

**ORDER OF LaShe's
GENERAL MEETING MINUTES
April 16, 2025
The Locale**

Board Members Present:

Jamie Lowe, Cindy Bishop, Stacey Jessee, Donna Diaz, Tracey Taylor, Kendra Isenhower, Gabby Smith, Sara McKinley, Nicolle Rayborn, Christine Bramlett, Melissa Davis

Meeting Called to Order 7:04p.m.

Reading of the Minutes: March 20, 2025

- Jennifer Ridgeway made a motion to dispense with the reading of March 20, 2025, minutes. Gayle Bishop seconded the motion. The majority voted in favor; one opposed; motion passed.

Housekeeping: Jamie asked that all smokers use designated smoking areas only. Avoid smoking near doors.

Officer's Reports

- **Vice President Cindy Bishop**
 - Member count: 2 Founder Emiritus, 299 Active, 8 Active Non-Riding, 30 Honorary, 23 Costume Honorary and 66 Associates.
 - Tonight, we will vote on thirty-four members
- **Treasurer Stacey Jessee**
 - Expressed thanks to the newly formed committee.
 - Read March 2025 balances.
 - Wells Fargo Operating-Beginning Balance \$76,860.63, Ending Balance \$52,213.61
 - Wells Fargo Savings- Beginning Balance \$15,0696.55, Ending Balance \$15,0697.83
 - MOOL Savings-Beginning Balance \$5,279.37, Ending Balance \$5,927.02
 - Trustmark Building Fund-Beginning Balance \$40,221.66, Ending Balance \$42,283.06
 - Trustmark Building CD-Beginning Balance \$174,659.66, Ending Balance \$175,185.92
 - Stacey will return shortly to read the 2025-2026 Proposed Budget. There are copies of the report at the Board table.
- **Recording Secretary Donna Diaz**
 - Thank you for supporting me this year as your recording secretary.
 - No report but please remember to sign in and do not forget your name tags.
- **Corresponding Secretary Tracey Taylor**
 - Working on communications-updating website
 - If you have changes, update your personal information in the member directory at the sign in table.
 - She is overhauling the newsletter. Check next month for a completely different format.

- **Parliamentarian Kendra Isenhower**
 - Thank you for your support for the coming year.
 - By Law Committee is committed to following procedures and addressing all your concerns regarding bylaws
 - This month there are no new bylaws to vote on, but we will be voting on 34 new members. Please have your correct name tag to be eligible to vote.
 - Reach out to me with any questions you may have regarding bylaws.
- **Historian Gabby Smith**
 - No report
- **Board Seat 1 Parade Sara McKinley**
 - Our first parade committee meeting will be on May 8, 2025, at 6:30pm at the float barn. If you would like to join the committee, please reach out to me.
 - If you have any suggestions for our parade-fillers, bands, etc., please let me know.
 - As of now, the Parading Society has no new information regarding route changes. I will let you know as soon as I gather any new information.
- **Board Seat 2 Ball Nicolle Rayborn**
 - Thank you for the opportunity to serve the organization this year.
 - The committee is established, and I am still looking for ladies, especially associates. The first meeting will be April 21, 2025.
 - I have reached out to venues to schedule meetings/tours. We are on the list for the Convention Center, and I have a meeting scheduled with the St. Louis Street venue.
 - I have reviewed the feedback from the Recommendation Committee. Issues and concerns will be addressed at our Ball Committee meeting.
 - Mark your calendar for February 10, 2026, for the best ball in Mobile!
 - Next month will be Theme reveal. Let's get this party started!
- **Board Seat 3 Ways and Means Christine Bramlett**
 - I am honored to serve as your Ways and Means Chairperson
 - Items from last year are on sale. New items include foam cups with our crest, T-Towels and T-shirts (long and short sleeve) with our toast. Please visit the store and purchase today.
- **Queen Melissa Davis**
 - No Report

Committee Reports

- **Layaway Haley Clough**
 - Haley will take orders in June and July 2025, The deadline for orders will be July 2025.
 - The committee will have our first meeting on April 24, 2025. Please contact Haley if you would like to join the committee.

- **EOC Danetta Bean**
 - The Evening of Chance will be on Friday, August 8, 2025, at the Locale.
 - The theme will be discussed at a later date.
 - Her committee will begin selling tickets at the May General Meeting.

Unfinished Business

- The next General Meeting will be on May 21, 2025, at the Locale.
- The Board is actively working on alternate venues while considering consistency, budget and our ability to have our hospitality and ways and means set up.

