gets quite in-depth. That's why I'm
7 hesitating to answer the question. I mean, I do everything
8 that I'm supposed to do, within the Digest of Masonic law,
9 which is quite extensive.

10 Q Do you know the difference between being the Most
11 Worshipful of the Grand Lodge of the State of Florida or
12 being the head of a corporation known as the Grand Lodge of
13 the State of Florida, or is there a difference, to your
14 knowledge?

15 A No difference.

16 Q Do you consider -- since you've indicated there's
17 no difference, do you consider that the Grand Lodge is a
18 not-for-profit corporation and acts and functions as such,
19 and that's what the Grand Lodge is, is a not-for-profit
20 company?

21 A That's part of it, yes.

22 Q What's the other part, then?

23 A The other part is the -- I want to say the word;
24 let me think of the word -- is the fraternal side of the
25 matter, of the fraternity. I have to handle fraternity

1 matters, as well as corporate matters.

2 Q Then I'll go back to my original question: So,
3 are there two separate Grand Lodges, or are they all still
4 fraternal and corporate, all underneath the corporate
5 letterhead?

6 A It's all under the Grand Lodge of Florida Free
7 and Accepted Masons.

8 Q Corporate or --

9 A Both.

10 Q Are there two separate entities?

11 I guess that's what I'm trying to --

12 A No. One entity; different functions within that
13 entity.

14 Q And the one entity is the corporation?

15 A Yes; one of them is.

16 Q And as a corporation formed under the laws of
17 Florida, it owes, essentially, a duty, a responsibility to
18 comply with the laws of Florida; does it not?

19 A Not necessarily.

20 Q What law of the State of Florida, as a
21 corporation, is it entitled to ignore?

22 A I don't know that answer.

23 Q But you believe there are laws of the State of
24 Florida that the corporation, Grand Lodge of the State of
25 Florida, can ignore or not comply with?

1 A I can't answer that.

2 Q Can the corporate entity, either through your
3 authority or power or another officer's power, violate any
4 member's civil rights?

5 A Depends on -- and I can't answer that thoroughly,
6 because I don't know all the functions of our Digest and
7 Masonic law, but there may be conflicts.

8 Q And again, civil rights are both federal and
9 State laws; are they not?

10 A They are.

11 Q And are you suggesting that the Grand Lodge of
12 Florida is somehow above those federal and civil laws?

13 A No.

14 Q So could we agree that the corporation and the
15 entity that's a corporation, Grand Lodge, is responsible
16 for maintaining and carrying out and preserving civil
17 rights of its members and individuals therein?

18 A No, I will not say that.

19 Q And why not?

20 A Because there may be conflicts, as I said before.

21 Q Well, what happens, then, when there's a
22 conflict?

23 A Explain.

24 Q Well, I don't know. You said that there may be
25 conflicts.

1 What would you consider a conflict of someone's
2 civil rights as an individual in something to do with
3 Freemasonry?

4 A Like I said, it depends on what the laws of our
5 Constitution are and our Digest of Masonic Law. When you
6 become a Mason, there are certain laws that you follow that
7 are a part of our Masonic Digest, and there may be
8 conflicts. I don't know all civil law, so I don't know all
9 of Masonic law, either.

10 Q Well, which do you believe -- having,
11 essentially, been in government service for well over 46
12 years -- which do you believe controls, then; Masonic law
13 or federal and State law?

14 A Explain your question. I don't know what your
15 question is.

16 Q Well, and again, we haven't been able to really
17 figure out what conflicts you're talking about. I'm just
18 saying, if there's a conflict between -- and you haven't
19 been able to point one out, but if there's a conflict
20 between a member's civil rights and Masonic law, which
21 trumps, essentially; the Constitution of the United States
22 and the Constitution of the State of Florida and its
23 statutes or Masonic law?

24 A That would have to be for a judge to decide. I
25 can't decide that.

1 Q In essence, it would be a legal decision, then?

2 A Yes.

3 Q Now, when I set your deposition, I had asked for
4 a number of exhibits.

5 Did you get a Notice of the deposition, and did
6 you do any research on what those exhibits were?

7 A I got a phone call yesterday.

8 Q Okay. You only got a call on it yesterday?

9 A Yes.

10 Q Okay.

11 A That it was going to be scheduled for today.

12 MR. SANDERS: Okay.

13 MR. DOUBERLEY: The documents were retrieved by
14 the Grand Secretary, and reviewed, and found to be all
15 within the penal file, which is not -- it's
16 confidential.

17 MR. LYNN: Except the letters to the Lodge.

18 MR. DOUBERLEY: Yes; certain letters have already
19 been produced. But the only thing that fits within
20 the descriptions of what's there were within the penal
21 file. For example, there were not exchanges of
22 e-mails and things like that in the background that
23 were not a part of the penal proceeding, so my
24 client has --

25 MR. SANDERS: What has been produced within the

1 last 24 hours?

2 MR. DOUBERLEY: Well, nothing, because we've
3 produced anything that's producible in prior --

4 MR. LYNN: We have those two things that he was
5 supposed to bring with him.

6 MR. DOUBERLEY: What things?

7 MR. LYNN: The letters.

8 THE WITNESS: Yeah.

9 (Witness tendering documents to Mr. Douberley.)

10 MR. DOUBERLEY: Well, they have -- so these are
11 outside the penal file?

12 MR. LYNN: Yes, those are outside the penal file.

13 MR. DOUBERLEY: Those documents are outside the
14 penal file.

15 (Mr. Douberley tendering documents to
16 Mr. Sanders.)

17 BY MR. SANDERS:

18 Q Did you do the research to pull this, Most
19 Worshipful?

20 A No, I did not.

21 Q Who did the research?

22 A The research was pulled by the Grand Secretary
23 out of the files. I have copies of them home someplace.

24 Q And just for the record's clarity, when you say
25 Richard did that, could you give the full name of Richard?

1 A Richard Lynn, the Grand Secretary, pulled it out
2 of the files.

3 Q And you only had 24 hours' notice on that?

4 A Twenty-four hours' notice that it was going to be
5 held today. I heard -- I didn't know the questions till
6 yesterday; correct.

7 Q Okay. Do you recall approximately what time you
8 found that information out, or what you were -- documents
9 were being requested?

10 A No, I don't.

11 Q Because this was noticed out on November 12th,
12 2013, and you hadn't heard anything until just yesterday on
13 this?

14 A Is that for the questions?

15 Q It's for the --

16 A I don't know what you have there.

17 Q This is just a copy of your Notice of Deposition.
18 Down at the bottom, it has the date, and then the requested
19 documents are on the second page.

20 (Mr. Sanders tendering document to witness.)

21 A (Witness perusing document.)

22 That's what I received today. I'm not even sure
23 it's the same thing.

24 MR. DOUBERLEY: Yeah, it's the Notice.

25 The noticing of this depo was all handled through

1 Counsel. He wasn't served with anything directly.

2 MR. SANDERS: I'm just trying to figure out when
3 he got actual notice of anything he was supposed to
4 produce. That's all.

5 MR. DOUBERLEY: He got it after I was preparing
6 to make the trip and saw a second page on the Notice,
7 which I -- had not been brought to my attention
8 before. But everything -- the search was done, and I
9 think we have done everything we can to survey
10 documents that would fit within your request.

11 MR. SANDERS: Is that an objection or --

12 MR. DOUBERLEY: Since you didn't subpoena him,
13 and you didn't serve him with something that he would
14 have to have prior notice of, I was explaining to you
15 how it is that he got late notice of that. And I'm
16 telling you that the corporation did the search,
17 because he is the Grand Master.

18 MR. LYNN: And all his records are here.

19 MR. DOUBERLEY: And his records are here, and
20 that's how we collected what it is we reviewed, to see
21 if there was anything outside the penal file. He
22 concluded there was not.

23 MR. SANDERS: Why do you believe the penal file
24 is exempt from production?

25 MR. DOUBERLEY: Because my client says it is.

1 It's one of those restrictions on one's otherwise
2 civil rights.

3 MR. SANDERS: And you're refusing to provide the
4 penal file today that would comply with this?

5 MR. DOUBERLEY: On another member, absolutely;
6 for a proceeding that is ongoing, absolutely. They're
7 not public knowledge. You don't represent him, and
8 this is not about him, the person that you want
9 records on. And everything else having to do with
10 Walter Hammond has been produced already, so --

11 MR. SANDERS: Do you want to provide the Court
12 with some kind of legal argument as to why you believe
13 that that's not discoverable?

14 MR. DOUBERLEY: We'll provide the Court an
15 in-camera copy of what we've retrieved, and the Court
16 can decide if it's something that should be produced.

17 MR. SANDERS: And you didn't seek that before 24
18 hours before today, so that we could get that heard
19 and --

20 MR. DOUBERLEY: Well, you may not want to pursue
21 it, once you ask the questions that would get to the
22 gist of what you're here for.

23 MR. SANDERS: I'm just going to reserve on the
24 record, pending a motion to compel, the continued
25 deposition of Most Worshipful Griffith, to respond to

1 the Notice with documents and to testify with regards
2 to those.

3 BY MR. SANDERS:

4 Q There's been two documents produced today. One
5 is a copy of a letter. It looks like a file copy, because
6 there's two holes at the top, where it's been, I guess,
7 hole-punched to go into a file. It's dated July 18th,
8 2013, from the -- or to the Honorable Reynaldo C. Viray,
9 Worshipful Master at Albert J. Russell Lodge, with a
10 reference to Walter M. Hammond's reinstatement. And it
11 would appear to have a signature down at the bottom of it;
12 and, below the signature, it says "Danny R. Griffith."

13 (Mr. Sanders tendering document to witness.)

14 Have you seen this before?

15 A Yes.

16 Q And is that your letter?

17 A Yes, it is.

18 Q And is that your signature on the letter?

19 A That's correct.

20 Q Did you type that, or did you dictate it?

21 A I dictated it. By "dictating," if you mean did I
22 have someone else type it, yes.

23 Q What precipitated this letter? And just for
24 explanation, if that's confusing, why was this letter
25 written?

1 A Why was the letter written? It was written to
2 find out if the Lodge of which Walter Hammond had been -- I
3 don't know the word I want to say, but to find out if the
4 Lodge wanted to proceed with reinstating him into their
5 Lodge.

6 Q And again, what precipitated your sending this
7 letter? Did you go and review the file and find something
8 that you thought was --

9 A No, that was not done. We were reviewing Penal
10 Affairs files, because it was the start of the year, and I
11 was reviewing those, and I wanted to find out if the Lodge
12 could -- wanted to reinstate him in their Lodge.

13 Q What's the standard procedure for reinstatement
14 after a suspension?

15 A Depends on what type of suspension it is.

16 Q Well, in this case --

17 A If it's a definite suspension or an indefinite
18 suspension, and so forth.

19 Q Well, in this case, I'll try to reserve it to the
20 facts of my client, Walter Hammond. In this case, it's an
21 indefinite suspension.

22 A That's right.

23 Q So what, to your knowledge, is the procedure for
24 that?

25 A The case -- if a case is still outstanding when I

1 took over as Grand Master, then I felt it was my duty to
2 review the case and see what -- what I thought about the
3 case.

4 Q And what -- if you can, describe what authority
5 you have with regards to making decisions with regards to
6 previously handled penal cases.

7 A There are many in the law -- the laws of our
8 Digest, that I have the right to do certain things, and one
9 of them is to review outstanding cases. If they come
10 before me with a letter, and ask me to review it, I review
11 it, and there are certain things that I have the power
12 vested in me, as Grand Master, to make decisions on.

13 Q And one of the decisions is to send letters to
14 the Lodge?

15 A If I want -- the possibility of somebody to be
16 reinstated, yes.

17 Q So, is that a proper procedure which would allow
18 for, in this case, Mr. Hammond to be reinstated without him
19 filing a Petition for Reinstatement with the Lodge?

20 A No. This letter was to find out if the Lodge
21 wanted to receive a Petition from him for reinstatement.
22 There's two things that have to take place; one is that the
23 Lodge has to agree that they will accept a Petition, and
24 that's what this letter was for.

25 Q And do you know or recall what part of the Digest

1 that is --

2 A Not without going back and reviewing it, no, I
3 don't.

4 Q But it's your understanding, then, that the
5 Digest has a provision wherein they can make a choice
6 whether or not to receive a Petition or not, or was this
7 something that you granted them by virtue of this letter?

8 A No. That's correct; they have that right.

9 Q But you can't recall that?

10 A No. I believe it's -- is this the particular
11 letter here? I believe it refers to the two sections of
12 the Digest, which are in Chapter 44 of the Digest.

13 Q Now, the first statement here says: A review of
14 our Grand Lodge files reflects correspondence referencing
15 the reinstatement of Walter M. Hammond, from Albert J.
16 Russell Lodge, No. 126.

17 What correspondence are you talking about?

18 A In the Penal Affairs file, okay, there is -- this
19 was requested several years back, I believe, and I can't
20 remember the exact dates, but there was a notice that they
21 requested to -- reinstatement into the Lodge, and I
22 followed up on that. That's what I followed up on.

23 Q Okay. And who wrote the letter or the
24 correspondence that you're referring to?

25 A I don't remember. I believe it came from

1 Mr. Hammond. I'm not positive of that. I can't remember
2 without refreshing my mind in the file.

3 Q Now, in Exhibit A of your deposition request, it
4 says: Regarding Most Worshipful Danny Griffith's letter of
5 July 18th, 2013 -- that's the one we're talking about, sent
6 to Honorable Reynaldo C. --

7 Is it Viray? It's V-I-R-A-Y. I hate to slander
8 people's name.

9 A "Viray," it appears to me.

10 Q -- Worshipful Master of Albert J. Russell Lodge,
11 No. 126, which made the decision to permit Albert Russell
12 to proceed with the process. I asked, down here, for
13 letters and correspondence.

14 Do you have the correspondence that you've
15 referenced here with you today?

16 A No.

17 Q Okay. That correspondence doesn't affect anybody
18 else's penal file, does it?

19 A No.

20 Q Okay. That only affects Walter Hammond's penal
21 file, right?

22 A I believe so.

23 Q Okay. Well, you can't ask them for direction.

24 A I didn't ask anybody for direction.

25 MR. DOUBERLEY: Well, of course he can. He's my

1 client. And we've given you the penal file. You act
2 like you've never heard of any of this now.

