

# CUMBERLAND VALLEY VOLUNTEER FIREMEN'S ASSOCIATION BY-LAWS

## ARTICLE I MEMBERSHIP

**Section 1.** Membership in the Cumberland Valley Volunteer Firemen's Association (hereinafter "CVVFA") shall be divided into two classes: Volunteer Fire or Rescue Company, Department, or Association membership and individual membership. Individual membership shall consist of four categories: Active, Active Beneficial, Honorary, and Life.

**Section 2.** Any Volunteer Fire or Rescue Company, Department, or Association may become a member of the CVVFA upon payment of the dues hereinafter set forth.

**Section 3.** Active members shall consist of two classes: active and active beneficial.

A. Active members are those members in good standing of any duly recognized Volunteer Fire, Rescue, or Emergency Services Company, Department, Organization or Association who:

1. Pay the requisite dues as governed by Article VIII of these By-Laws; and

a. Applied for membership after August 27, 1994; or

b. Elected to have the CVVFA purchase their accrued death benefit on or prior to August 25, 1995; or

2. Had been members of the CVVFA for eight (8) or more years prior to August 27, 1994 and who elected to forego beneficial status on or before August 25, 1995 in return for a waiver of future dues.

B. Active beneficial members are those members in good standing of any duly recognized Volunteer Fire or Rescue Company, Department, or Association who pay the requisite dues as governed by Article VIII of these By-Laws and who:

1. Have joined the CVVFA prior to August 24, 1994, and

2. On or prior to August 25, 1995,

a. elected to remain an active beneficial member; or

b. were deemed to remain active beneficial members by virtue of failing to make an election of options.

All active and active beneficial members are entitled to vote and to hold office.

**Section 4.** Honorary members shall consist of such persons who, by act or deed in the interest of the CVVFA or fire service in general, shall have commended themselves to the esteem of the CVVFA. Honorary members shall have the privilege of admittance to the CVVFA meetings and shall be permitted the floor when so invited. They shall be exempt from the payment of dues and may not vote or hold office.

**Section 5.** Life membership shall be conferred upon:

- A. all Presidents, Secretaries, Chaplains, Treasurers, and Attorneys who have retained active membership for the period of twenty (20) consecutive years; and
- B. any member who is in good standing and has been a member for fifty (50) consecutive years. Life members shall be entitled to all privileges of active members, however, they shall be exempt from the payment of dues.

## **ARTICLE II OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS**

**Section 1.** The Officers of the CVVFA shall consist of a President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Third Vice President, Fourth Vice President, Chaplain, Assistant Chaplain, Financial Secretary, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Attorney, ten (1) Directors, Home Office Manager, Advertising Manager, and Delegate to the Pennsylvania State Firemen's Association of the State of Pennsylvania; each to be elected at the Annual Convention by ballot and by a majority of the valid votes cast. Said Officers shall serve for a period of (1) year, except the Directors, who are elected for a two-year term or until their successors are chosen and qualified.

The President may not succeed himself/herself in the office of President. The offices of President and the four Vice Presidents shall rotate among representatives of the five States participating in the CVVFA; namely, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and Delaware, each State to be represented by the President or a Vice President.

**Section 2.** Nominations for all Officers, venue of future Conventions other than those already contracted for, and Delegate to the Pennsylvania State Firemen's Association shall take place during the first day of each Annual Convention. No member shall be nominated for any office, except Attorney, unless he/she is in attendance or unavoidably prevented from attending and is in good standing in the books of the CVVFA. No member shall be nominated or elected to more than one (1) elective office. All resignations of elective Officers shall be presented in writing prior to the nomination.

**Section 3.** The Election of Officers, venue of future Conventions other than those already contracted for, and the Delegate to the Pennsylvania State Firemen's Association shall be held on the second day of each Annual Convention. At least one (1) Director shall be elected from each of the five (5) States comprising the territory of the CVVFA. The election shall be by ballots unless there is no opposition for the office. The Recording Secretary should then cast the deciding vote. When

there is opposition the election shall be conducted as follows: The President shall appoint a judge, two tellers, and one clerk from the floor of the Convention. No member shall be judge, teller, or clerk of his/her own election. Ballots shall contain the names of all those nominated for the various offices, the venue of future Conventions other than those already contracted for, and the Delegate to the Pennsylvania State Firemen's Association. The ballots shall be placed in the hands of the Judge of Election prior to the opening of the second day's business session. All eligible active members will be presented a ballot by presenting their current active membership card to the Election Board. The Judge of Election shall have full charge of the election, shall provide the proper container in which to collect ballots, and shall notify the President when the hour of 10:00 a.m. has arrived and state the closing of the balloting. The Election Board shall count all ballots and make a written report of the results of the ballots cast.

