

# THE CASE FOR RESTORING AN OVERTURNED ELECTION

*A Communication to the Archons of Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity*

From

**Loren R. Douglass**

*51st Grand Sire Archon (elected)*

*The Archons elected a leader in 2022. The Board overturned that election. The body's right to self governance must be protected. Election 2022 results must be restored.*

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## **Archons,**

I address the membership as the man the body elected. The case is short. The record is clear. The remedy is clean. The matter returns to the body that holds the standing to resolve it.

## **I. The Office I Hold**

On August 19, 2022, the delegates of the Grand Boulé elected me Grand Sire Archon-Elect by national vote of approximately three hundred fifty Archons representing the local and international member Boulés. On June 17, 2024, I assumed the office of Grand Sire Archon for the two-year term to which I had been elected.

On April 9, 2025, the Grand Board purported to remove me from that office. I have sought relief in the courts of Pennsylvania, where the Fraternity is incorporated, and the Court of Common Pleas, Orphans' Court Division, has issued findings of fact and conclusions of law holding that I am likely to prevail on the merits of my claim that the vote violated the bylaws and that the subsequent ratification was ineffective. The case is ongoing.

I have not surrendered the office. The body that elected me in 2022 conferred a mandate the Board did not have the power to revoke. The body's right to self governance must be protected. The 2022 election results must be restored.

## **II. April 9, 2025**

Here is what happened in the room that day, in plain language. The record is one thing and the experience is another. The membership is entitled to both.

The Grand Board met in Orlando, Florida on April 8 and 9, 2025. A Special Committee had been investigating allegations concerning the use of fraternity funds during my tenure. The Committee delivered its report on April 9. The Committee's own recommended sanctions, allegation by allegation, ranged from private reprimand to censure. Censure was the most severe sanction the Committee recommended for any of the six matters it investigated. Removal does not appear in the Committee's written recommendations on any allegation. That report is in the documentary record.

Before the motion was put, one member of the Grand Board, Stefan Bradley, the Grand Rhetoricos, was required to step away from the meeting. Before doing so, he cast his vote electronically by text message — in the negative — to the presiding officer and to the entire Special Committee. The text was time-stamped and read-receipted before the in-person tally began. This was not a proxy. Bradley cast his own vote himself, in writing, minutes in advance of the meeting's tally. When the vote was tallied, his vote was ignored.

I left the executive session, as I had been asked to do, on the understanding that I would be recalled when motions related to my conduct were put to the Board. I lived five minutes from the meeting. I was not recalled. I was denied the opportunity to vote on the motion that purported to remove me from the office to which I had been elected.

In my absence, the Grand Sire Archon-Elect informed the Board that the Committee's recommendation was removal. It was not. He put removal to a vote. Of the twelve members present and voting, eight voted in favor of removal and four voted against. Two members of the Board, including the Grand Agogos, objected on the floor that the vote had not reached the threshold the bylaws required.

Two votes were lost to that tally. Bradley's, cast in writing in the negative and read aloud in the room before he stepped away, was disregarded. Mine, which I was entitled to cast as a member of the Grand Board, was never solicited because I was never recalled. Either vote, properly counted, would have defeated the motion under any reading of the threshold the bylaws impose.

At two o'clock that afternoon, I received a telephone call from the Grand Sire Archon-Elect informing me that the Board had removed me from office.

### **III. What the Bylaws Require**

On May 19, 2025, I commenced action in the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas. The matter was transferred to the Orphans' Court Division and docketed as O.C. No. 600 NP of 2025. The Court conducted an evidentiary hearing on July 2 and 3, 2025. On September 16, 2025, the Court issued findings of fact and conclusions of law.

Bylaw 2, Section 4G governs the removal of Grand Board Members. It provides that the Grand Board may, upon a two-thirds affirmative vote of *the entire Grand Board* present and voting at any meeting, remove a Grand Board Member. Footnote 10 to that section, adopted as part of the bylaws, states that Section 4G “does impose restrictions on the Grand Board.” The restriction is the phrase *the entire Grand Board*. That phrase fixes the denominator.