3 MR. SANDERS: You know, the penal file is huge.

4 MR. DOUBERLEY: I know. That's the problem.

5 MR. SANDERS: He references one correspondence,
6 which would have been easy to produce, had he been
7 given enough notice, less than -- you know, I'm not
8 faulting him, sir. You know, I never notice my
9 clients 24 hours before their deposition of things
10 they have to bring. So that's on you; not on me.

11 MR. DOUBERLEY: Okay. We don't --

12 BY MR. SANDERS:

13 Q So you don't have that correspondence with you
14 today?

15 A No.

16 Q And you don't know who it was from or who wrote
17 it, or anything like that?

18 A I do not recall.

19 Q Needless to say, you haven't had an opportunity
20 to review that, then, before today's deposition?

21 A I reviewed it originally; yes.

22 Q But that was back in July, right?

23 A That's correct.

24 Q But not before today's deposition, other than
25 back in July?

1 A Yeah; right. Within the last two days, no, I
2 have not reviewed it.

3 MR. SANDERS: Okay. Again, I'm going to just do
4 a motion on the record to reserve with questions with
5 regards to the correspondence, whenever it's produced
6 at the next deposition.

7 BY MR. SANDERS:

8 Q Okay. So you've reviewed the correspondence that
9 was dated October 4th, 2011, addressed then to Grand Master
10 Jim Harris?

11 A That's correct.

12 Q And it says it was requesting permission to
13 undertake procedures on balloting for a Petition for
14 Reinstatement of Walter Hammond.

15 So was there a Petition for Reinstatement before
16 Russell Lodge back in October of 2011?

17 A As near as I can remember -- and I can't remember
18 the dates or anything else, like I said, out of the file,
19 but it was -- when I read the file, the question came up as
20 to whether he could be reinstated in the Lodge. And that's
21 what I based that on.

22 Q Okay. But is the question based on being
23 reinstated or procedures with regards to the Petition for
24 Reinstatement he filed?

25 A Correct; that's the way -- that's the way it has

1 to go.

2 Q And I guess that was my point: There has to be a
3 Petition for Reinstatement, doesn't there?

4 A That's correct.

5 Q How long is a Petition for Reinstatement good
6 for? Does it have a limitation?

7 A Not to my knowledge.

8 Q Isn't it true the Digest limits consideration on
9 a Petition for --

10 A It may be. Without reviewing the Digest, I
11 cannot tell you.

12 Q If there is a limitation on the Petition, do you
13 have the right, as Grand Master, to waive that limitation;
14 and, if so, is that what you did by this letter?

15 A No. This letter was to Albert J. Russell Lodge,
16 to see if they wanted to receive a Petition. That's what
17 this letter was for.

18 Q Then I'll sort of reverse the question: Is that
19 standard operating procedure under Masonic law, that a
20 Lodge must get permission from the Grand Master before it
21 can receive a Petition?

22 A Not necessarily from the Grand Master, I don't
23 believe. I don't remember. As I said, without having the
24 Digest and reviewing back exactly what it says, I can't
25 tell you that, if there's a limitation or not.

1 Q Let me just -- I guess I'll take it sort of
2 backward, then: When I was asking you if there's a
3 limitation on a Petition for Reinstatement, you've quoted
4 down here 44.72.

5 I'll give you a second to read that.

6 A (Witness perusing document.)

7 Q Does that help, in any way, as to whether or not
8 there's a limitation on a Petition for Reinstatement?

9 A No, it doesn't.

10 Q It doesn't?

11 A This is saying, if he was rejected by the Lodge,
12 he has -- he can appeal to do that one year -- after one
13 year. That's my interpretation of it. And this, again, is
14 not the Petition. It's to find out if the Lodge will
15 receive a Petition.

16 Q That section of whether or not they're desirous
17 to receive a Petition is not listed in here, like the other
18 two sections.

19 A (Witness perusing document.)

20 In other words, what you're asking is, does this
21 letter have a limitation? Is that what you're asking me?
22 I don't understand what you're saying.

23 Q No. I'm just saying, we had talked earlier, and
24 you had said that there's a section of the Digest, but you
25 don't have it in front of you, which allows a Lodge, on its

1 own, without a Petition, to determine whether or not it
2 wants to receive a Petition.

3 A That's correct. That's Chapter 44 of the Digest.

4 Q Okay. But you --

5 A I don't know what it says right now, without
6 having it in front of me.

7 Q But the section that would allow it is in Section
8 44?

9 A It should be; yes.

10 Q Again, I'm still looking at the first paragraph,
11 and it's talking about the correspondence of October 4th,
12 2011, which was addressed to the then Grand Master Jim
13 Harris, requesting permission to undertake procedures on
14 balloting for a Petition for Reinstatement of Walter
15 Hammond, in accordance with 44.76 of the Digest.

16 A Uh-huh.

17 Q So we don't have that correspondence today,
18 either, do we?

19 A I don't know whether you have it or not.

20 Q You didn't bring it with you today?

21 A I did not bring it with me.

22 MR. DOUBERLEY: I don't read this request as
23 relating to that correspondence. It only makes
24 reference to one letter, July 18th, and nothing
25 preceding that.

1 You're developing areas of inquiry that can be
2 pursued, but I honestly did not --

3 MR. SANDERS: I'm just going to object on the
4 record. You're going back to your typical pattern of
5 making long speaking objections.

6 MR. DOUBERLEY: I'm not making an objection.

7 MR. SANDERS: Well --

8 MR. DOUBERLEY: I'm explaining to you that the
9 witness is not responsible for responding to your
10 Notice. I am. That's the rationale that went behind
11 Richard and I and what we produced out of their
12 records.

13 And if you don't want to hear it, then you can go
14 on with whenever you're doing, but I'm telling you we
15 didn't read this as including -- in fairness to the
16 witness, none of us read this as including those types
17 of documents, or we would have pulled them again.

18 BY MR. SANDERS:

19 CQ1 Most Worshipful Griffith, did you have any input
20 into pulling the documents which were produced today?

21 MR. DOUBERLEY: That's attorney-client privilege.
22 Don't answer that question.

23 MR. SANDERS: Certify the question.

24 (Thereupon, the question last-above referred to
25 was certified by the reporter.)

1 BY MR. SANDERS:

2 Q Did you have any hands-on participation in
3 pulling any of the documents for your deposition today?

4 A (No response.)

5 Q Did you understand the question?

6 A Yes.

7 Q And your answer would be?

8 A No answer.

9 Q Why won't you answer that question?

10 A My lawyer has advised me not to answer that
11 question.

12 Q He did not object to that question. I rephrased
13 the question.

14 MR. DOUBERLEY: Well, the answer must be that the
15 context is all within our discussions.

16 So, outside of what we did together, obviously,
17 he did not have any hands-on production.

18 MR. SANDERS: Are you testifying for him again?

19 MR. DOUBERLEY: I'm explaining why --

20 MR. SANDERS: You're not explaining.

21 Motion for sanctions.

22 MR. DOUBERLEY: Good; yeah. How many times have
23 you said that?

24 MR. SANDERS: Well, how many times have you done
25 it?

1 MR. DOUBERLEY: I don't know.

2 MR. SANDERS: It seems to be your modus operandi,
3 even though case law and the law says that you're not
4 supposed to.

5 MR. DOUBERLEY: Yes, Your Honor.

6 MR. SANDERS: So are you instructing him not to
7 answer that question?

8 MR. DOUBERLEY: No. He didn't answer because
9 it's obviously within the privileged communication.

10 MR. SANDERS: I didn't ask him about a single
11 thing that you and he talked about. I asked him what
12 participation he had in researching these records.

13 MR. DOUBERLEY: Outside of our discussions, after
14 I arrived today and you arrived, did you participate
15 in retrieving any of the documents?

16 Let's try that.

17 THE WITNESS: Yes.

18 MR. DOUBERLEY: Okay. That, you can answer.

19 BY MR. SANDERS:

20 Q Okay. And what did you do?

21 A I brought them up here; put them in my file,
22 brought them up here for you.

23 Q Did you go into the file and pull the
24 information? Did you pull the files, or you just were
25 handed these documents and brought them up?

1 A I wasn't handed anything.

2 Q Okay. How did you receive these two pieces of
3 paper?

4 A They were on my desk this morning to bring up.

5 Q And prior to them being on your desk this
6 morning, did you, personally, go to any of the files and
7 pull anything out of it or do any research on them?

8 A No, not today.

9 Q You may have, back sometime prior to July 18th of
10 2013?

11 A Correct.

12 Q But since then, you have not?

13 A That's correct.

14 What's the date? July 18th?

15 Q Now, the next paragraph says: It is my decision
16 (indicating) --

17 A I see it.

18 Q -- based upon review of said correspondence, to
19 permit Albert J. Russell Lodge, No. 126, to proceed with
20 the process of reinstatement of Walter Hammond, in
21 accordance with Regulation 44.76.

22 What did you mean by that?

23 A Exactly what it says.

24 Q So they were allowed to proceed with reinstating
25 him -- again, linking it to paragraph one -- based on the

1 Petition for Reinstatement?

2 A With the process; they're to proceed with the
3 process.

4 Q Of reinstatement; not ballot on whether or not to
5 receive a Petition for Reinstatement, but to proceed with
6 reinstatement.

7 Isn't that what it says?

8 A No, that's not what it says.

9 Q Well, could you read it into the record for me,
10 then. Just the first sentence is fine for right now.

11 A You just read it: With the process of the
12 reinstatement.

13 Q And your interpretation of "process of
14 reinstatement" means?

15 A It means that, if the Lodge elects to receive a
16 Petition, if they elect to do that, they may do so.
17 That -- but the Lodge did not opt to do that.

18 Q It doesn't say that, specifically, does it?

19 A Not in this letter. It does say "process," and
20 that is the process as defined in 44.46 -- or .76.

21 Q Well, and again -- and I'm looking at 44.76. And
22 I'll just read that into the record, and then I'll ask you
23 a question on it. And you've got it down here, in the
24 letter.

25 A Uh-huh.

1 Q It says: When the Grand Lodge, either in the
2 exercise of its original jurisdiction or on appeal, imposes
3 or affirms a penalty of indefinite suspension or expulsion,
4 no action in respect to reinstatement shall be taken by a
5 Particular Lodge without express written permission or
6 consent of the Grand Lodge or its authority.

7 A Correct.

8 Q Okay. I assume, from paragraph one, that that's
9 what the correspondence was about that was sent, back on
10 October 4th, 2011, requesting permission to move on Walter
11 Hammond's Petition for Reinstatement.

12 A Let me read this.

13 (Witness perusing document.)

14 I gave them permission to act upon this.

15 Q And again --

16 A On the process.

17 Q I don't want to try to be redundant, but I just
18 want to make the record clear: When you say "on the
19 process," were you talking about the original Petition for
20 Reinstatement mentioned in paragraph one?

21 Because you don't mention anything in this
22 letter, anywhere, about balloting on whether to receive a
23 Petition.

24 A This Chapter 44-point -- Chapter 44 of the Digest
25 tells them the process of what they go through, and this is

1 the process. I told them to proceed with the process for
2 reinstatement. The process is to -- the Lodge must vote to
3 receive a Petition. That's the first thing. If they vote
4 to receive the Petition, then they do the -- the Petition
5 then goes through its normal process.

6 Q What rule says that, as the procedure?

7 A Chapter 44 of the Digest.

8 Q So, somewhere in Chapter 44 is a section that
9 spells out that they must request permission from the Grand
10 Lodge before even receiving a Petition? Or does it say
11 that, after receiving a Petition, as what originally
12 happened --

13 A I cannot tell you. I don't have Chapter 44 of
14 the Digest in front of me to re-read.

15 Q But you're confident that that section is in
16 there somewhere?

17 A Chapter 44 is -- of the Digest is concerned with
18 penal affairs. That would be where I would expect it to
19 be.

20 Q And it will say that the Lodge ballots first and
21 requests permission --

22 A I can't tell you. I don't have the Digest in
23 front of me.

24 Q Well, what if the Digest essentially says that,
25 once the Lodge receives a Petition for Reinstatement, then

1 it has to ask the Grand Lodge for permission to move
2 forward?

3 A I don't know what Chapter 44 says. I can't tell
4 you that. I don't know the answer.

5 Q But you apparently knew the answer when you
6 drafted --

7 A I read the chapter, and that's what I went by
8 when I wrote this letter.

9 Q Okay. But nowhere in the letter does it say that
10 they're to ballot whether or not to receive the Petition.

11 A It says "the process."

12 Q And the process --

13 A I've explained it to you, as I understand the
14 process.

15 Q Okay. Now, the next sentence says: This process
16 will initially require the Lodge to vote to proceed at a
17 stated communication.

18 What do you mean by "the Lodge will vote to
19 proceed"; on the Petition for Reinstatement back in 2011 or
20 to receive a Petition?

21 A To receive a Petition.

22 Q But it doesn't say that in that sentence, does
23 it?

24 MR. DOUBERLEY: Objection; argumentative.

25 MR. SANDERS: Your attorney can make short,

1 simple statements.

2 MR. DOUBERLEY: Like I just did.

3 MR. SANDERS: Like he just did.

4 MR. DOUBERLEY: But they're not intended to guide
5 you in your answers.

6 MR. SANDERS: But that doesn't mean you can't
7 answer the question.

8 MR. DOUBERLEY: Right.

9 MR. SANDERS: It will be something he and I will
10 deal with the judge on.

11 MR. DOUBERLEY: Correct.

12 MR. SANDERS: Can you answer that question, or do
13 you want the court reporter to read it back?

14 THE WITNESS: Read it back.

15 (Thereupon, the question last-above referred to
16 was read by the reporter.)

17 BY MR. SANDERS:

18 Q I'll just restate the question.

19 When you said this process will initially require
20 the Lodge to vote to proceed at a stated communication,
21 that sentence does not say how to proceed or whether or not
22 it's on a Petition to vote to receive a Petition, does it?

