

History of Johnson City Lodge No. 486, F&AM

[Information was taken from the Minutes of Meetings, Grand Lodge Proceedings, Newspaper (staff news), correspondence in files and notes prepared by past officers of Johnson City Lodge No. 486. This history was abbreviated for presentation before the Tennessee Lodge of Research on September 11, 2004. Brother Davis is also a Past Master (1993) of the Grand Council, Cryptic Masons of Tennessee]

IN THE BEGINNING ...1875

According to handwritten notes in the minute's book from 1875 to 1878, an organizational meeting took place on October 25, 1875, at Rhea Lodge No. 47, Jonesboro, and again on November 1, 1875, at Dashiell Lodge No. 238, Elizabethton, for the purpose of organizing a Masonic Lodge in Johnson City, Tennessee. Masons from Dashiell Lodge No. 238, Rhea Lodge No. 47 and Johnson Lodge No. 274, Fall Branch, were involved in this process. At this period of time the city of Johnson City was growing and fast becoming the economic center of the area. The Masons involved in the organization were also the prominent leaders of city government, business and religious groups in Johnson City. The downtown area was centered on Fountain Square as the gathering place and the ideal location for any meeting or business activity. As you will see in the early history of our Lodge, Fountain Square was very important to the Lodge. The remarks in this document are just the highlights of events that took place to form the cement of masonry in Johnson City and the making of us what we are today.

A request, signed by ten brethren, was sent on November 6, 1875, to the Grand Lodge, Free and Accepted Masons of Tennessee, for a dispensation to work as a Masonic Lodge. A dispensation was granted by the Grand Lodge on November 9, 1875, to begin work. The first meeting was held on January 5, 1876, in the John Bowman Building, at Market Street and Fountain Square. At this time the Grand Lodge required Lodges to meet on the second or higher floor, with no other floors above them. A uniform code of bylaws was adopted for our Lodge. Fees for degrees were set at \$30.00 or \$10.00 for each degree. Dues were set at \$1.60 per year, and could be paid quarterly. It provided the Stated Meeting to be held on Wednesday evening of each week at early lamp lighting.

While working under dispensation, the Lodge initiated six, passed two, and admitted eight. The Charter, dated November 13, 1876, was received, naming the Lodge as JOHNSON CITY LODGE NO.486, with the same officers who served under dispensation. The Lodge met each Wednesday evening and the stated business and all degrees were conferred at the same time. No call meetings were held until early 1890s. In 1879 the bylaws were changed to set the Stated Meeting on the first and third Tuesday of each month at early lamp lighting. As money began to come in through dues and fees, most of it was disbursed in charity, refreshments and modifications to the Lodge room.

The Lodge grew rapidly and numerous activities were going on at the Lodge. In October 1884, a committee was appointed to search for new and larger quarters for the meetings. The committee

was charged to find quarters of suitable space, absolute secrecy, and within four blocks of Fountain Square. Rent was to be negotiated based on the number of meetings to be held. The annual report of the Treasurer showed a balance of \$238.65, in December 1884. At this meeting, held on December 16, 1884, the Lodge voted to move into a new Lodge Hall on the third floor of the Carr Building at the corner of Boone and West Market Street. The building was referred to as the WHITE ELEPHANT. Rent was set at \$7.50 per quarter. The membership continued to grow, revenues increased, and as the Lodge was fast becoming the center of activity in the down- town area, it was found that new quarters were needed. From 1884 until 1899, the Lodge quarters were enlarged seven times and the rent was increased from \$7.50 per quarter to \$60.00 per year or \$5.00 per month. On March 1, 1892, it was adopted by the Lodge to stop conferring degrees at Stated Meetings and begin Special or Called Meetings only for degree work. In June 1895, the then Governor Taylor, a member of Johnson City No. 486, spoke at the Saints John Observance in the Lodge Hall. At this time a new bank building, the Unaka Bank, was being constructed downtown on Fountain Square that, at that time, would be the most modern and up to date facility in the area. A committee was appointed on April 18, 1899, to begin negotiations with the owners to secure quarters for a Lodge. A report was given at the October 1899 meeting of the proposal made by the bank. This proposal was unanimously accepted and permission to relocate was received from the Grand Lodge on November 24, 1899. On December 2, 1899, a contract was signed with the Bank at a rental of \$60.00 per year for a five-year lease, beginning on January 1, 1900, and an option for an additional five-year lease. The first stated meeting in January was held in the new quarters. In 1905, a new contract was signed for a new five-year lease on the Unaka Bank Building for \$80.00 per year.

