

District 5 Special Task Force Call Notes

Saturday, April 29, 2023

There were 23 participants on the call, and several had two members on the device. So about 25 on the call.

President Cheryl Wille-Schlesser welcomed the group, recapped the first call, and discussed her hopes for future work of the task force.

We did not have anyone volunteer to chair the task force so the Zone Alignment & Lodge Development and Support Committee will continue to chair it.

Duane Kittleson shared information that he obtained to answer questions we had on the first call.

- He has asked to discuss whether any District board member needs a benefit product during the spring International Board meeting.
- Chris Pinkerton explained that the products Central Lodge members are buying are the same ones offered to lodge members. Efforts to have Insurance Professionals (IP's) visit lodges have been met with resistance by many lodges that don't want them coming.
- A new product will be released – maybe by the third quarter.

The group discussed ways that we can promote insurance products and help IP's reach out to lodges. We thought electronic meetings, sharing information in newsletters, having Zone Directors include insurance product information or having IPs at events might help.

International Secretary Robin Fossum shared that there is a committee looking at District restructuring. There isn't a timeline and it is a topic for the spring International Board meeting. That prompted discussion about are the efforts of this task force necessary if we don't know what District lines will be? We determined that we can still explore how the District Board (however it looks and whatever our zones are) can help local lodges.

We had an email from Clarke Brekke asking about the purpose of zones, what zone directors do, and Darlene shared these resources.

District lodge

2.3 Organization and structure

SON lodges exist throughout the USA, Canada, and Norway and are divided into geographical districts, each of which are assigned local lodges. Each of these district lodges is known by its number assignment.

2.3.1 Consists of

A district lodge shall consist of its elected officers and directors, all of whom shall be benefit members, and delegates from each local lodge (who are not required to be benefit members), and the elected international officers and directors from the district. The officers of a district lodge shall be president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and such other officers and directors as specified in the district bylaws. The benefit provision for district board members shall not be required for countries, provinces, or states where SON is not authorized to sell SON financial benefit products.

2.3.2 Requirements

District lodges may be established by the IBOD within geographical areas having at least 3,000 members.

2.3.3 Optional division

Each district lodge may be divided into several geographical zones for administrative purposes. The boundaries of the zone shall be fixed by the district lodge and the description thereof shall be stated in the district bylaws.

How does the District Board do its job?

- Board members are assigned by the district president to mentor local lodges in their vicinity (within a ZONE)
 - Visit lodges.
 - Attending lodge events.
 - Be available to help with questions from members.
 - Provide leadership training.
 - Board members serve in officer positions such as president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, youth director, publicity director, cultural director and sports & recreation director.
- Currently district 5 has six (6) zones. There are two BOD members assigned to each zone which are referred to as zone directors. The zone directors may also hold an officer position which requires additional duties for the district in general.

Darlene gave an update from the April 14-15 Board meeting: Bylaw Proposal- passed.

101	78	2
Possible	Vote Yes	Vote No

We need to have the Board accept the vote and she has updated the bylaws.

We discussed how to communicate with the District members to get input for the zone changes and discussion. Posting the task force call notes, PowerPoint, FFFN, emails to leadership, and direct presentations to lodges were discussed.

The group discussed how zones were historically created (by population), how we have evolved to geography, and what representation is needed. One thought is if a zone has six or more lodges, they need two directors and if under six, one director. Or one could look at lodge membership as a guideline but sometimes the larger lodges need less help as they are doing okay. It's the smaller, struggling lodges that need more help.

Another discussion was on the call's comments on officer's vs zone directors, should they have to do both, compensation, and other thoughts.

The committee recommends the board discuss the task force call notes and then determine the next step.

The board wants to have the Task Force engaged in getting feedback. A combination of in-person listening sessions and ZOOM meetings might work. Having a template to lead these meetings would give board members consistent talking points and resources.

The timeline we'd like to see:

- April – Hold a call with the Task Force to discuss a timeline and what the board discussed.
- May– July- hold listening sessions in-person and via ZOOM.
- August- have another Task Force Call and see what the feedback is and develop two main proposals to take to lodges for input.
- August – September- get feedback on the two proposals.
- October- have a report to the board.
- October – December- take a bylaw proposal to the District 5 members (delegates in Middleton)

- January – announce results so the Nominating Committee can move forward.

There was a question about whether a lodge can move to another District? Duane explained that he was on an International Committee a number of years ago and there was a procedure to do so.

Discussion included:

- Zones are more administrative and that doesn't mean that if a lodge isn't in the same zone as another, they can't do social or other activities together.
- Zone structure is set up to help lodges.
- Population distribution- perhaps we should focus on that in order to make sure that we have enough potential board members rather than focusing on geography.
- Darlene shared the updated International Charter and Bylaws (Dec 2022) and District Bylaws (March 2022) as resources to use.
- We discussed the role of directors- can we help more electronically and not have the travel/gas/expenses of visiting in-person? Visits are nice but not essential. Distance is certainly an issue in several zones. Online meetings can offer a variety of topics.
- Adult Heritage Camps and the District 5 Convention can both have opportunities for leadership training, help sessions, and administrative support.

Judy Ghastin shared several maps that she worked on. Darlene will get them and scan them for the group.

Going forward:

1. Darlene will compile all the "possible zone alignment" maps as something to show lodges to prompt discussion.
2. She will compile both an online google survey and one that can be printed that task force members can take to lodges in their area to get feedback from. It will also ask questions about the structure of the board. There was a discussion to make sure local lodge officers discuss the survey.
3. Surveys and gaining input will take place in May-July. We are anxious to hear what happens at the International Board meeting so set the next call for Saturday, May 27, at 9:00 AM CST. We will close the online survey before the May 27 meeting so we have some initial feedback from the District but will continue to compile the in-person and other methods of getting input.
4. There was a suggestion to promote our District NLF Grant (up to \$200) that lodges could apply for to help them with technology.

At the end of the call, Cheryl reminded the group that she would like the D17/D18 and 990 confirmations from lodges to ensure that all had reported.

After the call, Jim Herman volunteered to work with potential maps based on population. Darlene referred this to our Vice President to get Jim the membership numbers.

Notes by Darlene Arneson, Chr

Zone Alignment and Lodge Development & Support Committees