23 A Depends on how you interpret the letter. I
24 thought it was very specific when I wrote it.

25 Q Well, I'm just trying to follow the logical

1 course of your letter, and you've admitted several times
2 that it is you that drafted it and noticed it.

3 The next sentence says: In the event of a
4 favorable vote -- well, I don't want to paraphrase it; I
5 lost a word there -- in the event a favorable vote is
6 obtained to proceed, I will require a copy of the due
7 notice to the membership be filed with my office a minimum
8 of two weeks prior to the final vote.

9 How can there be a final vote if there's not even
10 a Petition that's been balloted on?

11 A This is referring to a Petition that would be
12 received after this letter -- or after this vote of the
13 Lodge.

14 Q And I'm not trying to argue with you.

15 If you could, just read your last sentence on
16 that paragraph, or just read it with me: "In the event of
17 a favorable vote..."

18 I'm assuming that means the vote you're referring
19 to in the sentence above.

20 A Where are you in the letter? Which paragraph are
21 you on?

22 Q I'm still on the second paragraph.

23 A Okay.

24 Q It would be the last sentence in that paragraph.
25 It says, "In the event a favorable vote is

1 obtained to proceed..."

2 When you said "in the event a favorable vote...to
3 proceed," are you not referring to the vote, where -- it
4 was just one sentence above that -- "this process will
5 initially require the Lodge to vote to proceed"?

6 A That's correct.

7 Q Okay. But there's no Petition. We've
8 established that, based on what your thinking is; correct?

9 A That's correct.

10 Q And don't we have to have a Petition in order to
11 proceed for reinstatement?

12 A After this vote is taken.

13 Q And that's why -- I'll just say I'm confused.
14 Your very next paragraph, which is linked to the first one,
15 or the -- not the first one, but the one in the middle of
16 that paragraph -- it says: In the event of a favorable
17 vote to proceed, I require that a copy of the due notice of
18 the membership be filed with my office a minimum of two
19 weeks prior to the final vote.

20 A Correct.

21 Q Okay. So what are they proceeding on after the
22 favorable vote, if there's no Petition in front of the
23 Lodge?

24 A They would not proceed any further.

25 Q Well, okay. What did you mean, then, by that

1 language?

2 A Well, that's my language to explain that I would
3 like to have a copy of the actions of the Lodge if there is
4 a Petition submitted, and so forth, to go further. I'd
5 like to know what that is. I'd like to have it in my
6 files.

7 Q Does it specifically say that?

8 A Depends on your interpretation or the lodge's
9 interpretation.

10 Q Well, then can we agree, then, that it takes some
11 interpretation, because the language is not plain and clear
12 as to what the direction is?

13 A No.

14 Q We can't agree on that?

15 A No.

16 Q Okay. You believe that the Lodge understood
17 that, if they voted, according to your description, that
18 they can accept a Petition, that they could move and notice
19 the membership of a final vote without a Petition?

20 A I don't understand your question.

21 Q And I'm trying to do the best I can, based on how
22 this is written. I'm asking it strictly on how it's
23 written.

24 A How it's written is how it's written. I think
25 I've explained enough about how it was written.

1 Q So, when the last sentence says, "a copy of the
2 due notice to the membership," your interpretation of that
3 is that that means Petition for Reinstatement?

4 A No; that the Lodge has agreed to accept the
5 Petition. That's the process.

6 Q What Petition?

7 A If there is a Petition submitted, the Lodge will
8 accept that Petition, not the answer of how they're going
9 to vote on it or anything else; they will accept the
10 Petition.

11 Q So, if a Petition comes in -- I'm just trying to
12 understand -- let's just say Russell Lodge votes, and they
13 approve to receive a Petition.

14 A Correct.

15 Q So there's no other votes on that, except for a
16 final vote?

17 A On what?

18 Q On the Petition for Reinstatement.

19 A The Petition for Reinstatement then would have to
20 be submitted, and they would receive it. However they vote
21 on it, that's up to the Lodge.

22 Q I'm looking -- again, you've quoted or cited
23 44.72 in your letter. I'll just read it into the record.
24 It says: A Petition for Reinstatement from an indefinite
25 suspension may be filed with the secretary and voted upon

1 at a stated communication, after being presented at a
2 previous stated communication, but the membership must have
3 due notice.

4 So this Petition would have to go before the
5 Lodge twice, once at a stated communication, and then vote
6 at the next one, if it's filed?

7 A It would have to follow its usual course in the
8 Lodge, which entails being received, being referred to a
9 Petitions Committee, having a background investigation
10 done, having an investigation committee investigate it,
11 report to the Lodge; it would have to be read in the Lodge,
12 and then the Lodge would have to vote in it, as in all
13 Petitions.

14 Q Now, in that paragraph, the last sentence says,
15 "but the membership must have due notice."

16 A That's correct.

17 Q Is that the due notice that you're referring to
18 in the second paragraph, which says: In the event a
19 favorable vote is obtained to proceed, I require a copy of
20 the due notice to the membership to be filed?

21 A I think I've explained it enough.

22 Q I just want to clarify the record.

23 A I think you've clarified it enough.

24 Q Well, I have to insist you answer the question.

25 A I've answered the questions. I'm not going to

1 answer any more questions on the letter. I've done it to
2 the best of my ability, and that's all I can do.

3 Q So you don't know whether or not the due notice
4 mentioned in paragraph two is the reference to the due
5 notice in the Section 44.72 that you quoted in the letter?

6 A I refuse to answer any further questions
7 concerning this letter.

8 MR. SANDERS: Okay. Motion to compel with
9 regards to testimony; unfortunately, a motion for
10 sanctions with regards to attorney's fees and costs
11 with regards to the deposition; reserve for further
12 questioning on this letter.

13 We'll make the letter Exhibit 1.

14 (Plaintiffs Exhibit No. 1 was marked for
15 identification.)

16 BY MR. SANDERS:

17 Q Now, the only other letter that you've produced
18 today is a letter of August 6, 2013. It looks like it's
19 from Albert J. Russell Lodge, to you, with regards to
20 Walter Hammond. It's a short letter. It just says: Dear
21 Most Worshipful Danny Griffith, At our stated meeting on
22 August 6th, 2013, your letter dated July 18th, 2013 -- the
23 one that we just were talking about -- was read, and a
24 ballot was spread to proceed with the process of
25 reinstatement of Walter M. Hammond. After the balloting

1 was complete, it was found that the ballot was dark because
2 of the numerous black cubes. I declared the ballot closed.
3 Therefore, I am reporting to you Walter Hammond's ballot to
4 be reinstated was rejected.

5 (Mr. Sanders exhibiting document to witness.)

6 Do you recall receiving that letter?

7 A Yes, I do.

8 Q Okay. Do you know what they were balloting on at
9 that point in time?

10 A Balloting on --

11 Q Your letter?

12 A That's correct.

13 Q There was no Petition that they were balloting
14 on, that you know of?

15 A No, not to my knowledge.

16 MR. SANDERS: Make that No. 2.

17 (Plaintiffs' Exhibit No. 2 was marked for
18 identification.)

19 BY MR. SANDERS:

20 Q I'm just going to read this request. I read the
21 previous request into the record. Request No. 2 was:
22 Since taking office after being elected Grand Master, but
23 to include any qualifying material before becoming Grand
24 Master, please provide any and all notes, phone messages,
25 e-mails, letters, correspondence --

1 (Mr. Douberley tendering document to witness.)

2 -- handwritten notes or typewritten transcripts
3 of any written or verbal conversations between the
4 Defendant's agent, Most Worshipful Danny Griffith, and all
5 other persons in which the topic or purpose of such
6 communication was Walter M. Hammond or any of the
7 surrounding issues concerning Walter M. Hammond, to
8 include, but not limited to, his Masonic charges, his
9 sentence, his appeal, his Petition for Reinstatement, and
10 all other Masonic matters, with the exception of
11 communications with Counsel for the Defendant, Grand Lodge.

12 Did you see and read that?

13 A Yes, I did.

14 Q Did you do any search for such information?

15 A Yes. I have no further information.

16 Q So you don't have any other e-mails,
17 correspondence or anything like that?

18 A No.

19 Q No. 3 asks for: Since taking office after being
20 elected Grand Master, but to include any qualifying
21 material before becoming Grand Master, please provide any
22 and all notes, phone messages, e-mails, letters,
23 correspondence, handwritten notes or typewritten
24 transcripts of any written or verbal conversations between
25 the Defendant's agent, Most Worshipful Danny Griffith, and

1 all other persons in which the topic, subject or purpose of
2 such communication was the preferring of Masonic charges
3 of -- or the possibility of preferring Masonic charges
4 against Plaintiffs' witness, John R. Stokes, or against any
5 other witnesses, supporters or individuals who signed a
6 Petition for relief or other legislation on behalf of or
7 for the benefit of Walter M. Hammond.

8 Did you receive that?

9 A I received this; yes.

10 Q Did you do any research and have any documents
11 that comply with that request?

12 A No, I don't.

13 Q You're familiar that Masonic charges have been
14 brought against John R. Stokes?

15 A Correct.

16 Q You don't have any paperwork with regards to
17 that, in your possession or under your purview?

18 A Not in my possession, with me, no.

19 Q Well, I'll clarify the question, then: You don't
20 have within your purview or access to paperwork, or does
21 none exist?

22 A No; it exists, the charges against Robert Stokes,
23 Robbie Stokes. I don't have them with me.

24 Q Essentially, that's what Paragraph 3 was
25 requesting for.

1 So you do have material --

2 A Yes, sir.

3 Q -- with regards to that?

4 A There is material in the file.

5 Q What was the purpose of filing Masonic charges
6 against Robbie Stokes at this particular point in time?

7 A Is this -- are we doing Robbie Stokes' trial,
8 or -- I mean depositions, or are we doing depositions for
9 Walter Hammond? It's a question I have, because I don't
10 know.

11 Q Robbie Stokes is considered a witness for Walter
12 Hammond.

13 A Okay.

14 Q And, as a witness, I have an entitlement to
15 inquire as to why, at this point in time, in the middle of
16 his litigation -- Walter Hammond's litigation -- Masonic
17 charges are being brought against Robbie Stokes.

18 A Okay.

19 MR. DOUBERLEY: I object to the form; predicate.

20 BY MR. SANDERS:

21 Q Do you know why Masonic charges have been filed
22 against Robbie Stokes and why they were brought now, for a
23 matter that apparently occurred back in 2012?

24 MR. DOUBERLEY: That's two different questions.

25 He doesn't have to answer a question -- pick one.

1 "Do you know why charges were brought?" is the
2 first half.

3 THE WITNESS: Yes.

4 MR. DOUBERLEY: Okay.

5 BY MR. SANDERS:

6 Q Why were charges brought against Robbie Stokes?

7 A Because there was a letter brought to my
8 attention -- after Grand Lodge of Florida, when there's
9 legislation brought up that there was a statement in the
10 legislation that conflicted with a letter that had been
11 written on the matter, and it was brought to -- that was
12 brought to my attention, and I felt the charges should
13 be -- proceed against that, to determine the guilt or
14 innocence of the party.

15 Q What's the process of submitting legislation to
16 Grand Lodge?

17 A It has to be submitted before December 31st. I
18 think it's December 31st.

19 Q And after it's submitted, where does it go?

20 A It goes before the Jurisprudence Committee.

21 Q And what do they do with it?

22 A They evaluate it and find out if it's in
23 compliance with our Digest, and so forth.

24 Q So they would read all the language contained in
25 the resolution?

1 A I would hope.

2 Q In this particular situation with the resolution
3 that you're talking about, questionable language, did the
4 Jurisprudence Committee come back with any information,
5 saying we have problems or concerns about the language of
6 this resolution?

7 A I could not tell you that. I was not on
8 Jurisprudence.

9 Q Was there anything in the file for Robbie Stokes
10 which shows that the Jurisprudence either sent a notice
11 to --

12 A I can't tell you that. I was not -- I did not
13 review the file on Robbie Stokes.

14 Q Okay. Would the Jurisprudence Committee have a
15 duty to review such for language, or what are they looking
16 for?

17 A I can't tell you that. I'm not a member of
18 Jurisprudence.

19 Q So you're not familiar with what their procedure
20 would be or --

21 A I've never been a member of the Jurisprudence
22 Committee; no.

23 Q But, as Grand Master, you don't have an
24 understanding of their workings?

25 A This happened -- occurred after the Grand Lodge,

1 after I took office, which was on May 29th.

2 Q But it was in regards to legislation that was
3 previously submitted.

4 A That was the information given to me, and I could
5 go on that information. How the Jurisprudence -- what they
6 talked about, what they discussed, I have no idea.

7 Q So was any of that a consideration when you got
8 charges as to -- well, what happened? What's this
9 legislation all about? How was it reviewed? Did you go
10 into any depth on it?

11 A No, because that -- that's why the charges were
12 brought, so that -- by me, so that the Penal Affairs
13 Committee could investigate it, and there would be -- if
14 there was a requirement for a Masonic trial, that would
15 happen. So somebody else makes those decisions. I did not
16 make that decision. I did not determine guilt or
17 innocence. That is the -- strictly a function of the
18 Masonic Trial Commission.

19 Q Now, these charges are brought by Most Worshipful
20 Joe Fleites?

21 A That's correct; under my direction to bring the
22 charges.

23 Q So you -- you told him to bring the charges?

24 A That's correct.

25 Q Why did you pick him, as opposed to anybody else

1 or doing it, yourself?

2 A Because he is the one that furnished me with the
3 information, on the letter that he had written, and the --
4 I had the information on the -- what do I want to call it?
5 Legislation had been submitted. I felt that there was
6 sufficient information there to bring the charges.

7 Q Are there any other charges pending, that you
8 know of, with regards to that same legislation?

9 A Not that I'm aware of.

10 Q Let me show you a copy of what I have that's
11 related to the charges. And it's several pages. Just for
12 the clarification of the record, it's a seven-page exhibit.

13 (Mr. Sanders tendering document to witness.)