New Business

- **Room Capacity:** The Board has received a request to increase the Room capacities due to no constraint with room size at the Ball. The capacity of each room will be forty-eight members to fall in line with the largest room size in the organization. Jamie opened the floor for questions.
 - She was asked to explain this. She replied that we no longer are limited by room size at the Ball. Therefore, in fairness, all room sizes have increased to the same number as the room with the largest capacity (48 each). This will help rooms dispense with the long waiting lists. Room transfers will be more expedient.
- **Costume Bids**
 - **Bienville**-Will fabricate and furnish the following quality costumes. 335 Active Theme/Float costumes at \$180.00 each. One hundred Associate costumes at \$160.00 each. The total bid is \$76,300.00.
 - **D&D Costumes** (our current costumer)-Will provide 335 themed costumes at \$185.00 plus ½ of the tariff charged for importing from China (at this time the tariff is at 20%). One hundred Associate Costumes at \$85.00 each.
 - **Aryn Carr**-Will provide 335 Rider costumes at \$215.00 each and one hundred Associate costumes at \$110.00 each. Total bid of \$83,025.00. She is a local seamstress.
 - **Jeremiah Kingsland** in Biloxi-Will provide 335 Rider costumes at \$175.00 to 200.00 each and 100 Associate costumes at \$200.00-225.00 each.
 - Discussion regarding bids: Can we discuss with Bienville reducing the cost of the Associate costumes? Per Jamie, we can do that.
 - Meg Westbrook explained that Jeremiah Kingsland does quality work and is very personable. He may not have understood what we need in a costume.
 - Tyger asked when a decision about the costumes must be made. Jamie said that we need to have a decision by the May General Meeting.
 - The Board will discuss the bids.
- **Float Builder Bids**
 - **Mythic Float Works**-The only bid received. She has 27 years of experience building floats. She has been the float builder for the Order of Polka Dots for 6 years. She will rebuild eleven floats for \$111,000.00.
 - **Carnival Artists**-Craig Stevens (our current builder) did not bid. We have an addendum to extend his contract from last year for one year in the amount of \$88,042.00 for refurbish of five permanent floats and 10 theme floats plus \$8153.10 for the recently purchased float for a total of \$96,195.10.

- Discussion regarding Float building: Kanja addressed the membership. Mythic Float Works is going to redo our floats. Craig has been extremely difficult to work with, he does not do anything special, he did not take initiative to update bead racks, steps, etc. on floats for the money that he was paid during Covid. If we can find the money in the budget to make this change, we need to make this change.
- **Annual Report/Proposed Budget-** Les Simison discussed the differences between reports. On the Annual Report and the Proposed Budget column Actual as of 3/31/25, for EOC, Income is the same - \$45828.00. On the Annual Report EOC Expenses are \$26972.28. On the Proposed Budget, EOC Expenses are \$23772.28. This is a difference of \$3200.00.
 - Jamie called for a break at 7:36pm to confer with Board regarding issues. The meeting was called back into order at 7:40pm
 - It was determined that the \$3200.00 difference was hall rental for the event. The Actual as of 3/31/25 on the proposed budget was correct.
- **Stacey Jessee read the proposed budget.**
 - Ashley Adams proposed that we increase the EOC expense budget by \$3,200.00 making the total \$27,200.00 and increase the income transfer from saving by \$3,200.00 making the total \$56,016.12. This will adjust the Total for both income and expense \$67,0771.12.
 - Kanja Weldy questioned the food and liquor totals on the Annual Report. It was determined that the numbers were skewed due to misclassification.
 - Membership wanted to know why we were not having a Spring event this year since it made money. Jamie explained that since the previous Board did not name a chair, naming a chairperson at this point would not allow enough time to put together an event. Therefore, we will not have a Spring event this year. Instead, we will let Ways and Means manage fundraising events this year.
 - Les Simison asked why the \$13,000.00 for Marshal horses was not in the budget. Jamie stated that it was included in the Parade Income and Expense as a pass through but if she looked at the Parade Budget, she would see the line item.
 - Joyce Lambert asked why we needed a safety deposit box. Jamie explained that we keep our important documents in there-i.e., original mortgage, charter, etc.
 - Jamie asked for any other discussion.
 - Gayle Bishop made a motion that we accept the proposed budget with the changes. Robin Brown seconded the motion. Jamie asked for any discussion. Majority in favor, six opposed and three abstained; motion passed.
- **Reinstatement letter for Christy Potts read.** Jamie informed the membership that she had been on the blacklist for five years but had dropped off. She has paid all her monetary obligations since.
 - The membership wanted to know what room she was in before. She was in Room 10
 - Julie Johnson made a motion to reinstate Christy Potts into the organization. Tiffany Simison seconded the motion. Jamies asked for discussion.
 - Marilyn Anderson needed clarification of her blacklist status. Why was she blacklisted? Why had she come off the blacklist without paying first? Jamie explained that members blacklisted monetarily drop off after five years. However, there is still a list kept with the amount of money that they owe. They must pay before they are reinstated.
 - The election committee summoned. Pam Pettis asked if we were voting on everyone at this time. The answer was no and that we would have a vote by hand.

- The majority were in favor of the motion, seven opposed, none abstained; motion passed.

