

# CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS WARREN TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

## ARTICLE I CONSTITUTION

Under the authority of an ordinance establishing and providing for the regulations of a fire department in and for the Township of Warren in the County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, adopted June 1, 1963, creating the Warren Township Volunteer Fire Department and providing the government therefore, the following rules and regulations for its administration are hereby set forth, and all members are required to thoroughly familiarize themselves and comply therewith.

## ARTICLE II NAME AND PURPOSE

The name of this organization shall be the Warren Township Volunteer Fire Department. Its object is the protection of life and property from fire in the Township of Warren.

## ARTICLE III MEETINGS

**Monthly meetings:** The monthly departmental meeting will be held the third Monday of each month (with the exception of July and August) at 8p.m. in participating firehouses, and on a schedule to be determined by the membership, unless a holiday falls on that day then it will be held on the following Monday. All meetings will be conducted according to Robert's rules of order.

**Annual meeting:** The annual meeting will be held on the first Sunday in December at 2 p.m. at the Municipal Building.

**Special meetings:** A special meeting may be called and posted at any time it may be deemed necessary by the executive officers. All members must be notified in writing with correspondence postmarked five (5) days prior to the special meeting date. Attendance by a member at a special meeting waives the notice requirement.

**Quorum:** Fifteen (15) members or twenty-five percent (25%), whichever is less of the voting members, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, and a majority of those convened shall govern.

## ARTICLE IV ORDER OF BUSINESS

### Regular Meeting:

1. Flag salute
2. Roll call
3. Reading minutes of previous meeting
4. Communications
5. Report of Officers
6. Report of committees
7. Unfinished business
8. New business
9. Good and Welfare
10. Adjournment

### Special Meeting:

1. Flag salute
2. Roll call
3. Special business
4. Adjournment

## ARTICLE V ORGANIZATION

***Department Officers:*** The firematic officers of this Department shall consist of one (1) Chief and one (1) Assistant Chief from each participating company. The Chief shall be elected by a majority vote of all active members of the Department present and voting at the December annual meeting of the department. One (1) Assistant Chief shall be elected from among its own membership by each participating company within two (2) weeks following this annual meeting of the Department.

***Executive Officers:*** Shall consist of one (1) President, one (1) Vice President, one (1) Recording Secretary, and one (1) Treasurer. The nominees for these offices shall be members in good standing of the Department.

***Nominations:*** The Departmental officers, except Assistant Chiefs, will be elected annually, to hold office for a period of one (1) year. Any officer may be re-elected for any number of terms. Nominations for these Department offices will take place at the November Department meeting. The President shall at the November Department meeting, appoint a Board of Elections consisting of the Department Secretary acting as Chairman, and two (2) representatives from each of the member company's. At the November Department meeting the Department Chief shall submit (1) a list of members whom he certifies meet the required voter eligibility criteria and (2) adequate statistical data confirming each individual's eligibility. Only those members listed thereon shall be

allowed to vote at the December election for Department firematic's officers. The eligibility list shall immediately be made available for inspection by any Department member.

**Challenges to Voter Eligibility.** Challenges to voter eligibility must be made, in writing to the Chairman of the Board of Elections within five (5) days following the November Department meeting. Any objection received shall be promptly reviewed and investigated by the Board of Elections which shall render its decision within ten (10) days following the November meeting. Decisions on voter eligibility rendered by the Board of Elections shall be final. If there is no timely objection, as noted above, to a members voter eligibility, that eligibility is deemed incontestable. *(See Article VI section 2 for eligibility rules)*

**Elections.** Elections will be held at the annual meeting on the first Sunday in December at the Municipal Building by written ballot. All eligible members shall sign their name as they receive their ballot.