**Section 4.** Installation of Officers shall be held following the election. Said installation ceremony shall be conducted by a Past President of the CVVFA, using form hereinafter adopted. Any Officer failing to appear for installation, without reasonable excuse, shall forfeit said office and another shall be elected or appointed according to Section 6 of this Article.

**Section 5.** The Board of Directors shall consist of the President, First Vice President, Financial Secretary, Recording Secretary, and the immediate Past President, who shall each serve for one (1) year, and ten (10) Directors to be elected from the CVVFA. Each of the said ten (10) Directors are to be elected for a period of two (2) years, the eldest of each State Director's term expiring at each Convention.

**Section 6.** The Board of Directors shall fill vacancies in unexpired terms of office.

**Section 7.** The President may, at his/her discretion, appoint no more than two (2) Ex-officio members residing outside of Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and Delaware to the Board of Directors. The Ex-officio Directors will represent the members and companies of their States within the jurisdiction of the CVVFA. The term of these Ex-officio Directors will be one (1) year and they may be reappointed. The Ex-officio Director will have no vote. These Directors shall not count toward the quorum for conducting business.

### **ARTICLE III DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

**Section 1.** The President shall preside at the annual and special meetings of the CVVFA; be an Ex-officio member of all committees; provide order and decorum; call all meetings of the Board of Directors and special meetings of the CVVFA when in his/her judgment he/she deems it necessary, when ordered to do so by the petition of no fewer than four (4) members of the Board of Directors, or when petitioned by fifteen (15) members in good standing, at such place he/she may determine; refer questions of dispute to the Board of Directors, appoint from the CVVFA membership an Historian, Sergeant-at-Arms, all committees set forth in Article IV, which appointments shall be made within ten (10) days after the Annual Convention, and special committees as he/she from time to time deems necessary. He/she shall be allowed to vote only during the election of Officers, upon the call for yea and nay and when balloting has otherwise produced a tie vote. He/she shall submit a

written report of the business transacted through his/her office during the year at the first day's session of each Convention.

**Section 2.** The Vice Presidents shall perform the duties of the President in his/her absence, serving respectively in the order of their standing.

**Section 3.** It shall be the duty of the Financial Secretary to sign on all orders drawn on the Treasurer, to keep a true and correct account of all money coming into his/her hands, to pay money accumulated as of April 15 and October 15 to the Treasurer for deposit, and to make a final accounting of all funds received on or before July 31 of each Convention year, taking the Treasurer's receipt for the same. The Financial Secretary shall have all dues posted as of July 1 of each Convention year, and turn all records including computer ledger data over to the Auditing Committee by August 1 of each Convention year. The Financial Secretary shall furnish annually a detailed statement of all money received and expenditures, and be prepared at all times to submit his/her books for audit. He/she shall deliver to his/her successor all books, papers, and other property of the CVVFA in his/her possession. The Financial Secretary shall be reimbursed for miscellaneous expenses, approved by the Board of Directors just prior to the opening of the Convention, and presented to the Convention for approval. He/she shall receive a donation, amount to be recommended by the Board of Directors, just prior to the opening of the Convention and presented to the Convention for approval for the ensuing year.

**Section 4.** It shall be the duty of the Recording Secretary to keep a complete record of all the proceedings at all meetings, and deliver to his/her successor all books, papers, and other property of the CVVFA in his/her possession. The Recording Secretary shall be reimbursed for miscellaneous expenses, approved by the Board of Directors just prior to the opening of the Convention and presented to the Convention for approval. He/she shall receive a donation, amount to be recommended by the Board of Directors, just prior to the opening of the Convention and presented to the Convention for approval for the ensuing year.

**Section 5.** It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to keep a true and correct account of all monies belonging to the CVVFA which may come into his/her hands, disbursements of the same, and to make a report of the condition of treasury annually or more often if requested. He/she shall not disburse any money except upon an order signed by the President and Financial Secretary. At the expiration of his/her term of office, he/she shall deliver to his/her successor all monies, books and papers belonging to the CVVFA in his/her possession. He/she shall receive a donation, amount to be recommended by the Board of Directors, just prior to the opening of the Convention and presented to the Convention for approval for the ensuing year.

**Section 6.** The Financial Secretary and Treasurer shall give security in such sums as the Board of Directors may determine, and the charge of the Surety Company furnishing such security shall be paid by the CVVFA.

