



**GRAND UNITED ORDER OF ODDFELLOWS FRIENDLY SOCIETY NO: 204F**

**MINUTES OF THE ZOOM MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
(COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT)**

held on  
**SATURDAY, 8<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2020**

**Tel No: 0161 872 3356**  
**Fax No: 0161 848 8574**  
**Email: [guoofs@aol.com](mailto:guoofs@aol.com)**  
**Web Site: [www.guoofs.com](http://www.guoofs.com)**

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**Due to technical difficulties and audio issues affecting the Grand Master, the Deputy Grand Master, Sister S. R. Whitehouse presided and the Meeting commenced at 09.46 a.m.**

**PRESENT:**

<b>Sister M. A. Blankson-VanDyck</b>	<b>Chairman/Grand Master</b>
<b>Sister S. R. Whitehouse</b>	<b>Vice Chairman/Deputy Grand Master</b>
<b>Brother R. W. Penn</b>	<b>Immediate Past Grand Master</b>
<b>Brother N. Robinson</b>	<b>Grand Secretary</b>

**Directors:**

**Sister P. A. Palmer  
Brother M. Gordon  
Brother P. C. A. Hlland**

**Also Present:**

**Principal Directors of the Grand United Trustees Limited:**

<b>Brother V. M. Houldsworth, P.G.M.</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>Chairman</b>
<b>Brother D. B. Whittaker – P.G.M.</b>		
<b>Sister J. Birch</b>		

**And**

<b>Brother D. Oakes</b>	<b>Deputy Grand Secretary</b>
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All were present but Brother Hlland left at 10.30 a.m. Meeting commenced at 9.46 a.m.

The Grand Master, although in attendance for a time, had no audio and the Deputy Grand Master chaired the meeting initially and opened the meeting welcoming everyone.

**2020/8/1      IN MEMORIAM:**

**Brother M. Nsiah-Buadi - Late of "London United" Lodge No:  
11636 – London:**

Noted, Worthy Brother Mike Nsiah-Buadi, PNG, PNF, PWCM, PGM, late of London United Lodge 11636 born on 21<sup>st</sup> April 1947 and passed away on 19<sup>th</sup> April 20, aged 73 years.

Worthy Brother Mike was admitted as a member of London United Lodge No. 11636 in 1985. He, was an active and enthusiastic member, served his Lodge and Order with faithfulness, punctuality and sincerity. He held practically every office available within the Lodge Membership and the Council. He worked as the Council Secretary of the Council Master's Chapter for a number of years.

Worthy Brother Mike became the seventh member from London United Lodge No. 11636 to be installed as the Grand Master of the Order worldwide at Llandudno for the term 2012-2014.

While, as the Grand Master, Worthy Brother Mike officially represented the Central Body at the Fraternal Annual Conferences of Ghana & Jurisdiction. The Committee of Management, Ghana & Jurisdiction in recognition of his impeccable record in Oddfellowship and appreciation of his visits to the Jurisdiction, honoured him with the title of Past Most Venerable Grand Patriarch (PMVGP) of the Patriarchy, Ghana & Jurisdiction.

Over the past two or three years, his health began to show signs of deterioration but he was determined to continue as usual to attend General Lodge Meetings and Annual Movable Conferences. He was a true Oddfellow indeed.

It was Worthy Brother Mike's wish that he be buried in his home town in Ghana. The date for the funeral service is not known but arrangements are in progress to repatriate his body to Ghana for internment at Akim Osorase District, Akim Achiasi, Ghana.

Worthy Brother Mike leaves a widow namely Worthy Sister Emma Nsiah-Buadi, PMNG (Naomi Household of Ruth), PCGR (Past Most Noble Governor's Chamber) London, two daughters, Phyllis and Christobel and four grandchildren.

Worthy Brother Mike Nsiah-Buadi will be sadly missed by all his family, Brethren and friends.

May his soul rest in perfect peace

On the Grand Master's instruction, the Meeting stood in a minute's silence in remembrance of all Brethren that have passed away since the last meeting.

**2020/8/2 MINUTES:**

**IT WAS RESOLVED, AGREED:** “that the Minutes numbered 2020/2/1 to 2020/2/23 recording the business conducted at the Meeting held Saturday the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2020 be approved and be signed by the Grand Master when next at Head Office.”

**2020/8/3 COVID-19:**

Noted, the situation was evolving daily and there is no telling what restrictions may be put in place by the Government and the Board resolved to follow Government advice and adhere to the stipulation that Branches hold an Annual General Meeting by the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020, even if online and that regarding any claims for Sickness Benefit due to having to isolate, that Branch Committees of Management have discretion over authorisation of Sickness Benefit claims and a statement concerning the requirement to hold an AGM by the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020 be included on the Order website.

**2020/8/4 ANNUAL RETURNS/ACCOUNTS:**

Noted, the deadline for the receipt of Consolidated Lodge Returns was the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2020. All returns have been received and copied to the Actuary and the Accounts and Committee of Management Reports required to be forwarded to the Regulator by the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020 or 14 days before the Branch Annual General meeting, whichever is the earlier date, had all been filed as required.