The entire Grand Board is fourteen members. Two-thirds of fourteen is ten. The vote of April 9, 2025 received eight. The bylaws are unambiguous on the face of the document. The Court has so confirmed, holding that I am likely to prevail on the merits of my claim that the vote violated Bylaw 2, Section 4G and that the subsequent ratification was ineffective.

The case is ongoing. No final judgment has issued. What the Court has issued is a preliminary determination on the merits, and that determination has not been disturbed. The bylaws, however, do not depend on the Court. They speak for themselves.

#### **IV. The Architect of His Own Ascension**

On July 3, 2025, the Grand Sire Archon-Elect — the man presently holding the office — testified under oath in the Court of Common Pleas about his role in the events of April 9, 2025. The testimony is in the documentary record. What follows is drawn from it.

He chaired the Special Committee that investigated the allegations. When asked whether he voted on the Committee’s recommendations, he testified: “I recused myself. Because I didn’t need to vote because I knew what the — when the committee voted, my vote was not necessary.” That is his sworn account of the Committee proceeding.

He chaired the portion of the April 9 executive session in which the motion to remove was put. He testified that “the only portion of that meeting that I was running was when we actually was going through the process of going through the findings and the ultimate vote.”

He cast a vote on the motion to remove. When asked, “And we saw some documents that you voted yes on the motion to remove; correct?” he answered: “I don’t know what you saw; but I did vote. Yes.”

He confirmed under oath that, mathematically, the motion would not have passed without his vote. When asked, “If you hadn’t voted, if you stayed away from voting, there only would have been seven yeses; correct?” he answered: “Mathematically; yes.”

Under the bylaws, the removal of the Grand Sire Archon elevates the Grand Sire Archon-Elect to the office. The man who chaired the meeting that produced the removal vote, who cast the deciding vote in a tally of eight that the bylaws required to be ten, and who then inherited the office produced by the proceeding — was the same man.

The Fraternity's own conflict-of-interest policy would require recusal in precisely these circumstances. He recused himself from the Committee vote, where his abstention cost him nothing. He did not recuse from the board vote that elevated him to the office. There he voted. Mathematically, his vote produced the result.

This was not a proceeding in which he had an incidental role. This was a proceeding he managed. The investigation, the recommendation, the meeting, the motion, the vote, the outcome — at each step, the same man. The proceeding that produced his ascension was the proceeding he managed from start to finish.

## **V. Judge in His Own Cause**

Every expenditure that became the subject of the proceeding had passed through the Fraternity's standing four-step compliance chain before it was incurred. The Executive Director reviewed each expenditure for compliance. The Grand Sire Archon-Elect reviewed and approved. The Grand Grapier reviewed and approved. The Grand Thesauristes reviewed and approved as the fourth and final signature. After approval, the Grand Thesauristes — in his separate capacity as the Fraternity's treasurer — also authorized the disbursement. Two distinct sign-offs, in two different functions, on every expenditure.

That same officer — the Grand Thesauristes — then sat on the Special Committee that investigated the expenditures he had approved and paid. He then made the motion to remove the Grand Sire Archon who had incurred them.

The cyberattack that produced these legal fees resulted from vendor bills the prior administration left unpaid. The decision to go to court was made months into my term, after all other measures had been exhausted, and only because forty years of the institution's digital data was being held hostage. The unresolved liability, which was undisclosed at the time of the attack, was inherited at the outset of my term. Caesar Mitchell and I personally conducted the negotiation that reduced those legal fees by more than half. I assigned a working group to finalize and implement the agreement — Tyson and Searcy to structure it, Roman to program it into the budget. The Grand Thesauristes thanked me in writing for the reduction. The Grand Sire Archon-Elect — the man who now holds the office — took public credit for a negotiation he did not conduct. The same Grand Thesauristes who thanked me privately for the reduction later cited those same fees, at their pre-negotiation levels, as evidence of misconduct. The acknowledgment was private. The accusation was public. Both are documented.

This is not an inference. It is a matter of record. An approver cannot impartially investigate his own approvals. A treasurer cannot impartially recommend removal of the man whose

disbursements he authorized. The Fraternity's own conflict-of-interest policy contemplates recusal in precisely these circumstances. No recusal occurred.