- Pam Pettis asked where the board was with the pictures of the potential members that we are voting on. Jamie told her that we no longer used the board but there is a book with applications and pictures. Jamie asked that Marissa come forward to draw for the Costume Committee while she conferred with the VP and the Parliamentarian.
- Marissa asked for Float Captains to come forward as their float was drawn. The costume committee is as follows:
 - Float A Abigail Baxter
 - Float G Kassidy Boutwell
 - Float J Ashley Gillespie
 - Float L Gina Bush (represented by Jamie Dean)
 - Float M Sonya Stephens
 - Float N Emalee Gibson (represented by Jenny Mooney)
 - Associates Teresa Cooper

- **Jamie called for a break at 8:14p.m.**

- **Call to order at 8:23p.m.**

- Jamie announced that while there was nothing in the bylaws stating that we had to present a picture of potential members, the Board hears the membership, and we will hold the vote over until next month as the book is not available tonight.

- Anita Knapp made a motion to vote on the potential members without the pictures at this meeting. Victoria Schuman seconded the motion.

- Gracie Overmeyer stated we always had a board with all their information and their pictures.
- Kim Witter asked that we get the board with pictures back on display.
- Danna Bean said that these names were in the newsletter, and we could have Facebook stalked them if we wanted to know what they looked like. Now, ladies on the list for years will not be voted on tonight. Are we only voting on them by what they look like?
- Gracie said she just wanted to see these potential members, but it was not about appearance.
- Joanne Tate asked if the Board approved of these people. Jamie said not this board, but another board did.
- Joyce Lambert said that when she got in in 1986, there was not a board with pictures on it. That may have changed but there weren't always pictures available for voting.
- Sydney Presley asked if we are going to call all these people and let them know we will be voting for them next month.
- Gayle Bishop said that they started showing the pictures to make sure that the potential member was 21 years old.
- Illa Hamilton said that a driver's license is submitted with their application, and she thinks these ladies need to be considered tonight.
- Barbara Evatt said that the secret committee vets them.
- Laura Bethea said that if we do vote, she would hate to think that having no picture available would be held against them and they would not get in.

- Robin Brown said we should not vote as some are set on a no vote because of us not having a picture for them.
 - Discussion ended. Cassie Knorr election chair asked to come forward for a standing vote count.
 - Sixty-eight were in favor, 46 were opposed, 2 abstained; motion to continue with the vote for new members passed.
- The Election committee handed out and collected ballots.
 - **Jamie called a break to count ballots at 8:42pm**
 - Emblems were asked to come forward.
 - **Call to order at 9:15pm**
 - Jamie stated that it came to the attention of the Election chair that the ballots were collected in a manner not usual for our organization. One of the election committee members collected ballots from members hands rather than having members place them in the buckets. Jamie, Kendra and Cassie consulted our bylaw having to defer to Roberts Rules 45:29 (Whatever method of collecting the ballots is followed, it-like other details relating to voting-should be fixed by rule or custom in the organization and should not be subject to haphazard variation from occasion to occasion) making this an invalid vote. We will bring the pictures of these members and vote on them next month.
 - Kanja Weldy came forward to present the following standing rule change.
 - Rule #1 – Standing rules for rooms and floats.

CURRENT:

Room dues are to be set by majority vote of room members present at the first room meeting following the OOL Annual Meeting; however, they shall not exceed two hundred dollars (\$200.00) per year. (10-21-04) (11-15-07) (9-20-12)

CHANGE:

Room dues are to be set by majority vote of room members present at the first room meeting following the OOL **General Meeting in which the members approved the current fiscal year Budget.** **Room dues** shall not exceed two hundred dollars (\$200.00) per year.

 - **Kanja Weldy made a motion to change Rule #1 – Standing rules for rooms and floats. Anita Knapp seconded the motion. Majority of members in favor. None opposed, one abstained; motion passed.**
 - **Committee Chairs announced.**
 - Associate Chair – Lynlee Evans
 - Audit-Jan Barbato
 - Costume-Marissa McManus
 - EOC-Danetta Bean
 - Election-Cassie Knorr
 - Float Barn-Paula Blackwell
 - Float Captain-Bridget Dixon Moseley
 - Float Review-Summer Frahm
 - Hospitality-Paula Harris

- Invitations-Robin Brown
- Layaway-Hayley Clough
- PR/Special Events-Lisa Bullock
- Photography-Gail Filotei
- Room Captain-Ashley Adams
- Melanie Suiter
- Mother MOOL-Cindy Bishop

Announcements

- **Room financial reports** are due for to Jamie by the May General meeting.
- **Room 8** will host Poker Run on May 31, 2025. It will be at the usual spots beginning at 10:00a.m.-Grand Mariner, Tate's Pool, River Shack, and Illa Hamilton's House. Save the date for Room 8!
- **Emblems** Kathy Ford, Sue Weaver, Maxine Smith, Pam Pate, Laura Bethea, Peggy Pierce, Jo Ann Tait, Gracie Overmeyer, Dianne DePaola, Dorothy Toland, Melanie Suiter, Kim Witter, Kim Knorr, Cindy Bishop and Jamie Lowe did New York kick while entering stage. The cane and gold top hat started at the end and was passed down to Jamie Lowe. Jamie did the New York kick off the stage to the new surprised Emblem Marissa McManus.

Waneva made a motion to adjourn. Abby Baxter seconded it. All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 9:35pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Donna Diaz
OOL Recording Secretary