

Grand Encampment of Knights Templar



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Decision No. 3, Series 2019-2021

Committees

January 11, 2021

BACKGROUND

On March 15, 2016, then Grand Master Duane Lee Vaught issued his Decision No. 6 which declared, "Multi-year committee appointments are allowed in part specifically to prevent a single person from exercising excessive control over such a committee."

ISSUE

Section 48 of the *Constitution, Statutes, Disciplinary Rules, Standing Resolutions, Ceremonies, Forms and Approved Decisions of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America* states, in pertinent part

Section 48. The Grand Commander shall have the following specific powers and duties but the enumeration shall not be deemed a limitation thereof:

* * *

(b) To appoint all Committees and all Officers not made elective, and to fill all vacancies, such appointees to serve during his pleasure or until their successors have been elected or appointed and installed.

Were a Grand Commander permitted to appoint a committee member to a term longer than his own, he would deprive his successor of the ability to exercise his right of appointment under Section 48 as to that committee member and any other committee member whose term had not yet expired since "[a] committee member ... who has been appointed for a statutory term extending beyond that of the Grand Commander ... cannot be removed before the expiration of his term, unless for cause shown." DeLamater Decision No. 7.

Grand Commandery committees with staggered, multi-year terms for members are not prohibited by the Constitution. Indeed, they may tend to produce salutary results, by preserving institutional knowledge among their members and ensuring continuity of effort as members are replaced. These qualities may be especially useful for committees charged with oversight and preservation of a Grand Commandery's investments and physical properties or for execution of long-term projects, such as centennial observances. However, in order to be consistent with Section 48, members of such committees must be elected, not appointed, notwithstanding Grand Master DeLamater's assertion, in his Decision No. 7, "The Grand Commander is authorized to appoint all committees"

DECISION

Grand Commandery committees with staggered, multi-year terms for members are permitted, but their members must be elected, not appointed. To the extent that they are inconsistent with this Decision, Norris Decision No. 5, DeLamater Decision No. 7, and Vaught Decision No. 6 are hereby rescinded.

Where under a Grand Commandery law a committeeman is appointed for a fixed term and that term has not expired, a subsequently elected Grand Commander may not remove such a committeeman except after charges, trial and proof. (1940, p 64 & 340, No. 5, Norris)

The Grand Commander is authorized to appoint all committees, such appointees to serve during his pleasure or until their successors have been appointed. Such appointees, however, cannot serve beyond the term of the Grand Commander making the appointment, unless the law under which they hold provides for a longer term. A committee member, however, who has been appointed for a statutory term extending beyond that of the Grand Commander, cannot be removed before the expiration of his term, unless for cause shown. (1958, p. 233 & 268, No. 7, DeLamater)

Grand Commandery committee with staggered multi-year appointments is not effective until the close of the conclave at which it is created unless specifically provided otherwise. Multi-year committee appointments are allowed. (2018, No. 6, Vaught)



Jeffrey Norman Nelson, GCT
Most Eminent Grand Master