At the annual communications of the Grand Lodge in January 1906, the Past Masters and members of Johnson City Lodge No. 486, help to elect Judge Robert Burrow, a member of Johnson City Lodge No. 486, as the Most Worshipful Grand Master of Masons in Tennessee. This along with other factors, help to place the Lodge in the eye of the State, and it became a powerful voice in the Grand Lodge.

May 30, 1908, Johnson City Lodge No. 486, with M. W. Grand Master E. K. Bachman , with 93 Masons present, laid the corner stone of the Munsey Memorial Church, located on the corner or Roan Street and Market Street.

In May of 1913, because the present lodge building was not being kept up, a committee was again appointed to search for new quarters, and to look into new buildings being constructed downtown with suitable room. July 1, 1913, a letter was read from the President of the Library Board offering the Lodge the second floor of the new proposed Mayne-Williams Library, as requested, provided the Masons would share in the cost of the new building. This matter was investigated thoroughly, and, in September this idea was rejected. However, the Lodge asks to rent a second story but this request was rejected by the Library Board.

December 2, 1913, the Lodge voted to start issuing dues cards to members in good standing when dues are paid.

March 17, 1914, the Lodge voted to buy robes, costumes and equipment needed in degree conferral and \$100.00 was authorized to make this purchase.

April 21, 1914, the Lodge voted to establish a building fund and that one-half of the Lodge treasure

be put in this account now and 25% of all further funds be allocated to this account. No money could be disbursed from said funds without a 2/3 vote of all members. A motion was voted to have the building committee find a suitable lot for building a Temple as earliest date.

July 20, 1915, Brother W. J. Miller was asked to submit a report on the cost of building a Masonic Temple and how much space could be rented at what cost and what revenue to be provided.

August 17, 1915, the Worshipful Master instructed the committee on new quarters to diligently pursue its efforts in this matter.

April 6, 1916, all members were summonsed to appear at 7:30 p.m. to vote on the building committee report. A proposal was offered to accept a floor on the new Armhurst-Smith Company building. This was rejected. A motion was then offered by George Wofford to appoint a ways and means committee to secure a lot and prepare for building a Masonic Temple of our own. This motion was overwhelmingly adopted.

June 20, 1916, Brother J. E. Brading, Chairman of the Building Committee, gave the following report: A lot owned by a Colonel John P. Smith, with a 75-foot frontage on the west side of Roan Street, adjoining the alley in back of Isaac Harr Building, and a depth of 108 feet south toward the railroad, can be purchased for \$100.00 a front foot, from which the owner will donate \$500.00 making the purchase price \$7,000.00. It was voted to accept the offer of the property and Brother Brading being appointed to close the deal. A loan was taken together with Thomas E. Matson Chapter to purchase the lot. On July 10, 1916, it was voted to start plans to erect a four-story building of 75 feet by 104 feet on the property. Dues were raised to \$4.00 and a committee charged. October 17, 1916, a Ways and Means Committee was appointed and charged to secure plans for building and ways of financing said structure. A year passed and no activity began on a building plan, so with members upset and irate, the Worshipful Master decided at the Stated Meeting September 18, 1917, to order the Secretary to summons the Building Committee to be at the next stated meeting with a full report on the building or else dispose of the property. Several delays in reporting but finally May 7, 1918, the Committee recommended the lot on Roan Street be sold at any price above \$8,000.00. A Committee was appointed to confer again with the Library Board in regards to the availability of space on a second floor of new proposed building.

