

## Orient Zoom Meeting

**October 26, 2025**

**7:00 p.m.**

**Attendance:**

- Estimated 80 names of people who joined the call.
- Others were not identified. These are those we verified from the call are:

|                 |                  |                 |                 |                     |
|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Gene Cobb       | DC Heilman       | Gerald's iPhone | John Davis      | Ranjan Varghese     |
| Thomas VanEtten | Chris Hall       | Greg Allred     | John Walston    | Richard Gelsomino   |
| Alex Cole       | Clayton Harpold  | Tim Parker      | J Thom          | Rick Patton         |
| Alex Edmisten   | Craig Horton     | Johnny Surles   | Julian Setzer   | Rita Daniels        |
| Allan Mann      | Currie Pendleton | Jack Williams   | Keith Morgan    | Rusty Woomer        |
| Andrew Norton   | DC Heilman       | James Howell    | Kenny Allen     | Scott Bittler       |
| Anthony Rosado  | Danielle Willard | James Johnson   | Kirby Matthews  | Scott Brand         |
| Tony Rathbone   | David Dietz      | James Pugsley   | Larry Peek      | Scott Lovvorn       |
| Arthur Romans   | David's Ipad     | Jason Caldwell  | Mark Tishman    | Shaw V              |
| Asa Buck        | Don Alderman     | Jason Hicks     | Matt Moore      | Steve Lengyel       |
| C. Lee Cannady  | Don Butto        | Jeff McEwen     | Michael         | Tim Farris          |
| Barry Deutsch   | Doug Collins     | Jeremy Hicklin  | Michael Brooks  | Tom Bridges         |
| Ben Griffiths   | Earl Wells       | Jerry Brown     | Michael May     | Tim Taylor          |
| Bill Keith      | Francis Anson    | Jim Cone        | Michael Orlando | Will Fulbright      |
| Binh Nguyen     | Fred Dean        | Jimmy Moore     | "Owner"         | Will Chriscoe       |
| Charles Talley  | Gary Handy       | Jody Ferree     | Ralph Kerley    | Clifford Shrewsbury |

## Meeting summary

### Quick recap

The meeting focused on reviewing key organizational documents, including a restructuring plan, strategic initiatives, and job descriptions, with the SGIG emphasizing the importance of feedback and collaboration. Several team chairs and personal representatives were announced for various committees, along with new organizational changes, including the creation of fundraising and history projects. The SGIG led a strategic planning session to discuss website consolidation and regional assignments, set deadlines for feedback, and announce upcoming events, including a national workshop April 9-11, 2026, in Charlotte.

### Next steps

- Current Restructure Plan, Strategic Plan, and Job Descriptions are working documents and can be downloaded from [ncscottishrite.org/download](http://ncscottishrite.org/download) until November 14. After that date, contact the SGIG directly.
- Over the next two weeks, all interested Chairs should contact and form their committee. Anyone interested in serving on Project 100 should contact the SGIG. A place will be found for all who are interested. Secretaries and Personal Representatives are encouraged to submit these names for Project 100 and all other Teams over the next two weeks so they are in place by November 22, 2025.
- Personal Representatives and Steve Pendergrass, chair of the Strategic Plan Team, should connect and form the team within the next 24 hours.
- Statistical information has been sent to all Secretaries and Personal Representatives concerning membership data that necessitates review and action regarding deceased and outdated records.
- EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY: Committee Chairs may contact interest survey responders or responders may contact Committee Chairs to form teams.
- The SGIG will send the interest response list to the Chairmen of the Teams again on October 27, 2025.
- Valleys are encouraged to use the YouTube Channel and send information to Ashley Cooke, Chairman. Wilmington is utilizing this as a Valley.
- A more complete disclosure of the Restructure, Strategic Plan, and Job Descriptions is desired for the November 22, 2025, Honor Court meeting and immediate release to the Orient after that.
- November 14, 2025, is the deadline for submission from those on the call for changes to be considered in the documents.
- We begin a history project with Ludwik Wodka, developing a 225<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Scottish Rite. It will be a history book of the North Carolina Scottish Rite, including chapters for every Valley in North Carolina.

- The SGIG has not yet named the Disaster Team Chair, but all others are in place  
**Chair appointed by SGIG/PR assigned to Team by SGIG/All Resources to each other**

Contact Information will be available at [ncscottishrite.org](http://ncscottishrite.org) as soon as possible.

- Membership Team Thomas VanEtten, 32° KCCH (Rick Patton, 33°)
- **Disaster Relief Team TBA Incorporates Project 100 (Asa Buck, 33°)**
- Americanism Team Tim Parker, 33° (Kirby Matthews 33°)
- **Masonic Youth Team (New) John Walston, 32° KCCH (Russell Bridges, 33°)**  
**Includes Adult and Youth State Leaders**
- RiteCare Team Alex Edmisten, 32° KCCH (Shaun Bradshaw, 33°)
- Strategic Communications Rita Daniels (Gilbert Bailey, 33°)
- Development Team Barry Deutsch, 32° KCCH (Earl Wells, 33°)
- **IGH/KCCH Teams Mike Daniels, 33°/Russell Rainier 33° (David Wicker, 33°)**
- **Fundraising Review Team Michael Fischer, 33° (Jack Williams, 33°)**
- Orient Wide Newsletter Team Craig Horton, 33° (Thomas Pope, 33°)
- Historical Team Ludwik Wodka, 33° (Gene Cobb, 33°)
- Strategic Plan Team Steve Pendergrass, 33° (Gene Cobb, 33°)
- **YouTube Channel Team Ashley Cooke, 32° KCCH (Gene Cobb, 33°)**
- NC Scottish Rite Masonic Foundation Board of Directors (Gene Cobb, 33°)

*Teams are in the process of being selected. List due to SGIG by 11/14/2025 from Chair*

**Generalists: Direct Reporting to SGIG with or without Team/Committee**

- Attorney Generalist William Mills, 33°, no team
- Fundraising/Development Generalist Jim Medlin, 33°, liaison
- Compliance Generalist Ranjan Varghese, 32° KCCH

**Summary**

**NC Scottish Rite Document Review**

The meeting focused on reviewing and discussing three key documents available for download on the NC Scottish Rite website: a restructuring document, a strategic plan, and job descriptions. Arnold emphasized that these documents are dynamic and subject to change, encouraging participants to provide feedback and engage in conversations about potential modifications. Team chairs and personal representatives for various committees were announced. The SGIG stressed the importance of collaboration and communication to ensure the documents reflect the collective input and needs of the organization.