14 A (Witness perusing document.)

15 Without reading everything, yes, I'm familiar
16 with it.

17 Q Now, you said there's no other pending charges --
18 we'll just keep that out, in case you need it.

19 A To my knowledge.

20 Q Has it been indicated or brought to your
21 attention that this legislation, which is essentially the
22 basis of the charges, was reviewed by the Grand Secretary,
23 Most Worshipful Richard Lynn?

24 A Yes. He -- he puts it in the file, sends the
25 letters out to the --

1 Q Well, I'm saying before the legislation was
2 submitted.

3 A No, not that I'm aware of.

4 Q Do you know if Most Worshipful Richard Lynn had
5 any concerns regarding the language in it before it was
6 submitted to the Grand Lodge as a resolution?

7 A Not to my knowledge.

8 Q Is there anything contained in the penal file
9 which would have suggested that there was a question by
10 Most Worshipful Richard Lynn as to the language in the
11 Petition?

12 A I have not researched the penal file of Robbie
13 Stokes.

14 Q Okay. And just so I can get it clear for the
15 record and in my mind, this was brought to your attention
16 by Most Worshipful Joe Fleites?

17 A That's correct.

18 Q And he sent a letter to you? He --

19 A He spoke to me, and then he showed me the letter.

20 Q Well, he showed you the letter or the
21 legislation?

22 A He show me the letter, and I saw the legislation,
23 because I was involved with presenting that legislation to
24 the -- all the districts in Northeast Florida -- North
25 Florida.

1 Q Now, did Robbie Stokes distribute or send this
2 letter out to anybody, besides submitting it to Grand Lodge
3 to go through the normal processes?

4 A As far as a legislation?

5 Q Yeah; as far as the legislation.

6 A The legislation went out to every Lodge in every
7 district in the State of Florida.

8 Q Who sent it out to all the Lodges in the State of
9 Florida?

10 A That would have been dispersed by the Grand Lodge
11 of Florida, in the book that's prepared every year for
12 proposed legislation.

13 Q And if there was a question or a problem
14 concerning legislation, say by the Jurisprudence Committee
15 or some other factor, the legislation wouldn't get
16 distributed, would it?

17 A It depends on whether it is legislation that's
18 going to come before Grand Lodge. There may be legislation
19 that doesn't come -- that would be submitted that doesn't
20 come before Grand Lodge.

21 Q So, for the purposes of today, any distribution
22 of the resolution which is the subject of the charges would
23 have been done by Grand Lodge, after it had gone through
24 the process of the Jurisprudence Committee and any other
25 process before going out; is that correct?

1 A That's correct. Jurisprudence makes their
2 recommendation; that's also published with the -- with the
3 legislation.

4 Q So, besides Jurisprudence, explain to me the
5 process.

6 They make a recommendation to who?

7 A They make a recommendation to all members of
8 the -- who are going to vote on this legislation.

9 Q I'm talking about -- well, how does it get out of
10 Jurisprudence, to get to a position where it's going to be
11 distributed to --

12 A Jurisprudence has a report that they submit after
13 their meeting.

14 Q But who do they submit it to?

15 A They submit it to -- I guess to the Grand Master.

16 Q Which wasn't you at the time?

17 A It was not me.

18 Q So it would be submitted to the Grand Master; and
19 then, would the Grand Master get the final say of whether
20 or not it gets in the package that goes out, or is it
21 another corporate decision?

22 I'm just trying to figure out what the process
23 would be.

24 A As far as I know, it's a Jurisprudence decision
25 of whether to proceed, or the legislation becomes a valid

1 piece of legislation or not. That's what they're there
2 for.

3 Q But it ultimately, then, still goes to whoever
4 the Most Worshipful is for that year?

5 A But he does not have any say in the matter,
6 whether it goes before the Craft or not.

7 Q But, presumably, the Most Worshipful would read
8 it. And, if he has objections, what would he do; send it
9 back to Jurisprudence?

10 A That, I can't tell you. I don't know. I haven't
11 faced that yet, so I don't -- I don't know the answer.

12 Q I know you didn't bring the penal file with you
13 today, even though we have it requested.

14 Was there any letters contained therein which
15 expressed any concerns about the legislation or the
16 language contained in the legislation before it was
17 submitted?

18 (Mr. Lynn leaving room.)

19 A I said I have not reviewed Robbie Stokes' penal
20 file at all. I purposely don't do that unless I have to do
21 it, because I have to be the final say in the matter after
22 it comes out of -- when I review the results of the trial,
23 if there is a trial.

24 Q So I'm going to try to be somewhat succinct, if I
25 can, to kind of group our conversation together:

1 Legislation is submitted by an individual member; it comes
2 in before December 30th, 31st -- whatever --

3 A Right.

4 Q -- it goes to the Jurisprudence Committee --

5 A That's correct.

6 Q -- they make a recommendation; it goes back to
7 Grand Lodge, and may or may not be reviewed; but, based on
8 the recommendation, it gets submitted and distributed?

9 A If it's a valid piece of legislation. The
10 Jurisprudence determines whether it is a valid piece of
11 legislation, first and foremost; and then, as near as I've
12 read, then they determine whether -- they have a vote to
13 determine whether they're going to support that legislation
14 or not support the legislation, and the reasons.

15 Q So, to the best of your knowledge, was this
16 resolution that was submitted by Robbie Stokes considered a
17 valid piece of legislation that could be distributed and --

18 A Yes; and that's why it was distributed.

19 Q And just for, I guess, clarification, based on a
20 statement that you made earlier, this was brought to your
21 attention by Most Worshipful Joe Fleites, and it was your
22 decision that he bring the charges, or was it --

23 A Yes. I told him to go ahead and proceed with
24 generating the charges. I'm the only one that can tell him
25 to proceed with it.

1 Q And then I suppose he submitted those charges
2 which, ultimately, ended up in this package here, that
3 you're looking at?

4 A That's correct.

5 (Mr. Lynn reentering room.)

6 MR. SANDERS: We're going to go ahead and make
7 this No. 3.

8 (Plaintiffs' Exhibit No. 3 was marked for
9 identification.)

10 BY MR. SANDERS:

11 Q I have a letter of September 3rd, 2013, to John
12 R. Stokes, and it would appear to be signed by you.

13 (Mr. Sanders tendering document to witness.)

14 I'll just ask you if you'll look at that and tell
15 me if you've seen that before.

16 A That's correct.

17 Q You can leave that right there for right now.
18 Thank you.

19 When charges are brought, are they typically
20 brought directly to the Grand Master or are they typically
21 brought to the Lodge where the member is at?

22 A It depends on the -- on who is writing -- who is
23 doing the legislation -- I mean bringing the charges and
24 what they're being brought for.

25 Q So there are separate sections underneath the

1 Penal Code 44 that allows for the charges to be presented
2 in one fashion as opposed to another?

3 A Yes. The Lodge may bring charges against
4 somebody, or the Grand Master may bring charges against
5 somebody.

6 Q Well, and I'm not arguing that --

7 A No. I'm just saying --

8 Q -- individuals or Lodges can bring charges. I'm
9 talking about the process.

10 A Right.

11 Q As far as the process is concerned, where are the
12 charges supposed to be brought to?

13 A They can be brought by either one, like I just
14 said.

15 Q Where are the charges brought; i.e., are they
16 filed with the individual's Lodge? Are they filed with the
17 Grand Lodge? And if there are separate sections, all I
18 need to know is what those are or that you, at least,
19 believe that there are separate sections that allow for
20 charges to be filed differently.

21 A Charges may be filed differently; yes.

22 Q Okay. And that would be in Section 44 of the
23 penal code?

24 A I believe that's where it's all at. I can't tell
25 you that without reading it.

1 Q And, to the best of your recollection, there's a
2 section that says charges can be brought directly to Grand
3 Lodge, circumventing the individual's Lodge?

4 A You say "circumventing."

5 Q Well --

6 A I would not say circumventing. There are
7 processes where the Grand Master can bring charges and go
8 directly to the Trial Commission. There are ones where the
9 Lodge may handle it.

10 Q I'm just going to read from 44.13. I know you
11 don't have it in front of you, but it states: The primary
12 responsibility for administration of Masonic justice is the
13 responsibility of a Lodge for the conduct of its own
14 members. It goes further and says: And wherever
15 practicable, charges of un-Masonic conduct shall be filed
16 in the Lodge of the accused member.

17 A Okay.

18 Q That's what it states.

19 Why weren't these charges filed directly with
20 Solomon Lodge?

21 A Very simple: This is something that involved all
22 of the Masons of Florida, not just the individual Lodge; it
23 was brought against all of the Masons of Florida, since
24 this was sent out as legislation to all of the Lodges of
25 Florida and all of the members of Florida; so, therefore, I

1 made the charges and brought them to a Trial Commission
2 for -- for the State of Florida. It's not charges against
3 an individual and a Lodge; it's charges against all of the
4 Masons of Florida -- information for all.

5 Q And again, please don't take me as correcting
6 you, but you said the charges weren't filed against --

7 A That's why I changed my wording. I said it not
8 the way I was thinking it.

9 Q So you're saying the charges were filed by all
10 Masons of Florida --

11 A No.

12 Q -- against one person?

13 A No. I'm saying, I filed the charges --

14 Q Okay.

15 A -- on behalf of all the Masons of Florida.

16 THE WITNESS: Do you all mind if I eat a piece of
17 candy?

18 MR. SANDERS: No, that's fine.

19 (Discussion off the record.)

20 I'm trying to look at -- again, on Page 2 -- the
21 sum and substance. And, here, I'll let you look,
22 since this has already been put into place.

23 MR. DOUBERLEY: I have it. This is the
24 attachment, right?

25 MR. SANDERS: Yes.

1 (Mr. Douberley tendering document to witness.)

2 BY MR. SANDERS:

3 Q The sum and substance -- it's about midway down
4 on Page 2 -- it starts with: "Right Worshipful John R.
5 Stokes..."

6 Do you see that section?

7 A Uh-huh.

8 Q "...submitted a resolution on the procedure
9 legislation, where he stated, in the ninth; whereas, Most
10 Worshipful Jim Harris and Most Worshipful Joe Fleites were
11 asked where in the Digest the Jurisprudence Committee had
12 the authority to prevent a resolution from getting to the
13 Craft and were either unwilling or unable to provide the
14 location..."

15 Is that the sum and substance of the Masonic
16 charges, or am I missing something?

17 A No; that's -- the sum is based on the letter --
18 let me find the right page -- a letter written on -- I
19 believe it was February 26, 2012.

20 Q Now, the letter of February 26th, that you're
21 referring to, is the substance of the charges against
22 Robbie Stokes?

23 A Yes.

24 Q Okay. And it's not what would be Pages 2 and 3
25 of this exhibit?

1 A That is page -- the same thing as Page 2.

2 Q Okay. So is it the letter of the 26th, 2012,
3 that's the substance of the charges, or is Pages 2 and 3
4 the substance of the charges against Robbie Stokes?

5 A This letter -- I don't know if the thing is
6 called "substance of the charges." This letter that was
7 written to John R. Stokes on February 26th, okay, is saying
8 that the substance of the charges listed on Paragraph
9 26.21, I believe it was -- let me see.

10 Q And I don't mean to stop you. I guess where I'm
11 confused is, you seem to be looking at Page 2, but you're
12 referring to the letter of February 26, which is on Page 4.

13 A 4.

14 Q So which is the substance of the charges?

15 A I don't understand "substance." That's what I
16 don't --

17 Q Well, which is the basis of the charges, then?

18 A The basis of the charges is that this letter was
19 written to Robbie Stokes. Okay?

20 Q On the 26th, 2012?

21 A 26th of February.

22 Q 2012?

23 A Telling him that this was not filed correctly;
24 where he said that Most Worshipful Jim Harris and Most
25 Worshipful Joe Fleites were asked where in the Digest the

1 Jurisprudence Committee had the authority to prevent a
2 resolution from getting to the Craft and were either
3 unwilling or unable to provide the location. Okay?

4 This is where they told him that reason, so --

5 Q So -- I'm sorry; just trying to clarify it.

6 So the charges in this exhibit are essentially
7 Pages 2 and 3; and, as an exhibit to the charges, we're
8 talking about the February 26th letter which is on Pages 4
9 and 5?

10 A Correct.

11 Q Okay. Now, again, if we could look at the letter
12 of the 26th --

13 A Uh-huh.

14 Q -- anywhere in that letter does it state that
15 Robbie Stokes filed something that they found was either
16 deceitful or --

17 A This letter, as I understand this letter, okay,
18 tells them that the -- that the legislation that was
19 rejected had to be filed by Walter Hammond, and not by
20 Robbie Stokes, and told him why.

21 MR. HAMMOND: That's news to me.

22 BY MR. SANDERS:

23 Q Well, let's look at the letter. It says: The
24 Jurisprudence Committee reviewed the legislation you
25 presented in great detail; 27 of the 28 members present

1 concurred that it was in violation of the Masonic Digest of
2 Law. The Digest is very clear on the procedure for members
3 who have been suspended or expelled from the fraternity to
4 follow.

5 Is that what that says, in the first paragraph?

6 A That's correct.

7 Q And again, this apparently is signed by Most
8 Worshipful Joe Fleites, the individual who signed the
9 Petition bringing the charges.

10 A Correct. He was the Chairman of Jurisprudence at
11 that time.

12 Q But, at that time, even though he's bringing the
13 charges now, he never said anything with regards to any
14 deceitful conduct on the part of Robbie Stokes in this
15 letter, does he? He's only talking about procedures.

16 A At this time, he's talking about the procedure to
17 follow; okay? And then, subsequent to that, the charges
18 were brought.

19 Q Section 44.75 says: "Grand Lodge has inherent
20 power to reinstate an expelled or suspended member..." and
21 it says -- in bold there, it says "...upon petition of such
22 member, without necessity of action by a Particular Lodge,
23 and may exercise such power after review of all
24 circumstances relating thereto and report of appropriate
25 committee thereon, and may entertain and grant petition of

1 a Particular Lodge for reinstatement of a member or former
2 member of the Lodge expelled by Grand Lodge after
3 investigation and report of appropriate committee thereon."