May 21, 1918, the Building Committee asked the Lodge to rescind the action taken about selling the Roan Street Property and gives the committee a little more time to arrive at a plan to raise money to pay the loan off. One suggestion was to raise the dues to \$12.00 per member or assess each member until the lot is paid. After much discussion, the W. M. ordered the Secretary to summons all resident members to the June 4, 1918 meeting for the purpose of settling this matter once and for all. It was decided to sell the lot. Brother George Wofford was placed in charge of disposing said property. At this time it was decided by the Lodge to set up a permanent committee to oversee the building procurement and property.

July 1, 1919, the sale of the lot was approved. In February 1920, a committee was appointed to check on quarters at the City National Bank. On June 15, 1920, Unaka Bank informed the Lodge that rent would increase from \$20 to \$35 per month.

January 18, 1921, the Lodge again approached the Library board about leasing the second story of

the new proposed building for 5 years with an additional 5-year option. The board agreed to lease the space at an annual cost of 10% of the building cost or approximately \$1,250-\$1,800 a year. This proposal was rejected by the Lodge. On February 1, 1921, Brother A. B. Crouch proposed to the Lodge the lease on the new building he was going to build on Spring Street for the entire second floor for 5 years at \$75.00 per month. The entire resident membership was summoned for a meeting February 15, 1921 for the purpose of deciding on the new quarters. A complete committee report was ordered on all options for rent, lease or buy. The report stated the New Library at \$1,250-\$1,800 per year was still open, The "BEEHIVE" building at 207-209 East Main, second floor for \$1,000.00 per year was available, The new proposed building on Spring Street for \$900.00 per year, or a lot at 314 East Main Street was for sale and would be suitable for building a Masonic Temple. The cost to the Lodge for the lot would be \$2,833.33 with the balance being paid by Thomas E, Matson Chapter and Watauga Commandery. It was voted to buy the lot and proceed with a building of our own. The deed was registered January 17, 1922.

February 11, 1922, the Lodge laid the corner stone for the Mayne Williams Library at 2:00 p.m. On May 2, 1922, the Unaka Bank raised the rent to \$50.00 per month beginning June 1, but the bank was sold in July to City Savings and Trust and the rent remained at \$35.00 per month. The poor state of repair of the Bank Building would not be addressed by the new owners, so a search for new quarters was again started. A committee was appointed and given the following charge by the Worshipful Master, "Locate and secure suitable quarters for the Masonic Bodies with ample room, adequate secrecy, within four block radiuses of Fountain Square, and rent not to exceed \$50.00 per month, and have this ready at the March 6, 1923 meeting."

March 6, 1923, the committee report was as follows; J. C. Penny Building cannot be secured as they are unwilling to negotiate. The only available quarters found was the second floor of the Campbell Building, North Roan Street, North corner of King Street, with rent of \$50.00 per month. It was voted to accept, and the Lodge moved on April 23, 1923, to the Campbell Building. This was not as good as expected and the membership was still unhappy with the quarters and the meetings were mostly of complaining about the building and where, what and when can we do better. March 8, 1924, Trustees were elected, three from Lodge and two each from the Chapter and the Commandery, all being members of good standing in Lodge No. 486, for the purpose of conducting business as the Lodge on quarters. At the March Stated Meeting the report of the trustees, steering committee and Ways and Means Committee gave the following report (see attached). The report was adopted and the W. M. ordered that all questions pertaining to quarters were to be addressed by the Trustees. In October of 1924, the property adjoining to the East of our present property on Main Street was purchased at a cost of \$8,400.00, the Lodge paying $\frac{1}{2}$, the Chapter paying $\frac{1}{4}$, and the Commandery paying $\frac{1}{4}$, and the seven trustees would form a Masonic Temple Association for deeding property and conveyance of property and disbursing monies.

June 16, 1925, the trustees tried again to negotiate with J. C. Penny's building owners but to no avail. All offers made were rejected by one of the parties. The W. M. charged the trustees again to locate new quarters at an earliest date possible.