This conflict is independent of the bylaw violation. Even had the vote tally satisfied the threshold, the proceeding itself would have been compromised by the participation of an officer whose conflict of interest required his recusal under the policies the Fraternity has adopted for itself.

No allegation in the report identifies a personal benefit to the Grand Sire Archon. Pins were gifts to the Past Grand Sire Archons. I did not receive one. No funds were paid to me personally for any reason. Every expenditure was incurred in service to the Fraternity.

## **VI. What the Membership Was Told**

On June 2, 2025, in his State of the Fraternity address, the man presently holding the office of Grand Sire Archon spoke to the membership about the events of April 9, 2025. The relevant statements appear below, paired with the documentary record this communication has just reviewed.

**What the membership was told:** that the removal was “executed by a supermajority vote of the Grand Board of Directors.”

**What the record shows:** The vote received eight of the entire Grand Board of fourteen. Bylaw 2, Section 4G requires an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the entire Grand Board, which is ten. The Court of Common Pleas has issued findings of fact and conclusions of law holding that I am likely to prevail on the merits of my claim that the vote violated Bylaw 2, Section 4G.

**What the membership was told:** that the Board's actions were “grounded in governance, carried out in accordance with our Constitution.”

**What the record shows:** On May 21, 2025, the Board voted again on the removal, attempting to ratify retroactively what it had done on April 9. A vote that did not meet the threshold at the time it was taken cannot be cured by a later vote. The original act remains what it was. The Court has held, on a preliminary basis, that the ratification was ineffective, that I have a clear right to relief, and that “the wrong is manifest.” The Fraternity's own conflict-of-interest policy is part of the Constitution. As Section V of this communication sets out, that policy was not observed.

**What the membership was told:** that the removal “resulted from multiple violations of our processes, our delegation of authority, and improper payments.”

**What the record shows:** What the record shows: Every expenditure cited as a violation was incurred personally by the Grand Sire Archon, then submitted for reimbursement through the Fraternity's standing four-step compliance chain — Executive Director, Grand Sire Archon-Elect, Grand Grappter, and Grand Thesauristes. The same Grand Thesauristes who approved each

reimbursement as the fourth and final signature, and who disbursed the funds in his separate capacity as treasurer, then sat on the Special Committee that investigated his own approvals.

**What the membership was told:** that “our GC, Lloyd Jordan, is also conducting a comprehensive review.”

**What the record shows:** Lloyd Jordan was not Grand General Counsel at the time of the events of April 9, 2025. The Grand General Counsel of the Fraternity at that time was Caesar Mitchell. Lloyd Jordan was retained subsequently.

The full transcript of the State of the Fraternity address is available upon request.

## **VII. A Pattern Outside the Bylaws**

The Fraternity engaged Lloyd Jordan on April 28, 2025 — nineteen days after the removal vote. No body had voted to authorize him. The engagement letter, signed twelve days later by the Grand Sire Archon-Elect, is dated back to April 28.

On May 10, the Executive Committee ratified the engagement by resolution. The resolution recites that the EC “had tacitly agreed without a formal vote to approve Lloyd Jordan’s engagement.” The Grand Board, which holds the authority to engage counsel of this kind, was not convened. The Resolution is in the documentary record.

This is the pattern. The April 9 removal vote fell short of the bylaw threshold. The May 21 ratification did not cure the defect — the Court has so held. The retention of counsel bypassed the body charged with authorizing it. At each step, the administration has acted first and sought authorization later.

## **VIII. The Fraternal Path**

On April 21, 2025, twelve days after the vote, I wrote to the Grand Board. I set out the bylaw violation and asked the Board to do three things: reconvene within forty-eight hours, vacate the vote, and acknowledge that I remain Grand Sire Archon. The letter is in the documentary record.

Forty-eight hours passed. The Board did not respond.

On April 24, I wrote again. As Chair of the Grand Board, I announced that I would call a virtual Emergency Meeting at which all Archons would be invited and all issues disclosed. That letter is also in the documentary record.

The Court of Common Pleas was the instrument I was left with. It was not the instrument I reached for first.