4 A Correct.

5 Q Did I read that --

6 A Yeah, you read it.

7 Q Okay; thank you.

8 Now, I'll go back to our previous conversation
9 that we've been having: It clearly says, under 44.75,
10 quoted by Most Worshipful Fleites, that it can only be
11 acted upon, the petition of such member; does it not?

12 A 44.75.

13 Q Yeah; which is quoted here, in this letter.

14 A That's part of it, yes.

15 Q Okay. The statement made by Most Worshipful
16 Fleites is that an action can only be instigated or
17 followed up on upon the petition of such member expelled;
18 does it not?

19 A If that's what it says there, not remembering
20 every word, yes.

21 Q Well, again, I'm just --

22 A I know.

23 Q It's the first two sentences there.

24 In the instance where you wrote the letter, there
25 was no Petition before Albert J. Russell Lodge, giving them

1 the authority to move forward, was there?

2 A I did not give them a Petition. I told them that
3 they could proceed -- that was all -- proceed with the
4 process.

5 You're also leaving out the one paragraph there.

6 Q Well, I'm going to get to everything on this, but
7 thank you for mentioning that.

8 The paragraph that starts after 44.75, quoted by
9 Most Worshipful Fleites, says: This section clearly states
10 that Walter M. Hammond needs to file the Petition needed to
11 bring before the Grand Lodge for action.

12 Is that what it states?

13 A That's correct.

14 Q Okay. So it still is requiring that Walter
15 Hammond file the Petition; is that correct?

16 A Yes.

17 Q Okay. If a Petition is filed, the Grand Master
18 will appoint a subcommittee from the Jurisprudence which
19 will then report its recommendations to the members of
20 Grand Lodge for action; is that correct?

21 A Yes.

22 Q Is that what it says?

23 A That's what it says.

24 Q In the instance where you wrote the letter --

25 A That has nothing to do with this.

1 Q Okay. Why doesn't it have anything to do with
2 this?

3 A Because that's a completely separate thing.

4 Q So that's handled by a separate section?

5 A No, that's a separate entity, in that this was
6 Robbie Stokes' case; that there is Walter Hammond's case.
7 They're completely different things. I'm not discussing
8 Robbie Stokes'. And the letters I wrote here, this was
9 only for Walter Hammond.

10 Q Well, and that's what I'm talking about.

11 I'm just saying that this is, in essence, in my
12 reading of it, a legal opinion, based on Grand Lodge rules
13 and procedures and citing the sections; is it not?

14 A I guess. I did not write this letter, so I can't
15 tell you that. The letter was written by Joe Fleites, the
16 Chairman of Jurisprudence.

17 Q Well, and again, Joe Fleites, who wrote this,
18 basically says that there needs to be a Petition, which
19 would then be sent to a subcommittee from the sub -- a
20 subcommittee from Jurisprudence, which would then report
21 its recommendation to the members.

22 That's what it says, right?

23 A I guess.

24 Q Okay. Was that done, in this circumstance with
25 Walter Hammond, before you sent out the letter to Russell

1 Lodge? Did you appoint a subcommittee to review any
2 Petition from Walter Hammond, I guess is the question --

3 A No, because we hadn't received the Petition yet.

4 Q So there was no Petition from Walter Hammond, and
5 this --

6 A At that point, no. This was to allow him to
7 submit a Petition.

8 Q Now, anywhere in there does it indicate that a
9 Lodge must seek permission to accept a Petition before it's
10 submitted?

11 A No.

12 This whole thing that I brought these charges
13 against Robbie Stokes was only in regards to what he was
14 told and what he said he was not told. That's all that
15 this was written for.

16 Q Okay. Most Worshipful Fleites, on the bottom of
17 Page 4, quotes section -- it looks like 12.15. It says:
18 Any proposed amendment or alteration of the constitution or
19 regulations to be presented to Grand Lodge for adoption at
20 an annual communication shall be submitted to the Grand
21 Secretary before December 31st -- and then it's bolded --
22 by resolution, explaining the reasons for the -- for
23 amending the constitution or regulation or proposed new
24 constitutional provisions or regulations -- and then it
25 stops bolding -- using no more than two letter-size,

1 typewritten single-spaced pages, and must be sent by the
2 Grand Secretary to each Particular Lodge, the Grand Lodge,
3 executive officers, the District Deputy Grand Master, the
4 district instructors and the District Grand Masters no
5 later than 60 days prior to the Grand Lodge Annual
6 Communication, and then it says, paren, 1993.

7 A That's right out of the Digest; correct.

8 Q Go to the second page of this letter, which is
9 Page 5 of this exhibit. It says -- at the top, it says:
10 Additionally, you were -- I've got to quote this exactly:
11 Additionally, you asked where the Digest --

12 A "Where in the Digest."

13 Q -- where in the Digest was the requirement not
14 met by your legislation. As you can read in Chapter 12.5
15 of the Digest of Masonic Law states, explaining the reasons
16 for amending the constitution or regulation or proposed new
17 constitutional provision or regulation. It was the opinion
18 of the Jurisprudence Committee that your legislation did
19 not meet this requirement.

20 Is that what it states?

21 A That's what it states; yes.

22 Q And it says that the governing regulation there
23 is 12.15; is that correct?

24 A That's correct; which is the previous paragraph.

25 Q Okay. And it says: By following 44.75 and the

1 Masonic -- got to get it right -- by following 44.75 and
2 the Digest of Masonic Law, you will still have accomplished
3 what you all are looking for, which is to bring this up for
4 a vote before the members of Grand Lodge.

5 That's what it states?

6 A That's what it states.

7 Q And it's signed by Joe Fleites?

8 A Correct.

9 Q And was this letter of February 26 referring to
10 the legislation that Robbie Stokes submitted, wherein the
11 statement was made that they were either unwilling or
12 unable to provide the location?

13 A No.

14 Q It's not?

15 A I don't believe it is.

16 This is -- has to do with the piece of
17 legislation that was rejected, and then that's where he
18 brought up the new legislation.

19 THE WITNESS (addressing Mr. Lynn): Is that
20 correct? Oh, you're not allowed to answer.

21 I don't have the legislations with me.

22 BY MR. SANDERS:

23 Q Well, again, there are two last pages to this
24 exhibit; are there not? It says: "Resolution Procedure
25 Legislation"?

1 A Yes.

2 Q And I'll ask you -- it's on Page 6, if you'll
3 look down to the second-to-the-last "whereas" --

4 A Yes.

5 Q -- is that the section that's being referred to
6 in the Masonic charges?

7 A I can't tell you that, because I don't -- yes,
8 that is the statement.

9 Q Okay.

10 A Whether it's the same one or not, I'd have to go
11 back, but it's the same statement.

12 Q Now, presumably -- and, unfortunately, this
13 resolution doesn't have a date on it, but presumably this
14 resolution went out; is that correct?

15 A This particular one, yes, as -- December of
16 2000 -- I'd have to see the legislation book. I can't
17 remember exactly which one went out.

18 Q Well, let me see if I can follow, at least, a
19 logical pattern, if we could, kind of going from back to
20 front: I assume this resolution had to go out and be
21 submitted to Jurisprudence and have them review it before
22 the letter was sent out by Most Worshipful Joe Fleites, on
23 February 26, 2012; would that be correct?

24 A I would assume, but I can't tell you that without
25 a date on it. I don't know when it was --

1 Q Well, and again, I would agree with you.

2 A I mean --

3 Q But let's just say, for argument's sake, the
4 resolution, according to the information here in the letter
5 of Most Worshipful Fleites, was supposed to be submitted,
6 at least, by no later than December 31st of the previous
7 year; correct?

8 A Yes.

9 Q Okay. So I'd have to assume -- again, trying to
10 be logical -- that this resolution was submitted on
11 December -- sometime in December of 2011.

12 A Uh-huh.

13 Q Would that be correct?

14 A That's correct.

15 Q The response to Joe -- Most Worshipful Joe
16 Fleites was February 26, 2012, after the Jurisprudence
17 Committee reviewed it; is that correct?

18 A Yes.

19 Q So -- just asking -- this letter, after the
20 resolution was submitted with the language already
21 contained therein, approximately three months prior to Most
22 Worshipful Fleites' letter, can't be in violation of a
23 letter that was sent three months later, can it? How could
24 they have informed Robbie Stokes that he was informed of
25 the procedure which made him deceitful, in this

1 (indicating), if this was submitted before he was informed
2 of the procedure?

3 A The procedure -- it was written here; okay? This
4 was telling him the procedure; okay? Robbie Stokes, in his
5 thing, says he did not receive anything from that.

6 Q But that was submitted three months before the
7 procedure was explained to him.

8 A I don't know that. I can't answer that. I don't
9 know whether he received another letter. I don't know
10 that.

11 Q But this is the only letter that's attached to
12 the charges; is it not?

13 A It's here, in this, in your charges.

14 Q Well, in these papers.

15 A Yeah.

16 Q So we have a resolution submitted by December
17 31st of 2011, in order to be considered by the
18 Jurisprudence Committee; according to the letter of
19 February 26, 2012, approximately three months later, two
20 and a half months later, after it's submitted, we get a
21 letter from Most Worshipful Fleites, indicating what the
22 proper procedure is.

23 A Okay.

24 Q So, if this letter is the first time that Robbie
25 Stokes was informed of what the proper procedure is, how

1 could he intentionally make a false statement --

2 A I don't know that that's fact. I'm saying, I
3 don't know that the letter -- that this letter here is the
4 only letter he received.

5 Q Okay; fair enough.

6 A I can't tell you that.

7 Q Fair enough.

8 But, for argument's sake, if this was the
9 legislation, and it was submitted in 2011, whenever it was,
10 sometime no later than December 31st, and this letter is in
11 response, telling him the procedure, and there are no other
12 letters to Robbie Stokes, telling him the procedure, how
13 can Robbie Stokes be in violation of deceit --

14 A I can't do anything on presume, because I don't
15 know. Without knowing every letter that was written
16 between the Jurisprudence and him, I have no idea.

17 Q Did you consider the dates and times of filing --

18 A No, I did not.

19 Q -- before requesting Masonic charges?

20 A No, I did not.

21 I strictly looked at a letter, and I looked at
22 the legislation, and that's why I brought it up, so a trial
23 could be -- resolve it, and find out what they want.

24 Q Well, again, just for clarification, the letter
25 of February 26, 2012 -- can we at least agree on this? --

1 is referencing the legislation which is attached as Page 6
2 and 7.

3 A I can't tell you that. I don't know.

4 Q Okay. But these are the supporting documents for
5 the Masonic charges against Robbie Stokes.

6 A I don't know. I didn't see all of this; I mean,
7 the dates and so forth.

8 I directed him to submit the charges, and he did
9 so; and what all he submitted, I don't know.

10 Q There are no other packages or Masonic charges
11 that you know of out there, in any other different form,
12 are there?

13 A I don't know. Not that I'm aware of.

14 I saw his charges, you know, here, and I did not
15 read all the exhibits and so forth. I have not done it.

16 Q Okay. Now, I'm going back to the letter that we
17 originally talked about, which is going to be marked as
18 Exhibit 4, your letter of September 3rd, 2012, and it says
19 in the letter directed to -- it says: Dear Brother Stokes,
20 In order to protect the integrity of our system of Masonic
21 justice and to ensure a fair and unbiased trial, I, as
22 Grand Master of Masons of Florida, under the authority
23 granted to me under the Digest of Masonic Law --
24 specifically, Section 44.23 -- do hereby direct the matter
25 of alleged Masonic conduct by R:.W:. John Stokes to be

1 tried by Trial Commission and do hereby take jurisdiction
2 of the matter.

3 Now, you've indicated that these really are your
4 Masonic charges.

5 A Yes.

6 Q Okay. What fear do you have, or -- maybe "fear"
7 is the wrong word -- why do you believe that only a Trial
8 Commission will protect the integrity of the Masonic system
9 in this case and that a Trial Commission needs to be
10 appointed?

11 A Because, first of all, they're very significant
12 charges; that's why. They relate to the whole fraternity,
13 as I said before, not just a Lodge or a particular person
14 in a Lodge. It relates to the whole fraternity; and,
15 therefore, I felt the only fair way to do this, to make
16 sure that they were unbiased, was to refer to a Trial
17 Commission which is made up of five members -- as you know
18 what Trial Commissions are made of -- and they can make the
19 decision.

20 And that Trial Commission is not picked by me.
21 The Trial Commission members are picked by the head of our
22 Penal Affairs. He selects the commissioner for it, and
23 they select the members based on who, in that particular
24 area, is available, and so forth. And they select them. I
25 don't have anything to do with the selection. I don't have

1 anything to do with making the decision. I don't have any
2 answer in it, so they can't say, "Hey, you're prejudiced on
3 it," or -- same way with a Lodge.

4 If you want to move this to, let's say -- I
5 believe he's a member of Solomon Lodge; if you want to move
6 it to Solomon Lodge, the commission is made up of members
7 of Solomon Lodge, their good friends and stuff, that may
8 not be fair. So the only fair way to do it is with the
9 Trial Commission. That's my concept of it.

10 Q And please don't take this wrong, but you
11 mentioned, okay, there could be friends of Robbie Stokes in
12 Solomon Lodge, which would make it unfair.

13 A No. I'm saying that whoever -- the members of
14 the Lodge, they could be friends; they could be enemies. I
15 don't know. I don't know the members of his Lodge, how
16 they feel about it. But I feel a fair way to do it is to
17 get an unbiased Trial Commission to do it selected.

18 MR. SANDERS: This will be No. 4.

19 (Plaintiffs' Exhibit No. 4 was marked for
20 identification.)

21 BY MR. SANDERS:

22 Q Now, when Masonic charges are brought, that's
23 still underneath the corporate umbrella; is it not?
24 Because the corporation --

25 A It's under the fraternal.

1 Q Which is?

2 A The fraternal section of the Grand Lodge of
3 Florida.

4 Q But the fraternal section is still underneath the
5 corporate umbrella. There is no Grand Lodge of Florida
6 outside the corporate entity that's been filed with the
7 State of Florida, is there?