The committee reported at the meeting on August 4, 1925, that a suitable building was available and they had taken an option on a five-year lease. This building is called the Taylor Building, located at the Market Street and Fountain Square, Third Floor, 75 by 80 feet floor space, heat and water

furnished, any renovations deducted from rent and only \$60.00 per month. The heat and water will offset the additional \$10.00 rent. It can be renovated for \$1,850.00 and this is to come off rent until paid. Second floor for dining room, etc. It was voted to accept and trustees were ordered to get the necessary renovations complete so they could be in the building by the December Stated Meeting. The Lodge moved into Taylor Building in December 1925. The Taylor Building was bought by Market Street Realty in May 1926, and a proposal to sell to the Lodge and take the main street property in on trades was overwhelmingly rejected.

On November 13, 1926, the Lodge celebrated its first Fifty-years as a Masonic Body in Johnson City and has always been located within four blocks of Fountain Square. Thus, ends the first fifty years . . . With no Lodge building we could call our own. By this time several shakers and movers in the Johnson City business circle had become active members and Past Masters of the Lodge as well as in the Grand Bodies.

In 1927, an aggressive campaign was started to develop and build a Masonic Temple in Johnson City. It was to be the envy of all Tennessee and especially East Tennessee. In October of 1927 the trustees began an unprecedented campaign to raise \$100,000.00 in one week and build a Masonic Temple on 314-344 East Main Street. It was to be a five-story building with outside dimensions of 84 feet by 97 feet. The first floor would include a gym, swimming pool, bowling alley and shower rooms. The Masonic Lodge would be amphitheater style, covering ½ of the building, on the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and fifth floor. The other half to be used for York Rite Lodge room, Eastern Star Hall, Dining and banquet room with kitchen, also suitable office, storage and sitting rooms with a library on the several floors. No consideration was given too outside facility or parking as very few had automobiles. The leaders set up five teams, each to raise \$20,000 in one week. A Hugh banquet was held at the headquarters in the John Sevier Hotel to kick off the event. A meeting was held each day at 2:15 P. M. to see the standing of each team. These efforts failed and only \$64,415 was raised, but the spirit was still going strong and efforts continuing through 1928 to raise and collect money toward the Temple. In June 1928 a six-month option was taken on a 163 foot by 108 foot lot on Walnut Street and Earnest Street at a price of \$75.00 per front foot. (\$12,250.00).

November 20, 1928, it was voted to purchase the Walnut Street property and it was purchased on February 5, 1929.

During the year of 1929, times began to deteriorate with the crash and money began to dry up. Pledge payments stopped and a lot of members just simply refused to donate and pay. Lodge activity slowed to a crawl and the interest in the building plan was placed on the back burner. On August 21, 1930, Brother Thomas Earl Doss, Past Master of Lodge No. 486, was appointed the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge to replace the Grand Secretary who had died while in office.

July 5, 1932, it was voted by the Lodge for the Trustees to forgive payments for Temple Association subscriptions until further notice. On April 18, 1933, some moneys were returned to subscribers and some used to cover dues as numerous members had been suspended for nonpayment of dues.

February 6, 1934, times were beginning to improve and the Temple Association made an offer of \$24,000.00 to buy the Elks Lodge Property on Spring Street. This offer, after consideration, was rejected by the Elks. The committee began negotiating to rent the Elks Building on Spring Street but was unable to consummate the deal. On November 6, 1934, it was announced that Brother George

T. Wofford would be nominated as the Senior Grand Warden at the January 1935 Grand Lodge Communications. He was elected Senior Grand Warden in January 1935 and died February 3, 1935.

August 29, 1935, a request was made to the Lodge to buy a portion of the Main Street property owned by the US Government at \$175.00 a front foot to erect a new Post Office, first federally owned property in Johnson City. It was voted to accept the offer and was sold September 1935.

January 1938, Brother Sam Cooper, P.M. and Secretary of Lodge No. 486, was elected Junior Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge of Tennessee.

March 21, 1939, Brother Roy Clark gave a report of all properties owned by the Masonic Bodies in Johnson City, but the report was not listed in the minutes.

March 31, 1939, it was voted to allow the trustees to make an offer on the old post office on Ash Street (ASH STREET COURT HOUSE). This offer was never discussed in the minutes after that.

