



SECRETARY OF STATE POLICE INVESTIGATORS LODGE 95

BOARD MEETING March 14, 2026

This Board meeting of the SECRETARY OF STATE POLICE INVESTIGATORS LODGE 95 was called to order on March 14, 2026, at 10:43 A.M. C.S.T., President Terry Trueblood at the Illinois FOP State Lodge located in Springfield, Illinois. There was a Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence for all our fallen brothers and sisters.

Roll Call of Officers

President Terry Trueblood
1st Vice president Kevin Stewart
2nd Vice President Stephen Flowers
Immediate Past President Ellen Sweeney – absent excused
Secretary Frank Wallace
Treasurer Tyler DuMontelle
Sergeant at Arms Christopher Yingling

Dist 1 Lodge Trustee Ebony Curington – absent excused
Dist 2 Lodge Alternate Trustee Seth Beard
Dist 3 Lodge Alternate Trustee Joe Foster
Dist 4 Lodge Alternate Trustee Doug Bierman
Dist 6 Lodge Trustee Eric Reif

Others in attendance:

FOP Lodge 95 Board Meeting - 03/14/26

1. Meeting Administration & Officer Reports

- Opening: Pledge of Allegiance, silent prayer for fallen/injured officers and servicemen.
- Roll Call: Established quorum; several officers and trustees present, some excused.
- Approval of Minutes: Last meeting's minutes approved unanimously.

2. State Lodge Political Crisis & Representation Issues

- Key Points:• State Lodge is facing severe instability: loss of president, secretaries, general counsel, lobbyists, chaplain, and over 2,000 members.
- Power consolidation around Chicago (Lodge 7); key positions and lobbyists all connected to Chicago, sidelining smaller lodges.

- Legislative committee restructured to favor Chicago interests; State Lodge failing to represent or communicate with smaller lodges, leaving Lodge 95 and others uninformed about relevant legislation.

- Example: Critical pension/retirement bills affecting members were not communicated; local officers discovered them independently.

- Questions Raised:• How can Lodge 95 ensure its members are represented at the state level?

- Is a separate lobbyist or coalition feasible and sustainable?

- What are the financial and political risks of acting independently from State Lodge?

- Can/should the coalition include non-FOP groups?

- Decisions Made:• Lodge 95 will pursue hiring an independent lobbyist (Vision MAI, Mercola Bella), preferably as part of a coalition with other lodges to share costs and increase influence.

- Pilot project: Engage lobbyist for spring session, fall veto session, and lame duck session; initial budget up to \$18,000, with attempts to negotiate lower costs and recruit coalition partners.

- Board unanimously approved the motion to proceed with coalition/lobbyist plan.

- Action Plans:• President to finalize engagement with lobbyist and negotiate terms.

- Board members to reach out to other lodges statewide to join coalition.

- Continue monitoring political fallout and retaliation from State Lodge; prepare contingency plans.

3. Legislative Updates & Pension Issues

- Key Points:• Discussion of House Bill 5006: raises mandatory retirement age for certain investigators to 65; bipartisan support.

- Members noted lack of State Lodge communication on this and similar bills.

- Importance of legislative liaison function highlighted; need for direct advocacy for Lodge 95's interests.

- Concerns about the future viability of the department due to political maneuvering and possible disbandment.

- Decisions/Actions:• Board will support HB5006; officers to reach out to bill sponsors and monitor progress.

- Continue to gather information and influence legislation directly through coalition/lobbyist.

4. Financial Reports & Fundraising

- Key Points:• Treasurer presented November–January reports; healthy reserves, but fundraising is crucial.

- Discussion of major expenditures: lobbyist fees, charitable donations, routine bills.

- Emphasis on using fundraising to support advocacy and outreach, not just operations.

- Board approved routine bills, continued use of current accountant, and renewal of corporate papers.

5. Membership, Legal Defense, and Administrative Issues

- Key Points:• Secretary reported current membership: 198 total, 103 on legal defense, 91 retired, 60 active bargaining members.
- Ongoing challenges with State and Grand Lodge membership processing; delays in cards and administrative burden shifting to local secretaries.
- Reported on legal defense fund expenditures and recent changes in member status (e.g., a member losing coverage due to non-renewal).
- Dues collection ongoing; outreach to non-renewed members assigned.

6. Outreach, Scholarship, and Community Programs

- Cops & Bobbers Event:• Scheduled for June 10th; approved \$3,000 donation for outreach, continued partnership with Lodge 263 for food/trailer.
- Board to seek additional donations; event planning underway.
- Scholarships:• Four scholarships awarded at \$625 each; recipients named and checks prepared.
- Christmas Outreach:• Capital Christmas event well-received; approved increasing funding to \$5,000 for greater family support due to rising costs.
- Board to seek additional local business donations.
- Next Christmas meeting scheduled for December 5th at Chesapeake; positive feedback on location.
- Police Memorial:• Scheduled for May 6-7; encouragement for participation and early hotel booking due to high demand.

7. State Lodge Conference & Board Representation

- Key Points:• Conference set for July 22–24 in Lake County; key officer positions up for election.
- Need to send full delegation to maintain board representation and voting power.
- President considering run for State Lodge president depending on political landscape.
- Strategic importance of maintaining alliances with Prairie State and AG's office for board votes.
- Actions:• Confirm delegate and alternate attendance.
- Monitor State Lodge political developments and adjust strategy accordingly.

8. Good of the Order: Sickness, Distress, and Member Updates

- Reports:• Updates on member illnesses, surgeries, and deaths; motions to waive dues for disabled members.
- Notable passings and support for bereaved families discussed.
- Personal updates shared by board and retired members (careers, health, family).

9. Next Meeting

- Scheduled for June 6th at 10:30 AM, prior to Cops & Bobbers event.

10. Other Topics

- Administrative issues: bank signatures update, insurance, and routine operations discussed.
- Some member dissatisfaction with State Lodge political endorsements (e.g., Senator Doris Turner) clarified as not Lodge 95 decisions.

Summary

Lodge 95 is facing a critical juncture due to dysfunction and lack of representation at the State Lodge level. The board unanimously approved forming a coalition and hiring an independent lobbyist to safeguard members' interests. Key community programs remain funded and active, and the board is engaging in proactive planning to ensure continued representation, member support, and legislative advocacy.

This meeting concluded at 1:25 p.m.

Respectively submitted

Frank Wallace

Frank Wallace, Secretary

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