**2020/8/5 NUMERICAL STRENGTH:**

Noted, the strength of the Order as at the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019 including comparatives for the previous year were detailed to the Meeting.

**2020/8/6 BRANCHES:**

**“WOODLANDS LODGE” NO: 185 – HAWORTH:**

Noted, the Grand Master and Deputy Grand Master had represented the Central Body at the Lodge meeting held on Tuesday the 11<sup>th</sup> February 2020 at the Bronte Hotel, Haworth and a Report by the Grand Master had been appended to the Agenda.

**IT WAS RESOLVED, AGREED:** “the Grand Master and Deputy Grand Master be thanked for representing the Central Body and the Grand Master be thanked for her written Report.”

**2020/8/7 ORDER ASSURANCE/HELPING HANDS ASSURANCE FUNDS:**

Noted, The Report on Policies issued during the 12 months ended the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019 and the Board believe there is still a place in the world for the Society's products and has a clear strategy going forward for promoting the Society's products.

**2020/8/8 OFFICER'S LIABILITY INSURANCE:**

Noted, the current policy terminates on the 18<sup>th</sup> August 2020 and the premium last year was **£2,628.60** for **£3,000,000.00** cover. The Grand Secretary informed that the Brokers had confirmed that the company previously providing the insurance cover was no longer doing such business and the Broker's were seeking alternative quotes.

**IT WAS RESOLVED, "that the Grand Secretary be authorised to continue appropriate cover."**

**2020/8/9 SOCIETY'S ACTUARY/ACTUARIAL INVESTIGATIONS:**

Noted, the Form FSC4 Interim Valuation Report confirming no change in the Society's financial condition that is required in a non-valuation year had been filed at the Bank of England as required, and despite the effects of the pandemic on the financial markets, the Actuary informs that if interest rates stay at their current low levels until the end of the year, that although the Society remains strong, Branches are likely to experience valuation deficits following the Actuarial investigations as at the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020. The Actuary suggested it may be worth looking into how weaker Lodges may be supported in this event to avoid the situation that arose following the last full Valuation as at the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017.

It was agreed that the Grand Secretary seek Actuarial advice on the options available to the Board for assistance from Central Funds.

**2020/8/10 ORDER DIARY:**

**"2021 EDITION":**

Noted, the issues brought up at the previous Board Meeting were raised with the suppliers and quotation received for two diaries. The current diary without maps, and an alternative sample.

**IT WAS RESOLVED, AGREED: "that the Grand Secretary be authorised to order 175 diaries of the alternative sample with cream inlay".**

**2020/8/11 BOARD DEVELOPMENT COMPLIANCE:**

Noted, by now 8 of 11 Skillcast courses should have been completed with two more completed by the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020.

**IT WAS RESOLVED, AGREED:** “that the immediate Past Grand Master, Brother Richard Penn, be excluded from the courses due to his employment qualifications and his short tenure in office.

**2020/8/12 THE ASSOCIATION OF FINANCIAL MUTUALS:**

Noted, the Association has informed that it will not be holding any formal physical meetings for the remainder of this year but will be holding a range of online meetings and webinars.

**2020/8/13 PROGRESSION OF THE ORDER:**

**13.0** Noted, the Deputy Grand Master, Sister Sally Whitehouse officially welcomed back to the Board, Brother R.W. Penn P.G.M. in his capacity as Immediate Past Grand Master until the next election Conference.

**13.1** Noted, it had already been notified to the Board that “The Big One” show at Chaddesden Park, Derby on Sunday the 7<sup>th</sup> June 2020 had been cancelled but a laptop has been purchased for the use at any shows and also for Zoom meetings.

**13.2** Further noted, the Actuary had provided new Key Information Documents for the Cashbuilder Plan but in the present circumstances it had been agreed it was not the time for marketing the promotion of Guaranteed Bonuses for the Plan.

At this point, the Deputy Grand Master handed the chairing of the meeting to the Grand Master.

**2020/8/14 MARKETING STRATEGY:**

Noted, Head Office had taken delivery of certain promotional goods as outlined to the meeting.

**2020/8/15 FAMILY FUN DAY:**

Noted, due to circumstances, the next Family Fun Day will be scheduled for 2022.

**2020/8/16 REPORT BY THE SOCIETY’S TRUSTEE:**

Noted, a Zoom Board Meeting had been held on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> August 2020 and the Chairman, Brother Vaughan Martin Houldsworth reported on the following:

**(i) Little Hulton Property:**

There had been an issue of the non-reimbursement of insurance premium of **£1,160.20** necessitating a withdrawal from the Rent Security Deposit Deed which has since been repaid and legal fees for **£570.00** taken from the Rent Security Deposit had also been reimbursed by the tenant.