January 1941, Brother Sam Cooper was elected the Most Worshipful Grand Master of Masons in Tennessee.

February 24, 1941, at the District Meeting held in Johnson City Lodge No. 486, 372 masons attended the meeting. This was the largest assemblage of masons ever in Johnson City. With the war beginning, all work began to slow down for the Lodge, and during 1942 and 1943, a campaign began to sell victory bonds, the Lodge buying several. Also, a soldier's cigarette fund began to send cigarettes to our boys overseas.

January 18, 1944. Robert Taylor, owner of the building of the Lodge, requested a meeting with the trustees regarding the selling them the building. It was rejected and the building was sold to T. E. Mullins in 1947.

It was reported that Lodge No. 486 had 63 members serving in the services of our Country during 1944.

October 16, 1945, L. D. Gastieger offered the Lodge \$8,000.00 each for the properties on East Main Street. Trustees reported they are worth \$14,000.00 to \$20,000.00 each and the offer was rejected.

May 21, 1946, Brother Roy Clark gave a report of all properties owned by the Masonic Bodies, but the report was not listed in the minutes.

February 4, 1947, an offer of \$25,000.00 was made for one of the Lodge's Main Street properties. It was accepted by the Lodge.

1947, it was reported that Lodge No. 486 was the only Lodge in Tennessee to have three living's past Grand Masters, Brethren Burrow, Cooper and Doss,

January 20, 1948, the Lodge's degree fees were raised from \$50 to \$75 and the additional \$25 to go to the building fund.

February 24, 1948, Governor Jim McCord visited and spoke at the Lodge.

The committee reported on several locations during this time and in May 1948, the notice of an

increase in rent to \$125.00 a month beginning in June. This prompted the Lodge to increase its efforts to relocate. It raised the fees to \$100.00 with \$25.00 to go into the building fund.

October 15, 1948, times were good, membership was growing and finances were stable, so it was decided that the time had come to build a home for the Lodge without delay. A new Building Committee was appointed to act on a building. Membership in 1948 was 444 Master Masons

March 1, 1949, a special meeting of the new Building Committee was called and a request was made to appropriate enough funds to remove the excess dirt and level the lot on Main Street, erect a sign for sale or will build to suit tenants.

March 18, 1949, Past Grand Master Robert Burrow passed away.

May 3, 1949, the committee announced that two suitable buildings were available that could be renovated for use as a Lodge. This was rejected by the Lodge and the committee was instructed to purchase property to construct a new building to our design. Plans were drawn for a two-story building, with Lodge facilities on the top floor and rental space on the first floor. These plans were approved and an estimated cost of \$50,000.00 was proposed to construct. The ideal site would be the old E. N. Campbell building, but were unable to purchase at this time. A Temple Building, Inc. was chartered on November 15, 1949, and empowered to proceed with haste. Membership had grown to 462, larger quarters were needed.

In early 1950, a piece of property was found on Roan Street at Millard which would be suitable to erect the building as planned. On October 3, 1950, the lot on Main Street was sold for \$20,000.00 and was suggested they rent the space above the WJHL Radio Station at \$225.00 a month while preparing for the new building. This was rejected and approval was made to take option on the Roan Street property. On January 5, 1951, the Roan Street property was purchased at a cost of \$8,000.00. Dues were raised to \$8.00 per year and a fund raisers began.

July 15, 1952, a report from the Temple Building, Inc. stated all assets of Temple Building, Inc. had been disposed of with the exception of the Roan Street Lot. On June 19, 1951, the Temple Building, Inc., requested the bodies turn over all available funds to them to begin construction. A portion of the lower level was started, footers poured, walls constructed and things begin to fall apart. The Korean Conflict, together with financial conflicts and member conflicts, construction was halted. In November of 1953 a law suit was placed against the Temple Building, Inc. because of the dangers and unstable construction on Roan Street. This suit was placed by the property owners and renters of Morris Funeral Home next door. The Grand Lodge notified Lodge No. 486 to rectify this situation immediately. The construction cost borne by the Lodge to remove, repair and stabilize property on Roan Street was with additional conflicts within the membership. Between the time of construction and 1956, city ordinances on building and parking requirements were put into place, so that when they got back to trying to start over, the city requirements cut the building size by 22% and a retail space could not be put on the first floor because of parking requirements. Also, in 1955, the Grand Lodge changed the specifications to allow Lodges to be all on ground level provided no windows or outside doors were inside the Lodge Room. The Roan Street property was not large enough (81 feet by 126 feet) to be practical after city set backs were met.