8 A I have no idea.

9 Q What entities do you know exist, besides the
10 corporate entity?

11 A Well, we have the Masonic Home of Florida; we
12 have different --

13 Q Well, let's take them one at a time.

14 Can the Masonic Home of Florida file charges
15 against Robbie Stokes?

16 A Not that I would know. I mean, there may be
17 somebody within the Masonic Home that could bring charges
18 against Robbie Stokes, a resident or something else, but --

19 Q Well, I agree, but that would be an individual.

20 A Yeah.

21 Q It wouldn't be the actual --

22 A It would depend. It would depend on what -- what
23 the occurrence was, with anybody. I mean, maybe somebody
24 figured out a way to steal money, for instance, from the
25 Grand Lodge of Florida, from the -- what do you call it? --

1 Masonic Home of Florida, or cheat them out of something, so
2 maybe they would file charges. I don't know.

3 Q But, again, you're still talking about filing
4 charges.

5 A That's what you asked about.

6 Q I'm just saying, under what umbrella, other than
7 the corporate entity, Grand Lodge, are the charges that
8 were brought against Walter Hammond and the charges being
9 brought against Robbie Stokes contained? Are they
10 underneath an umbrella from the fraternity?

11 A They're underneath the Grand Lodge of Free and
12 Accepted Masons of the State of Florida, under our Digest
13 of Masonic Law.

14 Q And the Digest --

15 A I don't think it says anything there, in that
16 context, that we are -- that the corporate is filing.

17 See, I consider the corporate the corporate board
18 of directors; okay? The corporate board of directors, as
19 you know, are made up of the Grand Master, Grand Lodge --
20 elected Grand Lodge officers -- not all of them; for
21 instance, Richard is not on the corporate board, and --
22 he's not.

23 Q I know.

24 A And we have a past Grand Master.

25 In this case, I have another member on the

1 corporate board, who makes the corporate decisions, which
2 is related to financial situations. And then there's
3 fraternal.

4 Q Well, when there's an Annual Grand Communication,
5 isn't all the corporate work done at that point in time;
6 everybody gets together, the board gets together, and
7 everything is decided at that point in time?

8 A Everything, no.

9 Q Generally, that's the corporation's annual
10 meeting; is it not?

11 A It's the Grand Lodge of Florida's Annual
12 Communication. I don't know where you're getting to from
13 "corporate."

14 Q Well, I'm just saying --

15 A I don't understand the "corporate," saying it.

16 Q I'm just trying to ask you, from your knowledge,
17 is there any entity called the Grand Lodge of Florida that
18 exists separately from what the corporation is, or does the
19 Grand Lodge of Florida exist underneath the corporate
20 entity?

21 A I don't know what -- "corporation." That's what
22 I said. I don't -- I don't know of anything that says
23 Corporation of the Grand Lodge of Florida.

24 Q Are you --

25 A Not that I'm aware of. I'm not saying it doesn't

1 exist; I just don't know.

2 Q You're familiar with the Digest?

3 A Somewhat, yes.

4 Q Have you read the section that refers to the
5 Digest and the corporation and how it was formed, and that
6 those are the governing documents of the corporation?

7 A I have probably read it; but, as far as
8 remembering and knowledge of it, no, I'm not a lawyer, so I
9 can't --

10 Q So you can't confirm if that section exists in
11 the Digest or not?

12 A No, I can't.

13 Q Okay. Have you had an opportunity to review the
14 Complaint in the action that's been filed against Grand
15 Lodge by Walter Hammond?

16 A No, I have not read it.

17 Q Now, you said you reviewed --

18 A I know it's -- I know a trial -- I mean, not
19 trial, but I know charges have been brought, et cetera,
20 that there's a lawsuit involved, and I leave that to legal.
21 I don't get involved in that at all.

22 Q I'll go back, I guess, to some of the questions
23 that I was asking, at the beginning, about civil rights.

24 Does the -- does Walter Hammond have the right to
25 confront his accusers, or can somebody just merely file

1 Masonic charges and convict Walter, without even showing up
2 at a Masonic trial?

3 A That has been done, and the convicted refuses --
4 I mean, the accused refused to be present.

5 Q Well, I'm not talking about the accused being
6 present. I'm talking about the accusers against Walter
7 Hammond, the people who filed the Masonic charges.

8 I'll just use it in your case: If the charges go
9 forward with Robbie Stokes, can Robbie Stokes go to a
10 Masonic trial, and Most Worshipful Fleites not show up to
11 present the charges?

12 A I would think it would be very odd if that
13 happened. I don't -- I don't know whether it's ever not
14 happened -- you know, it's ever happened, but I would think
15 that the accuser would be there.

16 Q So the accuser, the person who filed the charges,
17 should be present --

18 A In this case.

19 Now, see, I directed the charges to be filed.

20 Q Right.

21 A I will not be present intentionally, because I
22 will be tasked to review the results of the Trial
23 Commission later on, and I want to be unbiased when I do
24 that; so, therefore, I will not be present at that trial.

25 Q In the situation of Walter Hammond, you do know

1 he had two persons, two Brother Masons, sign the Petition;
2 do you not?

3 A No, I do not. I don't know anything about Walter
4 Hammond's case.

5 Q Okay. In the situation with Walter Hammond, of
6 course Most Worshipful Harry -- try again -- Most
7 Worshipful Harry was one of the signers of the Petition --

8 A Okay.

9 Q -- but there was an additional signer. Frank
10 Hufham also signed the Petition.

11 Are you familiar with that?

12 A I'm familiar with who Frank Hufham is. I haven't
13 talked to him in years; but, yes, I know who he is.

14 Q Have you had an opportunity to review Frank
15 Hufham's deposition testimony?

16 A No, I have not.

17 Q You would not know that Frank Hufham has
18 acknowledged under oath that he was called in by Most
19 Worshipful Harry to sign a Petition?

20 A I have not read anything about the deposition or
21 anything.

22 Q Okay. Does it seem unusual to you that a Grand
23 Master would ask someone to come in and sign a Petition to
24 prefer Masonic charges on behalf of the Grand Master?

25 A I can't answer for him. I don't know what went

1 on, or I don't -- I don't know the situation at all.

2 Q Frank Hufham would be considered an accuser,
3 though, by signing the Petition; would he not?

4 A That, again, I can't tell you. I don't know
5 what -- I don't know what was on the paperwork. I have no
6 idea. I wouldn't want to say something, because I don't
7 know.

8 Q If Frank Hufham didn't show up at the trial,
9 Walter Hammond could not face one of his accusers, could
10 he?

11 A Again, I can't answer that. I don't know what
12 situation existed. That was before my time.

13 Q Well, when you said earlier in the deposition
14 that you reviewed Walter Hammond's case --

15 A I reviewed Walter Hammond's case based upon the
16 information that there was a trial ongoing, the case was
17 still open, and I looked at that. But I didn't review the
18 deposition or any of the appeals or anything about it. I
19 just knew that he was trying to -- wanted to get back into
20 his Lodge; and, therefore, I said -- I asked Richard about
21 it, about putting in a letter, you know, and that's where
22 it went.

23 Q So you asked Richard about the letter?

24 A I confer everything with Richard. He's the Grand
25 Secretary.

1 Q Exhibit D of the Petition filed by Walter Hammond
2 has the Masonic charges and the documents attached to it
3 that was the reason for preferring the charges.

4 (Mr. Sanders tendering document to witness.)

5 Have you reviewed that?

6 A No.

7 Q You haven't seen that?

8 A No.

9 Like I said, I haven't seen anything to do with
10 the charges. I knew they were filed; other than that, I
11 don't know anything.

12 Q Again, I'm just going to reference Exhibit D on
13 the current Petition. The Petition -- can you tell me if
14 you recognize the signatures of the names who signed the
15 Petition against Walter Hammond.

16 A I recognize Robert P. Harry and his address.
17 Harry Franklin -- I don't know -- it must be Hufham; I
18 don't know -- something. I didn't know his name was Harry.

19 MR. DOUBERLEY: Can we go off the record for a
20 second?

21 (Discussion off the record.)

22 BY MR. SANDERS:

23 Q If a person -- excuse me -- if a Mason signs to
24 prefer charges, should they not be present so that the --

25 A I think you asked me that question earlier.

1 MR. DOUBERLEY: I think you've beat that horse to
2 death.

3 (Mr. Lynn leaving room.)

4 MR. SANDERS: Well, he indicated he did not know
5 that Frank had signed charges, so --

6 MR. DOUBERLEY: Yeah. But you said he did. I
7 mean -- you know.

8 MR. SANDERS: But he didn't answer it based on
9 that assumption.

10 MR. DOUBERLEY: Does it matter if it's Hufham or
11 somebody else?

12 THE WITNESS: I don't know whether he was there
13 or not. I don't know anything about it.

14 MR. DOUBERLEY: Yeah.

15 BY MR. SANDERS:

16 Q Should he have been there?

17 A I can't answer that. I don't know. Maybe there
18 was a reason. Maybe he was in the hospital. I have no
19 idea.

20 Q Well, in the deposition, he said that he wasn't
21 even informed of when the trial was.

22 A I don't know. I haven't read his deposition. I
23 don't know anything about it.

24 Q Well, assuming that that's what he said in the
25 deposition, do you believe that it violates my client's

1 rights, in any way, that he can't face an accuser?

2 A I would rather not answer that.

3 Q Why not?

4 A For the same reason I told you: I was not there,
5 and I have not read any of the documentation. I don't
6 know. I don't know how much more specific I can be.

7 Q So you have no way to make a formal opinion,
8 regardless of if you were there or not, whether or not
9 Walter Hammond should have been able to confront the people
10 who were accusing him of the wrongdoing?

11 A I have nothing to do with the Walter Hammond
12 case, other than the last letter that I put in to Albert J.
13 Russell Lodge. The answer is back -- that's all I know
14 about it. I don't know anything else. I was not part of
15 it. I wasn't -- in 2008, where was I? I don't even know
16 what I was doing in 2008, to be honest with you.

17 Q So would you say it just doesn't matter to you
18 whether or not he had an opportunity to do that?

19 A At this point, no. I have nothing to do with it.
20 I mean, I can't research every trial that's ever been held
21 in the State of Florida and know what's been going on, and
22 so forth. The only reason I'm involved in this is because
23 this -- this was open; it was a lawsuit pending when I took
24 office.

25 Q Did you ever read the actual article that was the

1 basis of the charges?

2 A No.

3 Q Let me show you -- again, as part of Exhibit D --
4 the actual Cedar Chips article of February 2008. It's
5 under the left-hand section, which is called Editor's Rant.

6 (Mr. Sanders tendering document to witness.)

7 And if you'll read that, and just let me know
8 when you're finished.

9 A Get my eyes focused on it.

10 (Witness perusing document.)

11 (Mr. Lynn reentering room.)

12 I don't know what the words say. It's blurred.

13 MR. HAMMOND: Help him out.

14 THE WITNESS: I don't understand what that -- I
15 don't understand the word. I can't read it.

16 MR. SANDERS: It says: By the way,
17 congratulations to those who eschew -- yeah, eschew --

18 THE WITNESS: That's as far as I got. I
19 couldn't --

20 MR. SANDERS: -- political correctness and have
21 or had the courage to walk away with heads held high.
22 As for me, I tell it how it is and serve without hope
23 of fee or reward. I trust that you will, too.

24 Zealously, Walter Hammond.

25 THE WITNESS: Okay. I couldn't read it. I'm

1 sorry. It's kind of fuzzy. I couldn't read it.

2 BY MR. SANDERS:

3 Q I understand that.

4 Do you find anything offensive about that rant?

5 A Oh, yeah. If I was -- sure.

6 Q What do you consider specifically offensive?

7 A I would consider it offensive reading about
8 "incompetent" and "corrupt" and "discussions about other
9 groups and leaders in high offices."

10 Q Well, it says "I have heard" that; does it not?

11 A It still says it; yeah. It still says it.

12 "By the way, congratulations..." and "...as for
13 me, I'll tell it how it is and serve without hope of fee or
14 reward."

15 Q You find that offensive?

16 A Well, I don't know. To me, without knowing
17 everything, it seems like he's insinuating something, but I
18 don't know what it is.

19 Q Well, can Masonic charges be brought for
20 insinuation?

21 A It may be. I don't know. I didn't bring the
22 charges. I can't tell you. I think you need to ask Bob
23 Harry that, or --

24 Q And I have.

25 A Who else is -- Frank Hufham, you said was on

1 there? I don't know.

2 Q Did you know that Most Worshipful Harry reached
3 out -- since this was an article from the Tall Cedars --
4 reached out to the Supreme Tall Cedar?

5 A No. I don't even -- I'm not even sure what the
6 Tall Cedars is. I think it's part of York Rite. I'm not
7 positive.

8 Q Then you wouldn't know that, even though Most
9 Worshipful Harry complained to the Tall Cedars about the
10 rant, that they didn't do anything about it, and they
11 didn't feel it offensive?

12 A Like I said, I do not know anything about it.

13 Q Have you seen this letter from Most Worshipful
14 Harry to the head of the Grand Tall Cedars?

15 (Mr. Sanders tendering document to witness.)

16 A No. I can tell you ahead of time, I haven't seen
17 anything.

18 Q Well, if you could just read it, I just want to
19 ask you a quick question, as a Grand Master, based on your
20 reading of that.

21 A (Witness perusing document.)

22 No, I haven't read it, at all.

23 (Witness tendering document to Mr. Sanders.)

24 Q Do you think it's appropriate for a Grand Master
25 to threaten, essentially, the -- essentially, to

1 excommunicate or withdraw all the recognition of Tall
2 Cedars in the State of Florida if he doesn't comply with
3 his request with regards to Walter Hammond?

4 A I have no idea.

5 Q Would you do that, as a Grand Master?

6 A I don't know. I don't know what the case is and
7 what he told him or nothing. I have not read any of his
8 letters, any of his correspondence. I haven't done any of
9 that.

10 Q And I'm just asking you as a Grand Master. Would
11 you, as a Grand Master, threaten, essentially, to dissolve
12 an entire Masonic organization if they didn't comply with
13 your request?

