

A message from Sons of Norway International Director Duane Kittleson

The delegates to the District 5 Lodge Meeting held in Middleton, WI on June 2022 passed a resolution instructing the District 5 President appoint a Special Committee (Task Force) to offer solutions to the difficulty the District Nomination Committee has in finding willing and qualified candidates to serve on the District 5 Board of Directors from the current zone alignment.

Here is the resolution as passed:

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the 2022-2024 District President shall appoint a Special Committee consisting of but not limited to current District Board members, past District Board members and District Members at large. The committee shall meet during the next biennium and present a recommendation of proposed solutions at the District Lodge meeting in June 2024. The Task Force should include diversification of selected appointees to include past, present, younger, older, different genders and from distant geographical areas that includes a more all-inclusive demographic appointee (s).

President Cheryl has asked me to help get this Task Force started and begin the work. Many of you Sons of Norway District 5 members have volunteered or agreed to help with this project. Thank You! I am asking District 5 Secretary Darlene Arneson to set up a ZOOM call at 10 AM CST Saturday, March 4. We will attempt to send an email invite to everyone that provided an email address. We will also publish the ZOOM call information in the FFFN which will be posted on Friday, March 3. If you were not contacted previously and would like to be a part of this task force please join us.

A most important question that I am sure many of you have is ***what is the purpose of a Sons of Norway District or Zone***. Well Jon Grinde, past International Director, past District 5 President and member of Idun 5-074 lodge in Madison, provided this perspective.

At the 11th Head Lodge (Followed by Supreme Lodge, and now International Lodge) Convention of Sons of Norway in Grand Forks, ND, July 7, 8, & 9, 1910, a constitution for district lodges was adopted. District lodges, which would have charge of the organization work, were to be established in states where there were at least 1000 members. ...The head lodge alone was authorized to establish districts. (Abbreviated from History of Sons of Norway, by Carl G. O. Hansen, Minneapolis, MN, December 1944)

Organization has always been the key word, in my experience and opinion, as to why districts and zones (formerly in District Five known as sub-districts) were established. The Home Office or Sons of Norway Headquarters depended on the districts to establish new lodges and to educate, guide, and instruct all lodges in the proper management and operation of Sons of Norway within their jurisdictions. Even with the ever-evolving nature of Sons of Norway today, I believe the Home Office continues to depend upon the districts to carry the load of organization.

Zones or sub-districts were established within districts to further shoulder some of the organizational work and maintain ties between lodges in close proximity to each other. A sort of "Divide and Conquer." All levels of leadership and organization within Sons of Norway have played strong roles over the history of the Society to maintain its motto of "Freedom, Fraternity, and Progress."

Jon M. Grinde