## ARTICLE VI DUTIES OF FIREMATIC'S OFFICERS

**Chief:** The Chief shall in all cases have the sole and absolute control and command over all the persons attached to the Fire Department, and shall direct their operations at all fires, so as most effectually to prevent the destruction of life and property. In all cases of fire, the Chief shall take prompt and efficient measures to use the means of the Department to extinguish the same and shall have the sole and absolute control and command over all the fire engineers and fire apparatus and over all persons aiding or assisting the Department in such cases, shall grant leave of absence to any member when thought proper, shall be responsible for the training of all members, shall be responsible for the periodic testing of all equipment and for the maintenance of the proper records, shall have at the regular monthly meeting in November the list of members eligible to vote in the December elections.

**Assistant Chiefs:** It shall be the duty of the Assistant Chief to see that all fire fighting apparatus is in order at all times, shall assist the Chief in all firematic duties as requested, and in the Chief's absence assume all the duties of the Chief, in order of rank. 1st. Assistant Chief, 2nd Assistant Chief, 3rd Assistant Chief, etc.

**Officers:** There can be the following officer titles: Captain, Extrication Captain, Truck Captain, First Lieutenant, Second Lieutenant, and Engineer.

**Company Officers:** Each member company may have a Captain, a First Lieutenant, a Second Lieutenant, an Engineer, and one or more Assistant Engineers may be elected at the discretion of the company. Nominees for these offices shall be members in good standing of the Department and meet all requirements for Officer.

**Department Chief Requirements:** A member nominated for the position of The Warren Township Volunteer Fire Department Chief shall be required to meet all of the following requirements. They

shall have served in a member company for a period of three (3) years in the position of firefighter. They shall have served as an officer for a period of 3 (three) years, serving in the rank of Captain or Asst. Chief for no less than two (2) of the three (3) years. A member can use their prior service from another fire department to meet the current requirements stated in these by laws after having served two (2) years with a member company.

**Officer Requirements:** All officer positions shall meet the current year requirements of The State of New Jersey Division Of Fire Safety.

**Department Chief Committee:** In the event that no one is nominated for the position of Chief a committee will be formed of one (1) person appointed by the membership of each company to meet with the Township Committee and discuss the path forward.

## ARTICLE VII DUTIES OF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

The Executive Officers of the Department shall consist of a President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, and Treasurer. The nominees for these offices shall be members in good standing of the Department.

**President:** It shall be the duty of the President to preside at all meetings, name and appoint non-firematic committees, and perform other duties as pertaining to the office. The President also has the power to call special meetings, when requested in writing by ten (10) or more members in good standing or when requested by the Board of Fire Officers.

**Vice-President:** In the absence or disability of the President, the Vice-President shall act as President and shall have all the powers to perform all the duties of the President.

**Recording Secretary:** It shall be the duty of, the Secretary to attend all meetings, to call the roll at the beginning of each meeting, to keep a full and complete record of the proceedings of all meetings in books provided for that purpose. In case the Secretary can not attend the meeting, the Secretary shall insure that the minute book is made available for the meeting, at which time the Chair shall appoint an acting Recording Secretary. The Secretary shall notify in writing every new member when elected and place the new members name upon the roll, shall furnish each company with a copy of the Constitution and By-Laws, Ordinance, and all current standing orders of the Chief. The aforesaid is to be posted at each member firehouse. The Secretary shall notify all active members of any special meeting and state the object of the meeting, shall answer all correspondence received, keep copies of outgoing correspondence, announcements, and mandates, shall also assist the Chief in correlating information for any and all reports and to notify the Township Committee of all changes in membership.

**Treasurer:** It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to maintain written records of all Departmental expenditures and to assist the Chief and Board of Firematic Officers in the preparation of the annual budget.

## ARTICLE VIII FIRE POLICE

There shall be a division of the department known as the fire police. The fire police shall have such officers as it may establish by its own bylaws. Members of the fire police shall be appointed from among members of the department or the CERT (civilian emergency response team) to perform certain police duties at fires and fire drills. The Fire Police will be governed in accordance with Warren Township General Ordinance Chapter 2-4 Fire Department, and WTFD.022 Fire Police Operations Standard Operating Guideline.

