

Rules for District 23 Master Mason Association Traveling Gavel (Amended 08/23/18)

The beautiful handcrafted cedar Gavel is the work and gift of W.: B. John Ross of Venice Lodge No. 301.

Traveling Gavel Case was donated by W.: Jon G. Wolf of Cary B. Fish Lodge No. 346.

The purpose of the Traveling Gavel is to promote visitation and fellowship within and throughout the Lodges of the 23rd Masonic District and is sponsored solely by the Masters & Wardens Association of the District a/k/a District 23 Master Mason Association (herein referred as “the Association”) with the following rules established:

A. Possession of the Gavel

1. Location, progress and retention of the Gavel are under the authority of the Association.
2. Possession of the Gavel must be in the entity of a Lodge and its presence shall be deemed an honor.
3. No individual Mason shall hold the Gavel in his personal possession other than for transporting.
4. The Gavel shall be displayed at the foot of the Master’s station (or close proximity) in Lodge possessing it.
5. The Gavel has no practical application and shall never be used as such or for any purpose other than display. Preservation or replacement of the Gavel is the responsibility of the Lodge in possession.
6. The location of the Gavel must be reported to Association at each of its monthly meeting by the Lodge in possession. Any Lodge not reporting its possession must return it to the preceding Lodge upon request of the Association.

B. Obtaining the Gavel

1. The Gavel may only be obtained from a Lodge by a contingency of five (5) or more regular members of a visiting Lodge (dual & plural members considered regular—no honorary members may be in the count).
2. The visitation may be at a Stated Communication, Called Communication or Social Night of the Lodge in possession of the Gavel.
3. The Gavel CAN NOT be obtained at an Annual Installation of Officers Communication (Stated or Called).
4. If two or more visiting Lodges attend the same night, the Lodge having the most members present shall receive the gavel. If the numbers are equal, the more distant Lodge shall take possession of the gavel.
5. Claim of the Gavel and exchange shall take place during an appropriate time at the closing of the Lodge.
6. Common courtesy and fulfillment of the Gavel’s purpose requires that all visiting Brethren be present at the opening of the Lodge and remain for fellowship and refreshment after the Stated Communication if such opportunity exists.

C. Restrictions on obtaining the Gavel (

1. Lodges are restricted from obtaining the gavel from the same Lodge that obtained it from them until after a term of 90 days has passed unless the Gavel has passed to at least one other Lodge in the interim.
2. No Lodge may obtain or retain the Gavel while that Lodge is in darkness.
3. A Lodge going dark for a specific time (i.e. summer) in possession of the gavel must pass it to the closest Lodge that will not be dark. The Lodge in possession must pass the gavel at the Association Meeting prior to going dark and has no inherent right to the gavel after such action.

D. Awarding of the Original “Encased” District Gavel

The Original District Gavel, “once lost—now found,” shall be presented to the Lodge which has possessed the Traveling Gavel for the most time during that physical year. The presentation will be made at the Annual meeting held in October. This is also a traveling award (duration of one year) and must be returned at the Association’s Annual Meeting presentation to the winner of the past year.