### **New Team Chairs and Projects**

The SGIG announced several organizational changes, including the creation of the Orient Fundraising Review Team, chaired by Michael Fisher, and the establishment of a 2026 project to publish a history book for North Carolina's Scottish Rite valleys. The SGIG is strongly promoting Project 100, which aims to identify at least one Scottish Rite member in every North Carolina county by the end of the year to work with disaster relief when it happens and be the point of contact in each county for subordinate lodge coordination with the NC Scottish Rite.

### **Committee Roles and Tournament Results**

The SGIG clarified the role of personal representatives on committees, emphasizing that they should support the team and chairman but not lead meetings. He announced the net profit from the golf tournament as \$39,165.40 and encouraged participation in the Strategic Plan Steering Team. The SGIG also shared membership statistics and instructed secretaries to review and update records for accuracy. He concluded by inviting questions from those on the call, which he would address in the chat feature after the meeting. This procedure in chat is how the Supreme Council conducts its business in ZOOM meetings with the Sovereign Grand Commander.

### **Committee Guidelines and Team Collaboration**

The SGIG discussed establishing committees, statutes, and guidelines, emphasizing the importance of integrating new talent by **listening to team members** and valuing their ideas. He stressed the need for **collaboration and open-mindedness, warning against hazing or belittling others**. The SGIG also addressed the determination of regional or valley roles, encouraging feedback on documents and the utilization of personal representatives for reporting and communication as critical factors for success. He clarified that Zoom meetings for teams are covered under his office and the Supreme Council, with team leaders responsible for setting up meetings either through him or on their own, but always with their Personal Representative designee present or the SGIG.

### **Other NC Scottish Rite Strategic Planning**

The SGIG stated that Advisory Conferences had the materials for two months and the current documents reflect their input. We are now in the stage of gathering input from those who expressed interest in serving the Orient or the Valley through the survey. The SGIG announced

plans to consolidate Scottish Rite websites onto one platform, [ncscottishrite.org](http://ncscottishrite.org), and outlined upcoming changes to fundraising processes, with Michael Fisher's team taking over reviews of existing applications for taxable and non-taxable fundraising efforts, which will be recommended to the SG.IG for final approval in January 2026.

The group discussed regional assignments for valleys: New Bern and Wilmington to the East, Asheville and Franklin to the West, and the remaining five valleys (Fayetteville, Raleigh, Greensboro, Winston-Salem, and Charlotte) to be further divided. The SGIG set November 14th as the deadline for feedback on the strategic plan and job descriptions and reminded everyone about plans for a national Scottish Rite workshop in Charlotte April 9-11, 2026.

Of note: there is no Golf Chairman as this will now need to pass through the Fundraising Committee. While there was no mention of the "Giving Tuesday" program, this will be discussed among the SGIG, the Compliance Generalist, the NCSRMF Treasurer, and the NCSRMF Finance Chair and Second Vice President.

### **The Chat Box was opened, and the following subjects were addressed**

#### **Systems and Structure Changes follow-up**

- Existing statutes, bylaws, guidelines, and forms remain in place
- Committee structure being implemented with designated chairs and personal representatives

#### **Personal Representative Utilization**

- PRs act as the SGIG's "eyes and ears" in meetings
- Serve as resources and advisors, not meeting leaders
- They advise SGIG of valley's needs
- PRs cannot exchange committees without SGIG approval

#### **Incorporating New Talent**

- Listen to new team members rather than dismissing ideas
- Avoid belittling suggestions and "we ain't never done it that way before" attitudes - new members may have valuable insights
- Use "attentive ears" more than "impulsive tongues"

#### **Committee Communication and Collaboration**

- Chairs may contact each other directly via phone calls (preferred over email/text)
- Teams serve as resources for each other without doing each other's work
- Stay in designated lanes while working collaboratively

#### **Regional Assignments**

- East: New Bern, Wilmington
- West: Asheville, Franklin
- Central/Flexible: Fayetteville, Raleigh, Greensboro, Winston-Salem, Charlotte (assignments may vary by project)

#### **Technology and Communication**

- Zoom capability available through the SGIG office and Supreme Council
- Team leaders are responsible for setting up their own meetings
- Website consolidation to a single [ncscottishrite.org](http://ncscottishrite.org) location

#### Grand Lodge Liaison

- The SGIG serves as the principal liaison with the Grand Lodge
- Ongoing efforts to improve coordination between Grandview and Sentinel systems

#### **Conclusion**

After a rough technological start, the meeting seemed to go very well. The SGIG asked everyone to reflect on what people will be saying about how WE addressed this moment in North Carolina history, emphasizing repeatedly that this is going to be a WE effort more than a ME effort.

The SGIG was very appreciative of everyone attending the ZOOM meeting in particular those representing Rainbow and DeMolay. More information will be coming at [ncscottishritee.org](http://ncscottishritee.org).

Let's go to work with the Right/Rite Heart!