

Minutes of the 66th, Annual Session

General Conference Grand Chapters Holy
Royal Arch Masons, United States, and

Bahamas, PHA, INC

June 28 through July 3, 2024

GRAND LUCAYAN RESORT

FREEP0RT, BAHAMAS



Minutes, Monday Morning

July 1, 2024

First Day, First Session.

Ritualist Opening Occasional Chapter:

The occasional chapter was opened by the host jurisdiction (BA.), at 8:30am, Deputy Grand High Priest Sylvanus Bethel Presiding, who then declared the occasional chapter open. The Most Excellent Grand High Priest, Lorne Basden was received and escorted to the east, and given grand honors and was presented the gavel at 8:45am. Grand High Priest Loren Basden asked that G.C.G.C. Grand King, Stephen M. Copher, Jr. (MI), be admitted, and the King said he wanted to come in with the other Grand Conference Officers. Grand High Priest Loren Basden welcomed all the companions to the conference, and to freeport and to the commonwealth of the Bahama Islands.

9:00am. The General conference officers entered the sanctuary, Led by general Grand king Stephen M. Copher, Jr. The grand Officers were given Grand honors, and the king was escorted to the east. the king requested that all Grand officers take their seats and ask Grand High Priest Loren Basden, if the local chapter could fill any empty seats. The Grand Conference was seated, and the Grand Conference Grand Marshals were asked to escort the General Conference Grand High Priest, Nathaniel Degraffinreaidt into the sanctuary.

9:10am. The general conference Grand high priest Nathaniel Degraffinreaidt entered the sanctuary he was escorted to the east and given grand Honors and was then presented the gavel.

Reception of Guest:

The G.C.G.H.P. Degraffenreidt ask for past jurisdictional Grand High Priest: They were,
P.G.H.P. Bobby Thompson (OK), P.G.H.P. Michael Berry Sr. (TX), P.G.H.P. Othello Burton (CA), P.G.H.P. James Reed (NC), P.G.H.P. Leslie Dean (BA), P.G.H.P. Arlander Reddick (KY), Mark Maxwell (KY), and P.G.H.P. Elvis Irby (TX).

Grand Encampment Grand Master, Robert Glenn (A). He was given Public Honors.

Past Grand Encampment Grand Master, Past High Priest, Russell Duckett was introduced.

The Grand Master of the commonwealth of the Bahama ISLANDS, The Honorable Lee Wallace was escorted into the sanctuary, and to the east and given Grand private honors. Grandmaster Wallace then welcomed everyone to Freeport Bahamas and wished all an enjoyable stay. He then received and welcomed from California, Past Grandmaster Charles Tanner.

Invocation:

The General Grand High Priest asked The Principal Sojourner for our invocation, and it was given by P.G.H.P. Richard wood, jurisdiction of the Bahamas.

ROLL CALL OF GENERAL GRAND OFFICERS:

A roll call of General Grand Conference officers was called for by G.C.G.H.P. Degraffinreadt,
General Grand Conference Grand High Priest --- Nathaniel Degraffinreadt (NC) – Present
General Grand Conference Deputy Grand High Priest -- - Vacant
General Grand Conference Grand King-----Stephen M. Copher, Jr. (MI) – Present
General Grand Conference Grand Scribe – Dr. Shawn G. Willis (OK)----- Present
General Grand Conference Grand Treasurer – Norman Thomas (TX) ----- Present
General Grand Conference Grand Secretary—Ronald D. Gerac (TX) -----Present
General Grand Conference Asst. Grand Sec. – Donald Crooms (KY) -----Excused
General Grand Conference Recording Sec.—Caldwell Jenkins Jr. (TN) ----Present
General Grand Conference Grand Trustees: 3 Year—Micheal Lovings (TN) – Present
2 Year –Bobby Thompson (OK) – Present
1 Year -Jimmy Chapel (NY) – absent
General Conference Grand C.C.F.C. Dale E. Weaver (MD) --- Present
General Grand Convention Coordinator --- Willie J. Tate (TX) -----Present
General Grand Conference Legal Advisor Harrison Gregg (TX) - Present

ROLL CALL OF JURISDICTIONS:

A Roll call was made of jurisdictions and any absentees were noted, present were, (Alabama), (California), (Florida), (Kentucky), (Maryland), (Michigan), (Missouri), (North Carolina), (Oklahoma), (Tennessee), (Texas), (Bahamas), (Virgin Islands)

ROLL CALL OF ALLIANCE DEPUTIES:

A Roll call was made of the Deputies of the Alliances. Reports were submitted to the General Grand Secretary, PGHP Ronald D. Gerac., The Deputies submitted reports

RULES OF THE DAY:

Reading of rules of the day by General Grand Attorney Harrison Gregg. It was motioned and seconded that report from the General Grand Attorney be received and the rules followed.

