

ORDER SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF ITALY IN AMERICA

Grand Lodge of Massachusetts

85 River Street Suite 2

Waltham, MA 02453

Minutes of the State Council Meeting

Wednesday, October 18, 2023

The monthly meeting of the State Council was held at the Watertown Sons of Italy and was called to order by State President Rodolfo Viscomi at 7:00pm.

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS

Absent Excused: State Immediate Past President Denise Furnari

State Orator Brenda Buonanno

State Financial Secretary Pio Frittitta

State Trustee Sylvia Pacetti-Poirier

Absent: State Trustee Anthony Isgro

State First Vice President Marisa Ranalli read the Principles of the Order.

State Second Vice President Kathi Young read the opening prayer.

State President Rodolfo Viscomi asked for a moment of silence for our departed members.

State President Rodolfo Viscomi led the Pledge of Allegiance to our flag.

MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 20, 2023 MEETING

Motion made and seconded to accept the minutes as submitted. Voted and so ordered.

COMMUNICATIONS

An email was received from Salvatore Circosta, President of the St Padre Pio Lodge # 3013 of Springfield requesting an Ad for the Booklet being published for their Italian Gala on Saturday, October 28. A motion was made and seconded to purchase a Half Page ad for \$250.00. Voted and so ordered.

A newsletter was received from the Grand Lodge of California. Motion made and seconded to pass and file. Voted and so ordered.

NEW BUSINESS

The Trustees met prior to the Council meeting to review the books of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, Charitable and Educational Trust, and Benefit Insurance Commission for the quarter ending September 30, 2023 and found them to be in good order.

SUSPENSION OF MEETING

A motion was made and seconded to suspend the regular meeting. Voted and so ordered.

National Executive Director Shayla Kaestle, who was present via Zoom, was introduced by State Second Vice President Kathi Young. Shayla spoke about her experience with her local lodge and as National Executive Director

CHAIRS OF PERMANENT COMMISSIONS

State President Rodolfo Viscomi asked the newly appointed Chairs of Permanent Commissions, who had been invited to attend the meeting, to introduce themselves and report on their vision for their respective commissions.

Membership

Chair Renee Ouellette discussed needing more people throughout the state to join the Commission and advised that one of her first goals is to plan a membership drive with former scholarship winners.

Italian Culture/Historical

Chair Claudia Hartley discussed her Italian heritage and her goal to propel this organization forward by creating programming. She plans to hold 6 events per year to bring awareness, history, and knowledge of Italian culture with the end result being to increase membership. She is coordinating an event with I AM Books in the North End on November 5 with Katie Parla, a cookbook author and Italian food connoisseur.

Public Relations

Chair Dario Gagliano discussed his goal to learn and share authentic stories of Italian culture and language in America with local lodges and to share the history of the Grand Lodge with them as well.

Charitable and Educational Trust

Chair Mark DeLuca stated that this position will be a learning curve for him. President Viscomi stated that Mark is an Assistant Vice President in the insurance industry and has plenty of experience with numbers.

Organization and Education

Chair David Crisci explained his educational background and discussed his ideas of putting different learning items on the state website through videos, paper items, etc. His goal is to put Italian language classes and other educational opportunities online. He also mentioned redesigning the website, which will go hand in hand with our new CRM.

Scholarship

Chair Cynthia Gage discussed her time on this Commission eight years ago and her background as a business analyst and project manager. Her goal is to automate the scholarship process and remove the paper format. She hopes to bring innovative ideas and young faces into the Commission.

Benefit Insurance

President Rick Vitali explained the functions of the Commission, the biggest being to protect the policyholder's money. He advised that there are some very old policies on file and is looking for any information regarding the policyholders, and he or Paul Guida can be contacted for more information.

Junior Division

President Joe Salvo discussed his association with the Methuen Lodge # 902, which he joined when he was 18, his involvement with the Samuel J. Musumeci Junior Lodge # 2693 of Methuen, and the need to gain more members and institute more Junior Lodges throughout the state. He also discussed the need for more Italian languages in schools.

FUTURE OF THE ORDER (FOTO)

Salvatore Circosta spoke about the FOTO forum held at the National Convention in August and explained that National Past President Bob Bianchi had asked National Executive Director Shayla Kaestle to put a group of 25 members between the ages of 21 and 35 together to collaborate and participate in discussions regarding the future of the Order including what was being done correctly, and where improvements needed to be made. The selected representatives from Massachusetts included Dario Gagliano, Ian Hatfield, Renee Ouellette, Noah Kozub, and

himself. Representative from other states, some of whom were members of the IAFL (Italian American Future Leaders), an organization made up of various Italian organizations, were also in attendance.

Ian Hatfield reported on and showed slides under 'Goals' and discussed ways to increase membership to the numbers previously attained, how to prosper as an organization, how to reignite passion for Italian culture and heritage, and holding events at local lodges to recruit young people to join local filial lodges as well as the State Council, etc.

Renee Ouellete reported on and showed slides on the 'Rose Thorn Bud' the group exercise they participated in: 'Rose' being what is great, and is beautiful about what we are doing and that works for us, etc.; 'Thorn' refers to what is causing 'hiccups' and prevents us from moving forward to make changes in a productive way; and 'Bud' refers to how we are getting ahead, how we are going to continue to move forward and have family-friendly events and to continue to grow junior lodges in Massachusetts.

Noah Kozub discussed diverse ways to reach out to younger members from college clubs and organizations, and to share stories of immigration online. He suggested sending congratulatory notes to past scholarship recipients when they graduate, offering an effective way to open the door to communication with them in the hopes they will join their local lodge.

Dario Gagliano discussed the group's idea to introduce FOTO to Massachusetts and have a one-day FOTO event at the Watertown Lodge on February 17, 2024. They would expand the age group to include members between the ages of 21 and 40. At least 300 of our members fit the category. These smart, motivated people could build projects that we can implement immediately at the local, state, and national levels. Discussions with state members followed on FOTO and how 'young people' will help our lodges move forward.

WELFARE OF THE ORDER

State President Rodolfo Viscomi thanked everyone for attending and stated that we have a great future with this Order.

State Second President Kathi Young led the closing prayer.

Having completed all business in accordance with the By-Laws, State President Rodolfo Viscomi declared the meeting adjourned at 8:38pm

Respectfully submitted,
Rita M. Anderson
State Recording Secretary