14 A If they didn't comply with the regulations of
15 Grand Lodge of Florida, yes.

16 Q And you would do that; okay.

17 A It's been done many times.

18 Q And would you consider that a violation of any
19 civil rights?

20 A No. It's a fraternal matter.

21 Q Even though the fraternity is a corporation?

22 A I don't know that. You said that before. I
23 didn't know anything about being a corporation.

24 Q Were you aware that Walter Hammond was asked to
25 do a retraction and did a retraction the very following

1 month?

2 A No.

3 Q Would that make a difference to you, if you'd
4 known that?

5 A I don't know the case. I keep telling you that.
6 I don't know all the facts concerning it, other than what
7 you just handed me there to read. I haven't read any of
8 it, haven't been involved in it. I was not on the
9 corporate board; I was not on the board of trustees; I was
10 not on the Jurisprudence. 2008 -- I was thinking back -- I
11 was a Grand Marshal way back then.

12 Q Let me ask you this: As a corporation --

13 A You keep bringing that up, "corporation." I
14 don't know anything about a corporation.

15 Q Well, you know that Grand Lodge is a corporation
16 or, at least, there's a corporate entity out there?

17 A No, I don't.

18 Q You don't even know that?

19 A No, sir, I don't.

20 Q All right.

21 A If I did, I would tell you. I don't know. I
22 would have to read the Digest and study it to find out
23 that.

24 Q So you, likely, haven't read the hearing
25 transcript of the actual trial of Walter Hammond.

1 A No, sir, I have not.

2 Q Okay. Isn't it true that Masonic law, the
3 Digest, allows for an accused, like Walter Hammond, to have
4 representation by an attorney?

5 A Yes.

6 Q To what extent can that person use their
7 representation?

8 A That, I can't tell you.

9 Q You don't know?

10 A I don't know. I know there's been discussions on
11 it. I know that -- how far you can go, and so forth, I
12 don't know exactly what is allowed and what is not allowed
13 with that.

14 Q Do you know of any restrictions within the
15 Masonic Digest that says an attorney representing an
16 accused can only do this?

17 A Not to my knowledge. I don't remember ever
18 reading anything like that. I'm not saying it's not there.
19 I'm just saying I don't remember ever reading it.

20 Q Well, and I would agree with you; there are no
21 restrictions on the use of an attorney, in the Masonic
22 Digest, that I can find. I was just curious if you knew of
23 any.

24 A Not to my knowledge.

25 Q To your knowledge -- I don't know -- I guess I

1 need to preface the question: Other than this litigation,
2 have you been involved in any other type of litigation,
3 either personal or through a business or anything like
4 that?

5 A No. I've been on two Trial Commissions, but
6 that's as far as it went. I've never done anything --

7 Q On those Trial Commissions, were those
8 individuals represented by counsel?

9 A No, neither one of them.

10 Q What would you expect a trial counsel to do at a
11 Trial Commission?

12 A I don't know. Like I said, I've never been
13 involved. I've never been a commissioner of one or nothing
14 else. I don't really -- I'd have to do a lot of reading
15 and so forth.

16 Q Would an attorney be allowed to, at least, speak
17 on behalf of his client at a Trial Commission, if you were
18 on it?

19 A I don't know. I -- I would think so, but I don't
20 know that for a fact. I don't know -- I haven't read that
21 section, you know, good enough to know what -- how a Trial
22 Commission is conducted. I've never been involved in it
23 that much.

24 Q And you haven't read Walter Hammond's file, but
25 does it cause you any concern that his trial counsel at

1 that time, John Bryant, wasn't even allowed to advocate his
2 position?

3 A No, I can't -- I don't know. I don't know who
4 the Trial Commissioner was. I don't know. I don't know
5 who was on the Trial Commission. I'm not sure what
6 happened on his case.

7 MR. SANDERS: I have no further questions at this
8 time, although I have made reservations with regards
9 to continuing the deposition after the judge makes a
10 decision with regards to additional contact. So I
11 will only suspend the deposition at this point in
12 time; I will not terminate it. That doesn't
13 necessarily mean that it will be continued, but it's
14 suspended at this particular time.

15 THE WITNESS: Whatever.

16 MR. SANDERS: In case it's -- in case it's not
17 continued, I have to, at least, put on the record,
18 your attorney --

19 MR. DOUBERLEY: Well, let me ask a couple of
20 questions.

21 MR. SANDERS: Oh, okay.

22 MR. DOUBERLEY: And I certainly will -- he will
23 not waive when it's over. I will send him an E-Tran,
24 and he can read it and review his questions and
25 answers.

CROSS-EXAMINATION

1
2 BY MR. DOUBERLEY:

3 Q At the time charges were brought against
4 Mr. Stokes, was the decision to bring those charges
5 motivated in any way by the fact that Mr. Hammond's
6 attorneys considered him to be a witness?

7 A No, I had no knowledge that he was a witness.

8 Q Did you direct the charges or authorize charges
9 to be filed in retribution for his participation in the
10 defense or advocacy in favor of Mr. Hammond?

11 A No.

12 Q Were you attempting in any way to intimidate
13 Mr. Stokes with respect to his participation, past and
14 future, in the Hammond matter?

15 A No.

16 Q Have you heard anybody say that that was one of
17 the motivations for bringing those charges?

18 A No, sir.

19 Q And I know we've said that there's nothing in
20 writing; but, in your discussions with other people
21 involved in this, has that ever come up?

22 A No.

23 MR. DOUBERLEY: All right. Thank you. I have no
24 other questions.

25 If you would type --

1 MR. SANDERS: I get to redirect now, a little
2 bit, on those questions.

3 MR. DOUBERLEY: All right.

4 REDIRECT EXAMINATION

5 BY MR. SANDERS:

6 Q Your reply to Counsel's questions, did any of
7 this ever come up with the other people that you discussed
8 this matter with, was no; is that correct?

9 A That's correct.

10 Q Okay. Who were the people that you discussed
11 this with?

12 A Joe Fleites.

13 Q That's the only person?

14 A Yes, sir; before I proceeded to tell him to
15 proceed with the charges.

16 Q And you indicated that you had no knowledge that
17 Robbie Stokes would be a witness, but you --

18 A No, sir.

19 Q -- you did know that Robbie Stokes was heavily
20 involved in trying to get Walter Hammond reinstated; did
21 you not?

22 A I knew he submitted the legislation for that,
23 yes; correct.

24 Q Okay. And you did know, at the time you were
25 talking with Joe Fleites, that this action had been filed;

1 did you not?

2 A I'm not sure what you mean.

3 Q Well, this action has been pending for a couple
4 of years now, so you did know the action existed.

5 A All I knew was that he had filed a thing to have
6 him reinstated in Masonry. That's all I knew.

7 Q But you knew the lawsuit was filed?

8 A I knew that there was a lawsuit filed with his,
9 but I didn't know it had any connection with Robbie Stokes.

10 Q Okay. But you did know Robbie Stokes was an
11 advocate all this time, prior to the lawsuit and after the
12 lawsuit, for Walter Hammond getting reinstated?

13 A I knew he had submitted the legislation. I kind
14 of assumed that he was doing it on his behalf.

15 Q And you know -- or maybe you don't know -- that
16 there was other legislation submitted by Robbie Stokes, and
17 that included hundreds of Masons' names attached to it;
18 correct?

19 A That's correct.

20 Q And I suppose you knew that, whenever Masonic
21 charges were brought against Robbie Stokes, that all of
22 those hundreds of people that signed the previous
23 legislation would also hear about that. You would, at
24 least --

25 A Hear about?

1 Q Hear about the charges against Robbie Stokes.

2 A No, I didn't. Unless he passed it out to them,
3 I --

4 Q But you do acknowledge that you knew there were
5 hundreds of people that signed previous resolutions --

6 A Yes, sir; I saw that list.

7 Q And when did you see that?

8 A Whenever it was submitted. The paperwork came
9 before the -- I was on the -- what the heck do you call
10 it? -- let me think of the word -- legislation presentation
11 group. We presented the legislation to the different
12 districts prior to Grand Lodge.

13 Q Do you recall whether or not that legislation,
14 with several hundred signatures of Masonic members -- did
15 it ever make it to the floor?

16 A I don't know. I don't remember. I just remember
17 seeing it, and saw all these pages of -- (gesturing).

18 MR. SANDERS: Again, we'll suspend the deposition
19 at this point in time, until it's reconvened.

20 MR. DOUBERLEY: If you would, expedite a
21 transcript beginning with my questions.

22 (Witness excused.)

23 (Thereupon, the deposition was adjourned at
24 approximately 12:40 p.m.)

25 * * *

Verbatim Reporting Services, Inc.

12345 Brighton Bay Trail North
Jacksonville, Florida 32246

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Phone: (904) 355-0198
flalaurie@bellsouth.net

March 30, 2014

William M. Douberley, Esquire
Douberley, McGuinness & Cicero
1000 Sawgrass Corporate Square
Suite 590
Sunrise, Florida 33323

In re: Hammond, et al. vs. Grand Lodge
Case No. 16-2012-CA-8054-MA Division: CV-E

Dear Mr. Douberley:

Attached hereto is the E-Tran copy you requested of the transcript of the deposition of your client, Grand Master Danny R. Griffith, taken in the above-styled case.

Please have Mr. Griffith read his deposition transcript and complete and sign the corresponding errata sheet, then please forward the original executed errata to Mr. Sanders, as he is being provided with the original transcript.

If you have any questions or if I may be of further assistance to you, please don't hesitate to call.

Cordially yours,


Laurie J. Miller,
Court Reporter

cc: Kevin S. Sanders, Esquire

The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Florida

DANNY R. GRIFFITH
Grand Master

July 18, 2013

1059 Birchwood Drive
Orange Park, FL 32065-6245
Res. (904) 272-5469
Mbl. (904) 465-4462
E-Mail: tdcgriff@bellsouth.net

Hon. Reynaldo C. Viray, Worshipful Master
Albert J. Russell Lodge No 126
4492 Summer Haven Blvd. S.
Jacksonville, Florida 32258

Re: Walter M. Hammond Reinstatement

Dear Worshipful Master, Wardens, and Members.

A review of our Grand Lodge files reflects correspondence referencing the reinstatement of Walter M. Hammond from Albert J. Russell Lodge No. 126. The correspondence, dated October 4, 2011, was addressed to then Grand Master, Jim J Harris, requesting permission to undertake procedures on balloting for a Petition for Reinstatement of Walter Hammond in accordance with Regulation 44.76 of the Digest of the Masonic Law of Florida.

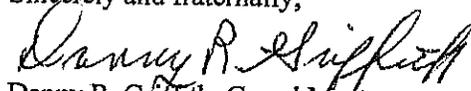
It is my decision, based upon review of said correspondence, to permit Albert J. Russell Lodge No. 126 to proceed with the process of the reinstatement of Walter M. Hammond, in accordance with Regulation 44.76. This process will initially require the Lodge to vote to proceed at a Stated Communication. In the event a favorable vote is obtained to proceed, I require that a copy of the Due Notice to the membership be filed with my office a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the final vote.

44.76 When the Grand Lodge, either in the exercise of its original jurisdiction or on appeal, imposes or affirms a penalty of indefinite suspension or of expulsion, no action in respect to reinstatement shall be taken by a Particular Lodge without express written permission or consent of the Grand Lodge or its authority.

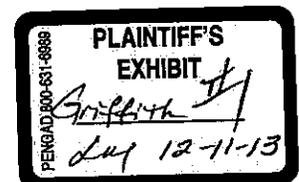
44.72 A petition for reinstatement from an indefinite suspension may be filed with the Secretary and voted upon at a Stated Communication after being presented at a previous Stated Communication, but the membership must have due notice. Provided, if such petition is rejected, the Petitioner may not petition the Lodge for reinstatement until after one (1) year from the date of such rejection.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions or require additional direction.

Sincerely and fraternally,


Danny R. Griffith, Grand Master

Cc: Francisco P. Velasco, Secretary, Albert J. Russell Lodge No. 126
Jeffrey S. Foster, D.D.G.M., 12th Masonic District
Robert P. Harry, P.G.M., Chairman, Masonic Jurisprudence Committee
Richard E. Lynn, P.G.M., Grand Secretary
Alan S. Rosenthal, P.D.D.G.M., Chairman, Penal Affairs Panel



"Together We Can Accomplish Anything"

Albert J. Russell Lodge No. 126
Free & Accepted Masons
P.O. Box 17711
Jacksonville, Florida 32245-7711
(904) 894-9081 email: Jax_boyeth@yahoo.com

August 6, 2013

M.: W.: Danny R. Griffith, Grand Master
The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of F. & A. M. of Florida
220 N Ocean Street
Jacksonville, FL 32202

Re: Walter M. Hammond

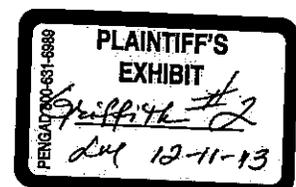
Dear M.: W.: Danny Griffith:

At our Stated Meeting on August 6, 2013 your letter dated July 18, 2013 was read and a ballot was spread to proceed with the process of the reinstatement of Walter M. Hammond. After the balloting was completed it was found that the ballot was DARK because of the numerous black cubes I declared the ballot was closed. Therefore, I'm reporting to you that Walter M. Hammond's ballot to be reinstated was rejected.

Fraternally,



Reynaldo C. Vijay
Worshipful Master



In Solomon Lodge
No. 20, F. & A.M.
25 E First Street
Jacksonville, Florida

Charges Against

Brother John Robert Stokes

Who resides at 12544 Herblore Drive; Jacksonville, FL 32225-3400

Whose mailing address is 12544 Herblore Drive; Jacksonville, FL 32225-3400

Whose telephone number is (904) 221-2544 and Mbl. (904) 591-7163

and who is a member of Solomon Lodge No. 20, F. & A.M., and a Plural Member of
Lewis A. Armistead Lodge No. 403, F. & A.M.

June 17, 2013

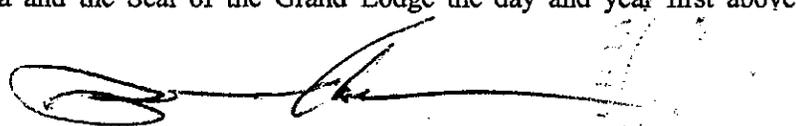
To Brother Stokes:

You are hereby notified that charges of unmasonic conduct have been filed against you in The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Florida, a copy of said charges is attached hereto.