General Grand High Priest Nathaniel Degraffinreaidt ask all companions to abide by the rules.

READING of MINUTES – 2023:

_The Minutes from our 2023 conference in Louisville Kentucky. Were sent to all jurisdictional Grand High priest, and General Conference officers by General Grand Recorder Caldwell Jenkins Jr. This was announced by General Conferenced Grand High Priest Degraffinreaidt..

P.G.H.P. Clarence Traynham moved that all reports that did not involve money be excepted, was properly moved and accepted, motion carried

Move to accept, Stephen M. copher, Jr. (MI) Second by, Felix Griggs (TN), motion carried

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE:

__Credentials report given by General Grand Sec. Ronald Gerac (TX), he reported that 15 jurisdictions were present, and the voting strength was (101).

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS:

There were no changes made to committees.

After Noon Session, July. 1,2024

1:25pm. Opened with the Pledge Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and the singing of the Bahama National Anthem by the body. The principal Sojourner then blessed us with prayer.

GENERAL GRAND HIGH PRIEST ADDRESS:

_The General Conference Grand High Priest, Nathaniel Degraffinreaidt talked about keeping with the changes, upgrades, and progressions of this General Grand Chapter, this is how G.G.H.P. Degraffinreidt Began His Allocution. He then requests prayer from the principal Sojourner. He stated that he has had numerous opportunities to serve this grand body through his travels and visitations being the face of the General Grand chapter he expressed thanks to all other companions and brothers for their participation in all their works. General Grand High Priest Degraffenried noted that many jurisdictions are being proactive in their missions of uplifting the several causes of Holy Royal arch masonry, namely support of the youth, awarding scholarships, feeding the homeless, working with the sisters, and many more. He

expressed to the jurisdiction of Kentucky, appreciation for their hosting of the general conference last year with special thanks given to then grand high priest and current medical advisor companion Arlander Reddick.

General Grand High Priest Degraffenreidt outline his travels, noting that all of them were done at no cost to the General Grand Conference. All Jurisdictional Grand High priests were thanked for their recognition and hospitality shown to him and his officers upon their several visits. He noted his constitutional duty to step up and preside over the General Grand Conference, when in December 4/2023 he received word that his predecessor was no longer eligible to do so. General Grand High Priest spoke about the Heroines of Jericho voting to not attend in the Bahamas emphasizing that they violated their constitution namely Article 4 Section 1 and article 12 Section 1 saying in part that the Heroines of Jericho will meet annually at the same time and place as this General Grand Conference. General Grand High Priest Degraffenreidt continued to summarize the events surrounding the situation, as well as the high amount of negativity that came with it. He summarized his community service and encouraged us to pray for our youth and named states that have been hit with natural disaster.

Recommendations:

- (1) That we accept the recommendations from our ritual chairman, and that we thank him for all his work in that department. and we began accepting orders, 1st for rituals to allow the conference to have funds for purchasing, per our constitution Article (10) section F subsection (1) and seek a loan if Possible.
- (2) That we research obtaining a business credit card to help make our business to be more efficient if feasible.
- (3) That we work to get our Heroines of Jericho back in perspective with us.
- (4) To recognize Alaska as a member of this General Grand Conference.
- (5) That Honorary Past General Conference Grand High Priest honors be given to the following
 - (1) MEGHP Bobby Thompson (OK) Per Convent General
 - (2) PGHP Big Bryce Hardin (TX) (\$600.00)
 - (3) MWGM (TX) Michael T. Anderson – to be honored in St. Louis MO. Next year
 - (4) MEGM Robert Glenn (AL) per his position
 - (5) PGHP Othello Burton (CA)
 - (6) MWGM Commonwealth of the Bahamas, Lee Wallace

GCGHP Degraffenreidt ask that the General Grand Chapter Support these initiatives:

- (!) Partner with the National Dementia / Alzheimer's Org.
- (2) Continue to support our Veterans.
- (3) WORK HARD TO BUILD OUR RITUAL STATUS.
- (4) Mental Health and wellness.
- (5) Have peace and harmony in the ranks of this conference and Prince Hall Masonry.
- (6) Stay focused in our Constitution, if we write it we should stay in bounds with it.
- (7) Set up a disaster and relief committee.