**(ii) Old Trafford Property:**

Metrorod had investigated flooding and a pungent odour in the basement of the property but were unable to get their tools to unblock the gully and a quotation of **£1,596.23** plus VAT had been accepted for an excavation in the basement to remove the gully and carry out further high power water jet works and install a new gully and advice was awaited when the work could be scheduled.

**(iii) Dinas Powys Property:**

It had been agreed that the tenant surrender the existing Lease and enter into a new 10 year Lease at **£10,000.00** per annum with the terms of the new Lease to merge with the existing Lease; an initial 6 months rent free with a rent review at the end of year 5, subject to a minimum increase of 5% and a maximum increase of 10% and Heads of Terms have been provided to the Society's Solicitors.

**(iv) Stockport Property:**

No developments reported since the Agents of the bank had informed the property would be closing on the 26<sup>th</sup> May 2020, with a Lease in place until the 25<sup>th</sup> December 2022, but the Society's property advisor had informed due to Covid-19 the premises were remaining open beyond the date indicated.

**(v) Money on Deposit:**

Santander Instant Reserve Account : **£ 908.16**

Nat West Business Reserve Account : **£70,000.00**

**(vi) Accounts & Report Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019:**

The Director's Report and Financial Statement provided to the meeting had been approved for adoption by the Annual General Meeting.

(vii)

**Ground Rents:**

**Woodford Green:**

The situation with the Head Lessee was still being looked into by the Society's property advisor along with the Society's Solicitors and Eric Shapiro and the latest advice from the Society's property advisor had been circulated in which he advised that the Head Lessee was not easy to deal with and were apparently aware of the potential worth of the land, being willing to surrender their interest in the Leasehold at the maisonettes and settle all arrears in return for the Freehold of the site with garages, or willing to accept a cash sum to fall away from their Leasehold interest and the situation with the Head Lessee was holding up a proposed Lease extension at Flat 58 that had been originally instigated in 2018. The Trustee was thanked for their very informative and comprehensive report.

**2020/8/17 ACCOUNTS PERIOD ENDED 30<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2020:**

Noted, the Assets and Liabilities are in balance for the period ended and the Deputy Grand Secretary reported to the meeting for which he was thanked.

**2020/8/18 FRATERNAL MOVABLE CONFERENCES/AFFILIATED LODGES:**

**Ghana & Jurisdiction:**

Noted, the Grand Master, Sister Marian Blankson-VanDyck had been marooned in Ghana with a series of flights home cancelled due to borders being closed during the pandemic and her latest information was the possibility of a flight scheduled for the 10<sup>th</sup> September.

**2020/2/19 "20202 ZOOM ANNUAL MOVABLE CONFERENCE:**

**19.0**

Noted, the rescheduled Conference to take place via Zoom in the afternoon at 2pm. All Delegates and Past Grand Masters registered to attend the Conference in Brighton had been sent papers and advice on connecting up on Zoom and trial connections had taken place to aid a smooth meeting. All able to vote have been provided with Proxy Voting Forms and been requested to provide questions in advance and the questions received have been circulated to the meeting and the meeting was also informed who had confirmed they will be attending and who had provided completed voting papers and informed of their voting by proxy.

**19.1**

Noted, the Customer Contact Centre of the Jurys Inn and Leonardo Hotels UK & Ireland had confirmed that all details and pricing of this year's Conference had remained the same and the booking had been amended to Spring Bank Holiday weekend 2021 with **£19,500.00** already deposited and the balance now not due until next year.

**2020/8/20 “2021” ANNUAL MOVABLE CONFERENCE:**

Noted, that the original Conference scheduled for Brighton this year will hopefully take place and be a full Installation Conference at the same hotel next year.

**2020/8/21 “2022” ANNUAL MOVABLE CONFERENCE:**

Noted, no decision to be taken until nearer the time.

**2020/8/22 HEAD OFFICE STAFF/PREMISES:**

**22.0** Noted, Metrorod had investigated flooding and a pungent odour in the basement of the property but were unable to get their tools to unblock the gully and a quotation of **£1,596.23** plus VAT had been accepted for an excavation in the basement to remove the gully and carry out further high power water jet works and install a new gully and advice was awaited when the work could be scheduled.

**22.1** Noted, consideration was given to a Lone Worker Policy when only one member of Head Office staff is present and it was agreed that the Secretariat investigate the providing of a panic button system and key safe outside the office to enable emergency services to gain access in an emergency.

**2020/8/23 LUNCHEON ARRANGEMENTS:**

**IT WAS RESOLVED, AGREED: “that everyone be responsible for their own arrangements”.**

**2020/8/24 ANY OTHER ADMISSIBLE BUSINESS:**

Noted, the Grand Master informed that Sister Emma Nsiah-Buadi had requested the Grand Master relay her sincere thanks to all the Board members for their condolences and best wishes after Brother Mike’s passing.

**2020/8/25 DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

**IT WAS RESOLVED, AGREED: “that the next meeting of the Board of Directors be held in accordance with General Rule on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2020.**

**[The Meeting closed at 11.35 a.m.]**

**SIGNED:** ..... (Chairman)

**DATED:** ..... (2020)