April 5, 1955, the Lodge instructed the Temple Building, Inc. to get started on a building. On May 2,

1955, it was announced an option had been taken on a piece of property on Jackson Avenue between Unaka and Watauga Avenues. The Lodge voted to go ahead with plans to purchase this property. On June 6, 1955, it was announced that the property on Jackson Avenue could be purchased for \$20,000.00 with a \$5,000.00 down payment and balance carried at 4%. The Lodge voted to lend \$5,000.00 to Temple Building at 3% to purchase the property. On June 21, 1955, a committee was appointed to study plans for a Temple on the Jackson Avenue property.

The property on Roan Street was then useless and was placed on the market for sale. On May 16, 1956, the property was sold to L. H. Shumate for a price of \$14,500.00, which was applied to the property on Watauga Avenue to clear the debt on the said lot. On April 17, 1956, a summoned meeting was called for the purpose of discussing the new building and getting pledges. A total of \$16,000.00 was pledged at this meeting. On May 1, 1956, the degree fees were raised to \$100.00, with \$25.00 of it to be for the Building.

November 20, 1956, the Lodge voted to change the loan of \$5,000.00 to the Temple Building, Inc. to a donation.

February 19, 1957, the Lodge voted not to renew the lease on Taylor building, but would rent it monthly. On March 1, 1957, bids were opened on construction of a Temple designed by Leland Cardwell. On March 19, 1957, bid went to J. E. Green to construct the Temple of approximately 13,000 square feet, a turn key job. The bid was for \$144,356.00, but with design changes, it was cut down to a total cost of \$91,777.00, and a loan of \$70,000 was secured. Ground breaking ceremonies were held on May 30, 1957, at 11:00 A. M., and work began. The first concrete was poured in July 1975. After the construction began, it was decided to leave off the kitchen and the dinning room, but on August 6, 1957, enough donations together with a \$7000.00 donation from J. C. of Lodge No. 486 made it possible to do the complete building. The corner stone was laid on September 7, 1957, at 10:00 A. M. with a sealed box inside containing numerous items.

October 1, 1957, the Secretary was ordered to inform Robert Taylor that we would be out of the Taylor Building on or about November 1, 1957. The moved into the present building were accomplished during the first two weeks of November. The Stated Meetings for October and November, were held in the Taylor Building and the first Stated Meeting in December was held in new building.

WE NOW HAVE OUR OWN PERMANENT HOME, AFTER 81 YEARS.

Building Contract.. \$69,777.00. Change order #1..\$22,000.00. Architect fees.. \$4,588.85, for a total cost of \$96,365.85. \$58,133.23 was paid upon completion of the work. A \$38,000.00 loan was secured, which paid off in 1962.

June 23, 1958, an open house was held at the new Temple. In August 1958, Brother Carmi Price built the stage in the East and the risers for the West and South, as well as the risers for the new

seating.

August 15, 1959, another open house was held in the Temple, and this was the first time in the Lodge history, it was open to mixed company. Before it was member and male friends only.

May 17, 1960, the parking lot was finished and the Order of the Eastern Star's purchased a piano for use in the Lodge room.

July 18, 1961, a banquet was held honoring Luther Ault who was presented with the Plaque and Clock now displayed in the foyer of the Lodge.

August 21, 1962, the building debt was paid in full and the OFFICERS' STATION CHAIRS for the EAST, WEST and SOUTH, the ALTAR and the three lesser lights were purchased from Wolfe Bros in Piney Flats for \$946.50.