(8) That we establish an awards program with Grand Chapter of the year, Grand High Priest of the Year, Grand Sec, and Grand Tres. Of the year. All will be based on community service and the precise work of each.

GGHP Degraffenreidt closed by thanking the Bahamas and Honorable Grand master Lee Wallace for having, and supporting this General Grand Conference, and all they have done to make our stay pleasant, enjoyable, and successful. We are grateful and we thank you. He thanked all General Conference Grand officers, Most Excellent Grand High Priest's and companions for the work that was displayed in making this conference a success.

Moved to receive by Dr. Shawn Willis (OK). Second by PGHP Felix Griggs (TN).

SECRETARY REPORT:

The Secretary's report was given by Ronald Gerac (TX). It was moved by P.G.H/P. Bryce Hardin (TX) to accept the report, and properly seconded by P.G.E.G.M. Russell Duckett to receive the report. Motion carried

TREASURER REPORT:

The Treasurer's report was given by General Grand Treasurer, Norman Thomas. His report was properly moved and seconded, and the motion passed.

AUDIT REPORT:

The audit report was given by the committee Chairman, H.P.G.H.P. companion Bobby Thompson (OK), PGHP Clarence Traynham (MD), GHP Michael Lovings (TN).

Move to accept, PGHP Harrison Gregg (TX) second by Dr. Shawn Willis (OK). Motion Carried, it was also recommended that any conflict be addressed by the committee.

RITUAL COMMITTEE:

_See report folder

GENERAL GRAND SCRIBE REPORT:

See The Report folder

GENERAL GRAND KING:

SEE The report folder

GENERAL GRAND DEPUTY REPORT:

See The report folder

REPORT of ALLIANCE DEPUTIES:

See The report folder

GENERAL GRAND HIGH PRIEST ADDRESS COMMITTEE:

chairman; Hon. Leslie M. Dean, General Conference Past Grand High Priest. (BA)

General Conference Grand Secretary, Ronald D. Gerac (TX)

General Conference Past Grand High Priest, Elvis Irby (TX)

General Conference Past Grand High Priest, Harrison Gregg Jr. (TX)

General Conference Past Grand High Priest, Norman Thomas (TX)

General Conference Past Grand High Priest, Mark Maxwell (KY)

General Conference Past Grand High Priest, Arlander Reddick (KY)

General Conference Past Grand High Priest, Willie J. Tate (TX)

The General Grand High Priests Address Committee had their meeting to discuss the General Grand Conference Grand High Priest Allocution. Their report reflected the same accolades and issues as stated by Grand High Priest Degraffenreidt. The committee had disagreements with the four recommendations from the Grand High Priest.

(1) To Accept the recommendation from the ritual committee chairman, thank him for his work in that department, and begin accepting orders for rituals enabling the conference to have funds for purchasing, per constitution (artical10, section subsection 1), and to seek a loan if possible. The committee rejected this recommendation on account of the statement about the loan.

(2) To research obtaining a business credit card to help our business become more efficient if feasible. The committee rejected this recommendation.

(3) For us to work to get our HOJ back in perspective with us. The committee rejects this recommendation and suggests that the jurisdictional Grand High Priests hold their respective Grand Courts accountable to their constitution.

(4) To recognize Alaska as a member of this General Grand Conference. The committee recommends deferring this matter until such time as specific prerequisites have been satisfied with regard to the jurisdiction of Oklahoma.

Moved by, PGHP Patrick Brathwaite (TX), second by, PGEGM Russell Duckett (NY) motion Carried with one opposition from Dr. Shawn Willis (OK), wanted clarification on Alaska.

TIME AND PLACE:

The General Grand Coordinator gave his report, Time and place is the Marriott St. Louis Airport. St. Louis MO. 63134. The dates are June.27 – July. 2,2025

Room rate \$145.00 per night plus 19.388% tax. Reservations must be received on or before Thursday, May. 21,2025 for information contact the hotel at (866)306-0942 or (314) 423-7900

BUDGET REPORT:

The budget committee turned in their report to the secretary, and the report is in the report file.