**Section 7.** The Chaplain, for the faithful performance of his/her duties, shall receive a donation, the amount to be recommended by the Board of Directors and approved by the Convention members. It shall be the duty of the Assistant Chaplain to assist the Chaplain, for which he/she shall receive a donation, the amount to be recommended by the Board of Directors and approved by the Convention members. If only the Assistant Chaplain attends the Convention, he/she shall fulfill the Chaplain's

duties and shall receive in full the Chaplain's donation.

**Section 8.** At the conclusion of their term of office, all Officers, Directors and committee chairpersons shall surrender to their successor all monies, books, papers, and all other property belonging to the CVVFA.

#### **ARTICLE IV DUTIES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND COMMITTEES**

**Section 1.** The Board of Directors shall direct the contracting of bills and their payment through the proper vouchers. It shall have charge of the investments of surplus monies and shall fill vacancies for the unexpired terms of office. It shall have power to offer suggestions and recommendations for alterations or amendments to the By-Laws to the Constitution and By-Laws Committee and complete business which may have been left unfinished by the CVVFA. It shall make annual reports to the Convention in session. Eight (8) members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. It shall have authority to establish scholarship award programs and total dollar amounts that may be awarded.

**Section 2.** The Membership Committee shall endeavor to increase the membership of the CVVFA. It shall further assist in the settlement of all Death Claims and in the collection of the annual dues. This Committee will also have as its members the four (4) Vice Presidents and the Entire Board of Directors with no voting rights.

**Section 3.** The Topics Committee shall recommend speakers for the Annual Convention to the Board of Directors during, or prior to, the March Booster meeting. It shall report at each Annual Convention upon the work performed and to the President whenever requested to do so.

**Section 4.** The Credentials Committee shall inquire into and report to the CVVFA upon all questions referred to it arising from disputes for admission to membership, and shall sit at the Convention Hall on the first day of the session to pass upon the eligibility of each representative or member. A majority of its members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

**Section 5.** The Auditing Committee shall audit the accounts of the Financial Secretary, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, and Home Office and Advertising Managers at least once each year or more often, if, in its judgment, it is deemed necessary. All ledgers and accounts of the Financial Secretary, the Treasurer, the Recording Secretary, and the Home Office and Advertising Managers shall be audited prior to each Convention. The Committee shall report to the Convention in session assembled. It shall have the power to demand of the Officers or committees of the CVVFA all books and papers which it may require to complete its work, and request the presence of any Officer or committeeman if necessary. The Committee members shall be compensated for their work in an amount approved by the Board of Directors. A majority of its members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

**Section 6.** The Memorial Committee shall provide an appropriate Memorial Service at each Annual Convention and provide floral display of Red Roses or Carnations for Memorial Programs.

**Section 7.** The Publicity Committee shall have charge of all publicity concerning each Convention or any other event in the interest of the CVVFA.

**Section 8.** The Fire Prevention and Education Committee shall arrange a fire prevention program for each Annual Convention and provide a training program for Friday afternoon or Saturday morning of the Convention. The Committee shall supervise and issue training certificates to all members attending said programs, and shall report to the Officers and Directors by the May Booster Meeting on the nature of the programs and for approval of funds.

**Section 9.** The Resolutions Committee shall prepare and present resolutions.

**Section 10.** The Public Relations Committee shall arrange special programs which will assist fire organizations of the CVVFA to promote programs which will promote the interest of the general public in fire safety. The Committee shall arrange a program with the assistance of the Fire Prevention Committee as part of each Annual Convention which shall be known as the E. Wade Thomas Memorial Fire Prevention and Fire Safety Conference.

**Section 11.** The Constitution and By-Laws Committee shall formulate and present proposed changes to the Constitution and By-Laws to the CVVFA, providing the proposals have been submitted in writing in accordance with Article X, Section 1 of these By-Laws.

**Section 12.** The Legislative Committee shall formulate and look after the passage of such legislation as may be to the matter and benefit of the CVVFA. The Chairman shall report regularly and seek advice from the Officers and Board of Directors on positions of the CVVFA, but shall have the authority to act by lone judgment when time is of the essence, being ever mindful of the goals and aims of the CVVFA.

**Section 13.** The Parliamentarian shall be consultant to, and advise the President and other Officers and committee chairmen on, any questions that may arise in interpreting the by-Laws. The Parliamentarian shall be present at all meetings during the Annual Convention to assist the presiding Officers on questions of parliamentary inquiry and to call attention to the presiding Officer to any error in the proceedings that may affect the substantive rights of any member or that may otherwise do harm. The Parliamentarian shall speak when so requested by the presiding Officer.