December 17, 1963, the Lodge voted to sponsor a DeMolay Chapter at Johnson City. On May 15, 1965, it was announced that Brother Charles B Jones of J. C. Lodge No. 486 would be the candidate for the Junior Grand Warden in 1968. He was elected as the Junior Grand Warden in March 1968. In March 1971, he was elected as the Most Worshipful Grand Master and Brother J. R. Denny was appointed as a Grand Lecturer.

July 6, 1965, the Lodge's bylaws were changed to have only one Stated Meeting per month beginning January 1966.

May 8, 1971, the Mayor, Vance Cheek, of Johnson City, declared this day "CHARLES B JONES" Day and presented him with a key to the city.

August 4, 1981, the Temple Building, Inc. announced to the Lodge its intentions to sell its assets to the Lodge for \$1.00. Brother Scott Combs donated the \$1.00 and the deal was completed on this date. The deed was transferred to the Lodge on September 28, 1981.

April 3, 1984, a motion was made by Brother Tom Jones to install a hitching post and rail in the parking lot to satisfy the needs of horses since their ass was inside. It died for a lack of a second.

November 7, 1987, Brother J. R. Denny retired as Grand Lecturer and a reception was given him by Lodge No. 486.

February 5, 1991, a contribution was made in the amount of \$100.00 by Brother T. P. Allen, with a motion that the light over the Altar remains on until all our servicemen are out of harms way. It was so voted and the altar light still remains on today.

So 128 years has passed, and we are still in existence in quarters of suitable size, sufficient secrecy and only four blocks from Fountain Square in our own building and with no indebtedness.

To the Worshipful Master, Wardens and Brethren. Johnson City Lodge, No. 486.

Your committee, appointed for the purpose of devising ways and means for the erection of a Masonic Temple in Johnson City, submits herewith the following recommendations:

First: That the Masonic organizations in Johnson City undertake the erection of a Masonic Temple of sufficient size and equipment to care for all of the Masonic bodies and for the order of DeMolay. This equipment shall include gymnasium, bowling alley, swimming pool, kitchen and dining room, together with ample lodge and lounging rooms.

Second: The maximum cost *should* not exceed \$30,000.00.

Third: That the property adjacent to *the* present holdings on East Main Street and extending on through to Jobe Street at a width of approximately 110 feet, should be purchased at once.

Fourth: That the three architects who are members of the local lodge be requested to submit plans and specifications, to which should be attached the bid of at least one responsible bidder. The architect whose plan is accepted should receive the regular architect's commission and the others an amount to be agreed upon for expenses.

Fifth: That the following plan of financing the building be adopted:

1. That a mortgage loan of \$40,000.00 be placed on the completed building.
2. That non-interest bearing stock (or certificates) be sold to members of the different Masonic bodies to the extent of \$50,000.00 with a guarantee that such stock (or certificates) should be redeemed at par in the event of the death of the subscriber.
3. Such subscriptions to be payable one-sixth cash and the remainder one-sixth every six months until paid.
4. The expenses and maintenance for the new building are estimated as follows:

Interest on \$40,000.00 mortgage	\$2,400.00
Insurance	375.00
Janitor, fuel, water and lights	1,500.00

Extras and incidentals 325.00

Total\$4,000.00

To meet this increased expense it is estimated that an increase of \$4.00 per annum on the dues of the 4290 Blue Lodge Masons will produce \$1,680.00

Increase of \$4.00 per annum on the dues of 200 members of Chapter 800.00

Increase of \$4.00 per annum on the 150 members of the Commandery 600.00

That a rental will be derived from the Shrine Club of 100.00

A rental from the Grotto 100.00

Rental from the Lockers 200.00

Total \$3,480.00

This leaves a deficit of between \$1,100 and \$1,200.00 which would have to be taken care of from initiations.

5. It is further recommended that the title of this property be vested in a board of trustees to be selected by the

several bodies.

We respectfully suggest that the Secretary notify each member of the Blue Lodge that this matter will come up

for consideration at the regular communication of March 18th, and urge upon each and every member the

Importance of his attendance.

Fraternally,

(Signed) GEO. T. WOFFORD,

“ J. E. BRADING,

“ H. D. GUMP,
Steering Committee.
Attachment #1