On May 29, 2025 — ten days after I commenced my action in Pennsylvania — the Grand Boulé filed a federal lawsuit against me in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia. The complaint alleges trademark infringement and related claims. I am defending that action.

In the months since, I have continued to seek resolution through the Fraternity's own internal procedures. I have filed grievances through the Fraternity's grievance process. They have not been heard.

On Friday, May 1, 2026, the Boulé filed for a temporary restraining order against me in the same federal court in Georgia.

Each fraternal path I have offered has been declined. Each procedural step I have taken inside the Fraternity has been met with a federal filing. The pattern is documented in the record now before the membership.

## **IX. The Remedy**

*The Archons elected a leader in 2022. The Board overturned that election. The body's right to self governance must be protected. Election 2022 results must be restored.*

By the time the Grand Boulé convenes in Dallas in July 2026, the man presently holding the office will have occupied that chair throughout the 2024–2026 term in its entirety. He will have served, without interruption from the moment of my removal, the balance of the term the Archons elected me to serve.

The remedy is proportionate. Restoration of the 51st Grand Sire Archon to office for the 2026–2028 term — the equitable answer to the events of April 9, 2025. One term for what was taken. A completed mandate. A defined end date. A clean ledger.

*The remedy is not new. It is the restoration of what the body already decided.*

In 2028, the body will elect whomever the Archons choose. The precedent of April 9, 2025 will be resolved by the act of the body that holds the standing to resolve it. The institution will move forward without that wound hanging over it as unfinished business.

## **X. What This Is Not**

Rumors are presently circulating through the Fraternity. Plain answers are owed.

There is no million-dollar demand. There is no written demand for personal payment of any kind. Counsel is authorized to pursue only the recovery of attorneys' fees incurred in vindicating the election. Anyone who says otherwise should be asked where that demand exists in writing. The answer will be silence.

There has been no misappropriation of confidential Fraternity information. That accusation was made publicly on June 2, 2025, and again, in still more aggressive form, in a mass communication to the entire membership on April 28, 2025 in which the man presently holding the office characterized my actions as constituting "Conversion of Fraternity property for personal use" — in legal terms, the civil-tort equivalent of theft, distributed to the national membership without specification of property, amount, or evidentiary basis. On August 7, 2025, the Fraternity's Grievance and Complaints Committee, reviewing substantially overlapping allegations, concluded that "the Committee sees no useful purpose to be served by recommending further action." That finding is on the record. Anyone who says otherwise should be asked to identify the document or communication alleged to constitute the misappropriation. The answer will be silence.

This is not a personal grievance dressed in institutional language. The bylaws were violated. The court has so held on a preliminary basis. The institution's own conflict-of-interest policy was not observed. The standing to remove the Grand Sire Archon belongs to the body that elected him, and that body has not been asked. These are matters of record, not matters of feeling.

This is not a request for sympathy. The bylaws assign to the body that elected the office the standing the Grand Board did not have. The resolution of this matter is the body's to make.

## **XI. What Comes Next**

Three things carry this through Dallas.

First, read the record. The Committee's investigation report is in the documentary record. An independent comparative analysis of that report, prepared by three AI platforms with their own disclaimers and authorship attribution, is in the documentary record. The April 21 and April 24 letters to the Grand Board are in the documentary record. The court decrees are public. The bylaws are accessible. The approval chain is documented. Every claim in this document can be verified against a source obtainable without anyone's help. No one need take my account on faith. No one need take the administration's account on faith. The record speaks for itself.

Second, the conversation belongs in the local Boulés. What happens at Dallas is not the act of any single Archon. It is the body restoring its own electoral act. The conversation begins at home. The case travels by hand. The questions are answered with what the record shows.

Third, the vote. In 2022 the body elected me Grand Sire Archon-Elect by a healthy margin and a mandate. In 2025 a Board without the votes the bylaws required overturned that election, elevated the man who chaired the investigation and chaired the meeting, and has governed since on an authority it did not have. None of this will be undone by the Board that did it. The power to elect and the power to undo the overreach is where it has always rested. The vote of the body restores the vote for all.

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*History is consistent on this point: lead, follow, or get out of the way.*

Fraternally,

**Loren R. Douglass**

*51st Grand Sire Archon (elected)*