

LODGE ACTIVITIES

As time goes by, the Business Practices Committee is finding fewer and fewer Lodges operating the activities of their Lodges in accordance with the Grand Lodge Statutes (Chapter 13 – LOCAL LODGE COMMITTEES) and Grand Lodge Activities Manual. Many Lodges keep saying they must sell alcohol to the Public in order to raise money for their Lodges. However, the Risk Manager of the Grand Lodge Insurance Department states in their Accident Prevention/Insurance Risk Newsletter (Winter 2022/2023) “The service of alcohol is a privilege the Lodge extends to Members and their guests, not a means of revenue for the Lodge.” Recommend every Exalted Ruler and all Lodge officers become very familiar with the following references:

Grand Lodge Statutes (Chapter 13 – LOCAL LODGE COMMITTEES)

Lodge Activities Manual

Grand Lodge Auditing and Accounting Manual, Chapter 3, para 3-122

Exalted Rulers, Lodge Officers, Committee Members Manual

Guidebook called “so You’re Planning to stage a Event or Activity

The Lodge Activities Manual states “It is the responsibility of the Exalted Ruler, other Lodge Officers and all the committees to develop and successfully execute a balanced program of Lodge Activities, including social functions, club activities, and community service projects. The responsibility for planning and managing such a program lies mainly with an appointed Lodge Activities Committee.”

The manual goes on to state “As the chief administrator of the Lodge, the Exalted Ruler should meet once a month with the Officers and Committee Chairpersons. The importance of these meetings cannot be stressed too greatly! They not only inform the Officers and Committee Chairpersons of what has been planned but also, as a brainstorming sessions, they are the best source for new ideas for Lodge activities.”

Appendix B contains a list of suggested Lodge Activities for Lodge meeting, club, and social occasions. There are two pages of ideas and many more ideas

would come from a brainstorming session. Appendix C has suggested procedures for committee chairpersons and committee members. There are two pages of ideas listed in this appendix.

Auditing and Accounting Manual, paragraph 3-122 – Lodge Activities and Reporting. This paragraph has very important procedures that must be followed in order to have a successful event. “The need for advance planning for any event cannot be over-emphasized. It is important that no event be scheduled unless there is reasonable assurance that a profit will be realized.” Fundraising events and Lodge Activities events are processed differently because of the reporting requirements. “For actual fundraising events it is important to segregate the value of the donation from the value of the ticket purchased. This is necessary to properly prepare the Lodge Federal Form 990.” The paragraph goes on to state “At the conclusion of the event and as soon as practicable all Revenues should be turned in to the Lodge Secretary for processing. The Committee Chairperson should prepare a report of the results of the event to read at a regular Lodge meeting.”

The Exalted Rulers, Lodge Officers, Committee Members Manual provides the basic responsibilities for all of the Lodge officers and includes the duties and responsibilities for all Committee Chairman. For example: “ENTERTAINMENT COMMITTEE: The club operation of the Lodge has its place in the success of the Lodge. Entertainment in a proper environment is an excellent way to involve the membership. A committee devoted to this project is a “must” for Lodges having a club operation.” Exhibit B-1 has a list of Statutory Committees and Subcommittees along with Additional Committees that the Exalted Ruler could appoint if needed.

Why would anyone want to re-invent the wheel? On the Grand Lodge website (elks.org), there is a document called: “So You’re Planning to Stage a Event or Activity.” It is recommended to use this guidebook whenever a special event or a fundraiser is being considered. Would it be used for doing a Friday night dinner or a Tuesday Taco night, not really, but still must plan to do whatever is necessary to make a profit.

The guidebook is divided into seven steps followed by a Special Event Worksheet. It starts off with some important items to consider before a decision is made such as: Decide who you want to attract to your function, allow plenty of preparation time, be aware of major holidays, try to avoid a conflict with major community events, and which days of the week would you get the best attendance?

Step 2: Choosing the Best Time of Day followed by recommendations.

Step 3: Developing an Invitation List followed what should be considered.

Continue with step 4 through step 7. Ensure the Special Event Worksheet is completed, followed by the Completed Project Report which must be turned in to the Lodge Secretary.

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DISCLAIMER

The Business Practice Committee of the B.P.O. Elks of the State of Florida has prepared this information to assist the Local Lodges of this Fraternal Order. The FSEA Business Practice Committee is neither responsible nor empowered to be responsible for the establishment of such procedures. The Business Practice Committee acts as a resource to assist Local Lodges. You should always consult your Lodge's tax and legal advisors before engaging in any endeavors or transactions to ensure compliance with Federal, State, and Local Laws.