**Section 14.** The Scholarship Committee shall select a student or students to receive the CVVFA Scholarship award. The Scholarship Committee may, in its sole discretion, award such amount or amounts by way of a grant (not to exceed \$1,000 total) to any such person or persons it shall deem worthy or fit. The Scholarship Committee may, as a source for such grants, use such funds as are provided from any person, firm or corporation it deems within its discretion to be proper. The Scholarship Committee shall promulgate such rules and regulations relating to its duties as eligibility of applicants or recipients, acceptable courses of study, and sources of funds to be solicited and accepted, from time to time as benefits its function and purpose.

**Section 15.** The Convention Committee shall make arrangements for the Annual Convention and, as needed, shall coordinate activities with local organizations. The Committee shall devise and manage

fund-raising activities, primarily to assist with financing the Annual Convention.

## **ARTICLE V ADVERTISING MANAGER**

**Section 1.** The Publicity Manager shall have charge of soliciting, collecting for sponsor space sold, compiling, publishing and distributing the CVVFA's annual book of proceedings, which shall be placed in the mail to all member companies and sponsors. The Publicity Manager shall be reimbursed for miscellaneous expenses, approved by the Board of Directors just prior to the opening of convention and presented on the convention floor for their approval. One Director from each state shall be appointed by the President to assist the Publicity Manager. A donation to each Director, in amount that solely covers individual director's expenses actually incurred in assisting the Publicity Manager, may be considered and set by the Board of Directors. He/she shall be bonded or have similar insurance in the sum of five thousand dollars (\$5,000); premium on bond shall be paid by the CVVFA. Sponsorship contracts shall be signed by the President, Treasurer, and Publicity Manager. He/she shall make an annual report as requested by the Board of Directors, just prior to the opening of the convention and presented to the convention for approval for the ensuing year.

**Section 2.** The Publicity Manager will have copies of the CVVFA's annual book of proceedings for individual members at the registration of delegates at the annual convention.

## **ARTICLE VI HOME OFFICE MANAGER**

**Section 1.** The Home Office Manager shall be responsible for:

- A. receiving all death claims;
- B. all CVVFA merchandise;
- C. promotion of Booster Meetings; and
- D. carrying out all necessary official and incidental duties of the office.

**Section 2.** The Home Office Manager shall secure lodging for those specified in Article III, Section 8. They shall be notified as to location of motel at least thirty (30) days prior to Convention.

**Section 3.** The Home Office Manager shall, with the current President, the First Vice President, and the Chairpersons of the Memorial, Topic, and Convention Committees, meet at least three (3) months prior to the Convention with the local company for Convention Program planning.

**Section 4.** The Home Office Manager shall be advanced Three Hundred Dollars (\$300.00) for petty cash, such amount to be replenished from time to time by the Treasurer as needed. All expenses shall be reported to the yearly audit. All needed business contact of the CVVFA during the year shall be channeled through the Home Office this business to be directed by the Home Office Manager to proper person or committee. The donation to the Home Office Manager shall be

recommended by the Board of Directors and approved by the Convention body..

## **ARTICLE VII MEETINGS**

**Section 1.** The Annual Convention shall be held on the Thursday, Friday and Saturday beginning on the Thursday preceding the first Saturday in August. The opening session of the Convention shall convene at a time set by the Board of Directors on the first day selected for each Annual Convention and continue until recessed from time to time during the session, or sine die when the entire business has been concluded. A meeting of the Board of Directors shall be held on the night prior to the first day of Convention, at a time set at the previous Board meeting.

**Section 2.** The elected Officers and Board of Directors may contract with any member company for the site of the Annual Convention. The Annual Convention shall not be held in connection with any other convention or celebration, with the exception of a fire company celebration.

**Section 3.** Three (3) Booster meetings shall be held each year on a Sunday in October, March, and May. Booster meeting dates are subject to change at the call of the President provided the Board of Directors approves at the meeting immediately preceding said proposed change. Subject to the provisions of Article III, §1, the Board of Directors may meet prior to each Booster meeting. The Home Office Manager shall notify each Director, Officer, and member of the location, date, and time of all special meetings of the CVVFA no fewer than fifteen (15) days prior to said special meeting.

**Section 4.** Fifteen (15) members of the CVVFA, two (2) of whom are elective Officers, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at a Booster meeting or Convention. All meetings of the CVVFA shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, which is hereby recognized as authority.

**Section 5.** All business of the CVVFA must be fully completed prior to any celebration which may be arranged in connection with the Annual Convention.