GENERAL GRAND CONFERENCE FUND RAISER (raffle):

The General Grand Conference at our last conference decided to have a fundraiser. The purpose of the fundraiser was to try to offset expenses to winners for the conference that was held in Freeport, Bahamas, in 2024. Of the thirty-nine (39) jurisdiction members of this General Grand Conference of Chapters Holy Royal Arch Masonry, ten participated. Dr. Shawn G. Willis is the chairman of this committee, The breakdown is as follows.

(1) Delaware (\$1,220.00), (2) Maryland (\$1,220.00),(3) North Carolina (\$1,220.00),(4) Oklahoma (\$1,220.00),(5) Tennessee (\$1,220.00),(6) General Conference Grand Scribe. Shawn Willis (\$3,100.00), (7) General Conference GHP Medford Campbell (\$200.00), (8) Illinois (\$120.00, (9) California (\$1,220.00). A full report is contained in the public folder.

STUDENT AID REPORT:

The financial Aid Committee submitted their report. The committee members are MEGHP Michael Berry Sr. (TX), MEGHP Bobby Thompson (OK), MEGHP Dr. Kenneth Allen (IN), and MEGHP Dr. Elton Lewis (FL). There were four students accepted for student aid. (!), Kaleb Paul (FL), (2), Eva Kilpatric (IN), (3), Teigan Hill, (OK), (4), Kandance Miller (TX). A full report is in the file folder.

KING CONTEST:

Chairman Grand King Stephen M. Copher, Jr. reported that only eight states participated in the king contest. A discussion took place addressing the issue, there was discussion about not allowing a state to submit a scholarship application if that state did not contribute to the king contest. After talking about the issue, it was decided that we would allow the submissions for this year and notify all the states of this issue next year.

Moved to accept by Grand King Stephen M. Copher, Jr. second by Grand Scribe Dr. Shawn Willis, motion carried.

CONSECRATION CEREMONY:

The Consecration ceremony was conducted by MEGHP Clarence Traynham (MD), and PGHP Richard Wood (BA). GCGCGHP Nathaniel Degraffinreadt presented certificates, and a medal

to all elected Grand officers, also to the CCFC PGHP Dale Weaver. He then presented metals to all companions that were present.

Nominations:

3:05pm. Principal Sojourner, Richard Wood (BA) rendered Prayer.

GCGCGHP: ----- Nathaniel Degraffinreadt (NC) ---- unopposed

DGCGCGHP: ----- Stephen M. Copher, Jr. (MI) --- unopposed

GCGK: ----- Micheal Berry (TX) ----- Dr. Shawn Willis (OK)

GCG Scribe: ----- James Hutchins (BA) ----- Michael Lovings (TN)

It was moved and properly second that all other officers retain their seats, motion carried.

ELECTION RESULTS:

The gavel was passed to GCGCPGHP Leslie Dean for the purpose of the elections.

GCGCGHP: ----- Nathaniel Degraffinreadt (NC)

DGCGCGHP: ----- Stephen M. Copher, Jr. (MI)

GCGK: ----- Dr. Shawn Willis (OK) 51.9 % of votes cast

GCG Scribe: ----- Michael Lovings (TN) 75.5 % of votes cast

GCG Treasurer: ----- Norman Thomas (TX)

GCG Secretary: ----- Ronald D. Gerac (TX).

GCG Asst. Secretary: ----- Donald Crooms (KY).

GCG Recording Secretary: -- Caldwell Jenkins Jr. (TN).

GCG Convention Coordinator: ----- Willie J. Tate (TX).

GCG Asst. Convention Coordinator: --- Elvis Irby (TX).

Trustees: 3 Year: Jimmy Chapel (NY), 2 Year: Gregory Walker (MO),

1 Year: Russell Duckett (NY).

GCGCCFC: Dale Weaver (MD).

4:25pm. All officers were sworn in by PGCGCGHP Leslie Dean.

4:30pm. Prayer was rendered by Principal Sojourner Richard Cook, the General Conference of Grand Chapters, Grand High Priest Nathaniel Degraffinreaidt closed the 66th. Annual conference.