## ARTICLE IX MEMBERSHIP

***Membership Limits:*** Membership of each company shall be limited to (30) active members.

***Exempt member.*** An exempt member is one who has satisfactorily met the requirements of the New Jersey State Firefighters Relief Association.

***Section 1 New Members Working for Exemption:*** To be eligible for active membership in this Department, a person must first be accepted into one of the participating companies. The applicant must be proposed by a member of this Department in good standing. The applicant must conform with State regulations; be a citizen of the United States and be of good moral character. Upon acceptance of membership by a participating company the applicant must complete the application form for membership in the New Jersey State Firefighters Relief Association, including the reverse side of said form Physical Examination, and must also be fingerprinted by the Warren Township Police Department for identification purposes. The applicant must then be confirmed by resolution of the Township Committee. A probationary period of one (1) year commencing on the date of confirmation shall be required. During this probationary period new members shall be required to attend forty percent (40%) of fires, drills and / or department meetings, and must attend the basic firefighter training course sponsored by the Somerset County Firefighters Association, or show valid proof of similar training elsewhere. During probation no member shall attend New Jersey State Fire College, or hold any Department office. New members not meeting the above requirements, shall at the discretion of the Board of Fire Officers, be dropped from membership at the end of the probationary period.

***Section 2 Active Members:*** Active members recognized as certified firefighters shall meet all the requirements as stated in Section 1, shall maintain membership in a member company and shall be required to attend ten percent (10%) of all fire calls, six (6) department drills and 50% of department Meetings within the period from November 1<sup>st</sup> of the prior year to October 31 of the current year to maintain voting status for chief election.

***Section 3 Active Exempt Members:*** Certified exempt members wishing to continue as exempt members may do so by attending six (6) department meetings and will only be able to vote for

executive positions.

***Section 4 Associate Members:*** An associate member must maintain associate membership in good standing in a member company and shall be able to participate in indirect fire fighting activities such as, but not limited to, fire prevention activities of fire police. An associate member shall be eligible to hold Department executive office and vote in elections for such offices. An associate member shall not be eligible to vote for Department firematic officers or matters pertaining to direct fire fighting activities. An associate member shall not be required to meet the requirements of active membership and shall not participate in direct fire fighting activities.

***Section 5 Junior Members:*** To be eligible for Junior membership in the Warren Township Volunteer Fire Department, a candidate shall be sixteen (16) years of age or older but not have reached their eighteenth (18th) birthday. The applicant shall submit a completed physical examination utilizing the New Jersey State Firefighters Relief Association form and must be fingerprinted by the Warren Township Police Department for identification purposes. Immediately upon attaining the age of eighteen (18), a junior member shall be deemed automatically to be confirmed as an active member without further action by the Township Committee, provided they also qualify under applicable Departmental and company By-Laws, and have served at least one (1) year as a junior member, otherwise they must serve one (1) year probation. At this a second physical examination shall be submitted using the aforementioned form. An applicant for junior membership shall not be appointed unless the parents or legal guardian of the same first execute the Application and Agreement forms furnished by the Department. A junior member shall at all times conform with the resolution adopted may 24, 1963, establishing and providing for a Junior Member in the Warren Township Volunteer Fire Department. A junior member shall be required to attend twenty-five percent (25%) of the annual Departmental activities as designated by the department officers. A junior member shall not have the right to vote on any Departmental issues or hold any Departmental offices except Junior Department Offices.

***Section 6 Honorary Members:*** An Honorary member shall be a person who, through association and performance, has been chosen for recognition by the Department. Candidates for Honorary membership shall be proposed in writing by a member in good standing at the regular meeting. If elected an Honorary member, a badge will be presented at a time designated by the President. Honorary members shall not be subject to active duties or requirements, and shall not have voting privileges or the right to hold office.

## ARTICLE X AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

These By-Laws may be altered or amended at any regular or special meeting by following Robert's Rules of Order.

**Amended: 5/23/2010**