**Section 6.** The Board of Directors is hereby vested with the authority to make a reasonable donation to any member company for hosting any meeting or Convention.

## **ARTICLE VIII DUES**

**Section 1.** Persons entitled to membership in the CVVFA shall be admitted upon presentation of credentials as hereinbefore prescribed and by payment of annual dues.

**Section 2.** Annual dues for all classes of individual members required to pay dues and Volunteer Fire or Rescue Companies, Departments, or Associations may be established by successful motion at the Annual Convention. In all cases, payment of dues shall be made to the Financial Secretary on or

before December 31st of each year. All funds collected shall be placed in the General Fund.

**Section 3.** Any member Volunteer Fire or Rescue Company, Department in arrears for a period of two (2) years shall be expelled from membership in the CVVFA.

**Section 4.** Any Volunteer Fire or Rescue Company, Department, or Association seeking reinstatement to the CVVFA shall, in addition to the then present membership fee, be required to pay all dues for the period in which they were in arrears, but in no event shall be required to pay a sum greater than two (2) times the then present Volunteer Fire or Rescue Company, Department, or Association membership fee.

**Section 5.** Any individual active member of the CVVFA failing to pay the annual dues by adjournment of Convention each year shall become delinquent and shall not be entitled to participate in any meetings whatsoever, nor shall be entitled to benefits; and when in arrears six (6) months, the Financial Secretary shall notify him/her and request payment. If delinquent for a period of one (1) year, he/she shall be suspended from individual active membership. Any individual active member of the CVVFA in arrears for a period of three (3) or more years shall be expelled from membership.

**Section 6.** All individual active members suspended for non-payment of annual dues shall not be reinstated as an individual active member or enrolled as a representative from a member company or department until they have paid the full amount of arrears which may be open against them on the books of the CVVFA. Individual members who are serving a suspension from the CVVFA for failure to pay annual dues shall not be entitled to receive mailings from the CVVFA. All delinquent and reinstated individual active members shall serve a probation period of one (1) year from the date back dues are received by the Financial Secretary, prior to receiving benefits, if said member was entitled to benefits at the time he/she became delinquent or was suspended.

**Section 7.** Any active member of the CVVFA entering into the Armed Forces shall be excused from the payment of dues during his/her first tour of duty. He/she shall retain all privileges and benefits of the CVVFA. Within one (1) year of discharge he/she must remit dues to maintain active membership.

## **ARTICLE IX DEATH BENEFITS**

**Section 1.** No individual acquiring membership status in the CVVFA subsequent to August 27, 1994, shall be entitled to enjoy the status of active beneficial member.

**Section 2.** On the death of an active beneficial member the CVVFA will pay the beneficiary named by said active beneficial member who has served his/her probationary period of one (1) year and has paid his/her first year's dues as such active beneficial member the sum of Thirty Five Dollars (\$35.00). To the beneficiary of said active beneficial member who has paid his/her second year's dues as such active beneficial member, the CVVFA will pay the sum of Seventy Dollars (\$70.00) with an increase of Five Dollars (\$5.00) for each additional year of active beneficial membership. The maximum death benefit shall be One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00). Claims for death benefits

shall be made on the CVVFA's Death Claim (Form DB) provided by the Home Office, subject to the approval of the Board of Governors.

**Section 3.** There shall be a Committee on Death Benefits, to be officially known as the Board of Governors of the Death Benefit Fund, which shall consist of the President, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, and Home Office Manager of the CVVFA.

**Section 4.** The President of the CVVFA shall serve as the President and the Financial Secretary of the CVVFA shall serve as the Secretary of the Board of Governors of the Death Benefit Fund. All claims for death benefits shall be presented to the Secretary of the Board in such manner and form as the Board shall prescribe. The Board shall pass upon the validity of all claims and where granted shall direct the payment of same in accordance with Article IX of these By-Laws. The Board shall report to each Annual Convention upon all claims presented to them and action taken thereon. In event of an appeal from an adverse decision of the Board, the same shall be determined by the Convention.

## **ARTICLE X AMENDMENT OF BY-LAWS**

**Section 1.** Any addition or amendment to these Bylaws may be adopted from time to time after such addition or amendment is proposed in writing at one regular meeting of the association, which may include a Booster meeting or the Annual Convention, read, and laid until the next succeeding Annual Convention, upon the affirmation vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present. Any proposed Bylaw amendment shall be read at any intervening regular meeting of the Association between the time that it is proposed and the Annual Convention at which a vote is taken.

**Revised 7 August 2006 (to reflect amendments made at Convention 2006)**