A copy of these charges have been delivered to the Worshipful Masters and Secretaries of Solomon Lodge No. 20, F. & A.M., and Lewis A. Armistead Lodge No. 403, F. & A.M.

You are required to file your answer to these charges within ten (10) days of receipt of said charges, which answer shall specifically admit, deny, or excuse each allegation of the charges. Your answer will be reviewed by the Grand Master.

Witness my signature as Grand Secretary of The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Florida and the Seal of the Grand Lodge the day and year first above written.



M.: W.: Richard E. Lynn, P.G.M., Grand Secretary
The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Florida.

Cc: Grand Master
Deputy Grand Master
Chairman, Penal Affairs Committee
D.D.G.M., 11th Masonic District
Worshipful Master, Solomon Lodge No. 20
Secretary, Solomon Lodge No. 20
Worshipful Master, Lewis A. Armistead Lodge No. 403 (Plural Lodge)
Secretary, Lewis A. Armistead Lodge No. 403 (Plural Lodge)

1



To the Most Worshipful Grand Master, Grand Wardens and Members of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Florida located at 220 North Ocean Street, Jacksonville, Florida:

In Re: Charges against Right Worshipful John R. Stokes who resides at 12544 Herblore Drive, Jacksonville Florida 32225 and is a member of Solomon Lodge No. 20.

Right Worshipful John R. Stokes on or about December 21, 2012, did submit a Resolution on the "Procedure Legislation".

The undersigned hereby charges Right Worshipful John R. Stokes with unmasonic conduct as hereinafter specified:

1) **44.01** As piety, secrecy, obedience, temperance, truth, honesty, chastity and charity are a few of the **many virtues upon which mystic covenants and virtues are based, so their contrarities, profanity, evil speaking, insubordination, deceit, intemperance, lewdness and derision are a few of the many vices which are subjects of fraternal discipline, and for the correction or vindication of which every Lodge involved is responsible to the whole Fraternity, and**

2) **26.21** No Mason or Masons subject to the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Florida shall, by written or printed critical or controversial communications of any kind, circularize the Officers and members of any Particular Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction.

Right Worshipful John R. Stokes submit a Resolution on the "Procedure Legislation" where he stated in the ninth Whereas: "Most Worshipful Jim Harris and Most Worshipful Joe Fleites were asked where in the Digest the Jurisprudence Committee had the authority to prevent a resolution from getting to the craft and were either unwilling or unable to provide the location, and"

See exhibit number one Resolution Procedure Legislation submitted by Right Worshipful John R. Stokes, date stamp on back of second page received by the Office of Grand Lodge.

In a letter sent by me as Chairman of Jurisprudence Committee dated February 26, 2012 to Right Worshipful John R. Stokes,

12.15 Any proposed amendment or alteration of the Constitution, or Regulations to be presented to the Grand Lodge for adoption at an Annual Communication shall be submitted to the Grand Secretary before December 31 **by Resolution explaining the reasons for amending the Constitution or Regulation or proposing new Constitutional provisions or Regulations**, using no more than two letter size typewritten single spaced pages; and must be sent by the Grand Secretary to each Particular Lodge, the Grand Lodge Elective Officers, the District Deputy Grand Masters, the District Instructors, and Past Grand Masters no later than sixty (60) days prior to the Grand Lodge Annual Communication. (1993)

This writer responded to his question on the second page "As you can read in Chapter 12, Regulation 12.15 of the Digest of Masonic Law states **explaining the reasons for amending the Constitution or Regulation or proposing new Constitutional provisions or Regulations**. It

was the opinion of the Jurisprudence Committee that your Legislation did not meet this requirement.

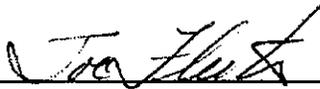
See Exhibit number two, Letter sent to Right Worshipful John R. Stokes on February 26, 2012.

Right Worshipful John R. Stokes was not truthful in the writing of the "Resolution Procedure Legislation" and this was submitted to the members of Grand Lodge for their consideration.

Witness having knowledge of the foregoing Most Worshipful Jim J Harris P.G.M. who resides at, P.O. Box 780412, Sebastian, FL 32978-0412 Phone Number (772) 532-4053 and Most Worshipful Joe Fleites P.G.M., who resides at 9725 S.W. 78 Loop Ocala, FL. 34481 Phone number (305) 804-8930

On information and after due and careful investigation the undersigned verily believes that Right Worshipful John R. Stokes, as in charge No.1 Deceit, and in charge No.2, printed critical or controversial communications of any kind, circularize the Officers and members of any Particular Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction.

The undersigned upon his or their Masonic honor allege the above charges are true except those alleged upon information and belief and the undersigned verily believe those to be true after due and careful investigation :



Most Worshipful Joe Fleites P.G.M.

9725 S.W. 78 Loop Ocala, FL. 34481

Phone number (305) 804-8930

Oleeta West Dade Lodge 145

Miami Springs Florida

Charges filed this 10th day of June A.L. 6013, A.D. 2013.



M.:W.: Richard E. Lynn, Grand Secretary

Grand Lodge of Florida, F. & A.M

The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Florida

JOE FLEITES
Past Grand Master

9725 SW 78 Loop
Ocala, FL. 34481
Mbl. (305) 804-8930
E-Mail: jfleites@bellsouth.net

February 26, 2012

John R. Stokes
12544 Herblore Drive
Jacksonville, FL. 32225

Dear R.: W.: Stokes:

The Jurisprudence Committee reviewed the Legislation you presented in great detail. 27 of the 28 members present concurred that it was in violation of the Digest of Masonic Law. The Digest is very clear on the procedure for a member who has been suspended or expelled from the Fraternity to follow.

44.75 Grand Lodge has inherent power to reinstate an expelled or suspended member upon petition of such member without necessity of action by a Particular Lodge and may exercise such power after review of all circumstances relating thereto and report of appropriate committee thereon and may entertain and grant petition of a Particular Lodge for reinstatement of a member or former member of the Lodge expelled by the Grand Lodge after investigation and report of appropriate committee thereon.

This section clearly states that Mr. Walter M. Hammond needs to file the petition needed to bring before Grand Lodge for action. If a petition is filed, the Grand Master will appoint a sub-committee from Jurisprudence which will then report its recommendation to the members of Grand Lodge for action.

12.15 Any proposed amendment or alteration of the Constitution, or Regulations to be presented to the Grand Lodge for adoption at an Annual Communication shall be submitted to the Grand Secretary before December 31 by Resolution explaining the reasons for amending the Constitution or Regulation or proposing new Constitutional provisions or Regulations, using no more than two letter size typewritten single spaced pages, and must be sent by the Grand Secretary to each Particular Lodge, the Grand Lodge Elective Officers, the District Deputy Grand Masters, the District Instructors, and Past Grand Masters no later than sixty (60) days prior to the Grand Lodge Annual Communication. (1993)

Additionally you asked where in the Digest was the requirement not met by your legislation. As you can read in chapter 12 section 12.15 of the Digest of Masonic Law, states **explaining the reasons for amending the Constitution or Regulation or proposing new Constitutional provisions or Regulations**. It was the opinion of the Jurisprudence Committee that your Legislation did not meet this requirement.

By following 44.75 and the Digest of Masonic Law you will still have accomplished what you all are looking for, which is to bring this up for a vote before the members of Grand Lodge.

Fraternally

Joe Fleites

Joe Fleites P.G.M.
Chairman, Jurisprudence Committee
cc: Grand Master
Grand Secretary

Resolution Procedure Legislation

Whereas: In December of 2011 a resolution was submitted to Grand Lodge in proper format and before the time deadline, and was to address the craft on a questionable suspension/ Masonic charges, and

Whereas: : There are a growing number of brothers that are of the opinion that his rights were violated and the penalty is too severe, and the resolution was signed by over two hundred and twenty members of the craft in good standing, and

Whereas: The resolution was addressed to the Grand Lodge Delegates in accordance with the provisions found in the Digest of Masonic Law of Florida, Article 4 Sections one and two where it states "the supreme head and authority of Ancient Craft Masonry in this jurisdiction." And "It has original jurisdiction over all subjects of legislation for the benefit of the Craft, and judicial powers in the interpretation and administration of its own Laws, and in the trial and punishment of its own Officers and members, and appellate jurisdiction in all cases involving Masonic rights and benefits-not in violation of this Constitution, and the established Landmarks of the Order;

Whereas: Precedents have been set and many resolutions are found in the Grand Lodge Proceedings that had the recommendations for and against them by the Jurisprudence Committee and

Whereas: The resolution was prevented from being included in the Legislative Packet thereby denying the Lodges represented their right to make an informed decision, and

Whereas: this gives the appearance that members of the Jurisprudence Committee either felt or did not have faith that the Members of the Lodges represented at Grand Lodge had the intelligence to make the decision or that the decision would not be the one they wanted, and

Whereas: It is believed that the Jurisprudence Committee's opinion is important and afforded them by the Digest of Masonic Law, nowhere does the Digest give them the authority to withhold any resolution from the Delegates of the particular Lodges at a Grand Lodge Communication, and

Whereas: The authority of the Jurisprudence Committee throughout the digest only gives them authority to recommend approval or rejection and

Whereas: Most Worshipful Jim Harris and Most Worshipful Joe Fleities were asked where in the Digest the Jurisprudence Committee had the authority to prevent a resolution from getting to the craft and were either unwilling or unable to provide the location, and

Whereas: A member of the craft asked for an explanation at the Grand Lodge Communication for not putting it on the Grand Lodge floor and not being placed in the legislative packet. He was told that it was not the correct regulation and therefore it was not necessary to put on the floor, and

Whereas: The brother at the microphone at the Grand Lodge Communication respectively requested twice after twice providing copies so that it could be placed on the floor for a vote, and his requests were ignored, depriving the Delegates of their rights to submit resolutions and their right to vote on resolutions , and

Whereas: It is believed that the two hundred members of the craft had a right to be heard by the Grand Lodge Delegates, and the eight hundred + delegates had a right to decide for themselves if the correct regulation was used and

Whereas: The Grand Lodge Delegates make up Grand Lodge and it is proper for them to have the final say in all matters of the Masonic Fraternity in accordance with article 4 sections one and two,

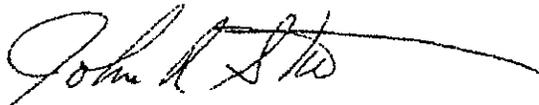
Therefore be it resolved: That all future resolutions be reviewed by the Resolutions Committee as found in Chapter 13 section 2 and that no one member serve on both committees and the Jurisprudence Committee make recommendations to the Grand Master as outlined in Chapter 13 and the digest be changed to read: (Changes are underlined and bold typed)

Fraternal Committees - The Fraternal Committees of the Grand Lodge.

- (1) The Committee on Masonic Jurisprudence, which shall be divided into such sub-committees as shall be prescribed herein or by Regulations of Grand Lodge, and such other sub-committees as the Grand Master shall deem appropriate, but there shall be a sub-committee designated Committee on Resolutions, a sub-committee designated Committee on Masonic Digest, a sub-committee designated Committee on Appeals, a sub-committee designated Committee on Lodge Charters, a sub-committee designated Committee on Appendant and Allied Orders, and a sub-committee designated Committee on Foreign Relations.

Sub-committees shall be composed of a Chairman and at least two (2) other members. All Resolutions, except Memorial Resolutions, all penal appeals, all applications for Lodge Charters, all requests for recognition or withdrawal of recognition of organizations whose membership is predicated on Masonic affiliation, all correspondence or reports of recognized foreign Jurisdictions and all matters of recognition or withdrawal of recognition of foreign Masonic Jurisdictions and all matters of Masonic Law, customs, practices, policies and procedures shall be referred to this Committee for report and recommendation thereon. All resolutions shall follow the same procedure as legislation and included in the Grand Lodge Legislative packet and voted on by the craft. (Provided the resolution is not intended to defame or impune the reputation of an individual or group of individuals. ~~All Past Grand Masters in good standing shall be members of this Committee together with such additional members as may be appointed by the Grand Master.~~

Respectfully Submitted



R. W. : John R. Stokes

The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge
of
Free and Accepted Masons of Florida

DANNY R. GRIFFITH
Grand Master

September 3, 2013

1959 Birchwood Drive
Orange Park, FL 32065-6245
Res. (904) 272-5469
Mbl. (904) 465-4462
E-Mail: tdcsgriff@bellsouth.net

Hon. John R. Stokes
12544 Herblore Drive
Jacksonville, Florida 32225

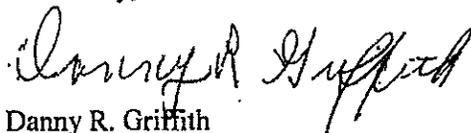
Re: Trial by Trial Commission

Dear Brother Stokes:

In order to protect the integrity of our system of Masonic Justice and to insure a fair and unbiased trial, I as Grand Master of Masons of Florida, under the authority granted to me under the Digest of Masonic Law, specifically section 44.23, do hereby direct the matter of alleged unmasonic conduct by R.:W.: John Stokes to be tried by Trial Commission and do hereby take Jurisdiction of this matter.

Once the Trial Commission has been appointed you, the accuser, the witnesses, and the Lodges will be notified of the date, time, and place of the trial.

Fraternally,



Danny R. Griffith
Grand Master

DRG/bb

Cc: Grand Secretary
Chairman, Jurisprudence Committee
Chairman, Penal Affairs Panel
D.D.G.M., 11th Masonic District
Worshipful Master, Solomon Lodge No. 20
Secretary, Solomon Lodge No. 20
Worshipful Master, Lewis A. Armistead Lodge No. 403 (Plural Lodge)
Secretary, Lewis A. Armistead Lodge No. 403 (Plural Lodge)
M.: W.: Joseph A. Fleites, P.G.M. (Accuser)

"Together We Can Accomplish Anything"

