

Section VII



Constitution

and

By-Laws

of the

Illinois Firefighter's Association

ILLINOIS FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION, INC. CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I

Name

Section 1. The name of the organization shall be: The Illinois Firefighter's Association, Incorporated, of the State of Illinois (IFA).

ARTICLE II

Mission Statement/Guiding Principles

Section 1. **Mission Statement.** Dedicated to the advancement of the Fire Service by providing leadership, the Association will proudly support the health and welfare of the community of firefighters in Illinois through education, training, benefits and information networking at the local, state and national levels.

Section 2. **Guiding Principles.** The Association will accomplish our mission through the following: (1) providing ethical leadership; (2) continuing to provide an Indemnity Fund; (3) strengthening conferences and seminars; (4) supporting scholarships and grants; (5) participating in state and national committees; (6) monitoring legislative programs; (7) improving the newsletter and website; (8) seeking legal counsel on firefighter issues; (9) cultivating bonds and friendships within the fire service; (10) collaborating with other organizations/associations and (11) Health and Safety training.

ARTICLE III

Membership

Section 1. **General Membership.** Membership in this Association shall consist of Fire Departments duly organized under the laws and ordinances of Cities, Villages, Towns, or any other political subdivision of the State, including Special Districts, Fire Protection Districts, and Departments organized by industry, Departments of Military installations, and Departments of State Institutions working under the authority of the political subdivision wherein located may also become members by complying with the Constitution and By-laws of this Association. Special Districts shall apply to any organized Fire Department that is not incorporated or is not operating

under the jurisdiction of a Fire Protection District or Municipality. Annual dues are set out in Article XIII, Section 5, Dues.

Section 2. **Past Officers.** All past officers of the Association are dues free members. All directors serving on the Executive Committee for ten or more years are dues free members. (See Article XIII, Section 7)

ARTICLE IV

Directors

Section 1. **Directors.** The Directors of this Association shall consist of a President, Vice-President, 15 Directors (one of which shall be the Immediate Past President), and a Secretary/Treasurer. Directors will hold their respective offices until their successors shall be elected and qualified.

Section 2. **Executive Officers.** The Executive Officers shall consist of the President, Vice-President and Secretary-Treasurer of the Association.

The President, Vice-President, and Secretary/Treasurer shall be elected for two (2) year terms with the President and Vice-President being elected in the opposite year of the Secretary/Treasurer.

Directors shall be elected for a four (4) year term with three (3) or four (4) being elected annually as terms expire. The immediate Past President shall serve as a Director. The Past President's term will run until the next President is elected, at which time the new immediate Past President will automatically fill this position.

Section 3. **Qualifications for Serving as a Director**

Persons interested in serving as a Director shall meet the following:

1. A minimum of 5 years as a member of the Association, including individual members and lifetime members.
2. Residency in the state of Illinois.
3. No felony convictions or convictions related to crimes against persons.
4. Availability to travel for meetings throughout the state to conduct Association business.

Section 4. **Vacancy.** If any vacancy shall occur for any reason in any office of this Association, except

PRESIDENT, (and this vacancy would be automatically filled by the VICE-PRESIDENT) such vacancy *may* be filled by appointment by the PRESIDENT with the approval of the Directors of the Association, for the unexpired term for which said Director was elected. If the Immediate Past President office becomes vacant for any reason, it shall remain vacant until a new President is elected.

ARTICLE V

Duties of Executive Officers

Section 1. **President.** It shall be the duty of the President to preside over all meetings of the Association.

- a. To appoint members to all Standing Committees;
- b. To approve expenditures by signing checks received from the Secretary/Treasurer for payment; and,
- c. To sign all checks duly approved by the Directors of the Association.
- d. To appoint; with the advice and consent of the *Directors* of the Association: an Executive Manager to assist with the business of the Association.
- e. To appoint an assistant to the Secretary/Treasurer.
- f. To break ties in any tied vote.

Section 2. **Vice President.** It shall be the duty of the Vice-President to perform all the duties of the President in his absence or inability to perform his duties.

Section 3. **Secretary/Treasurer.** It shall be the duty of the Secretary/Treasurer to keep a complete and accurate record of the proceedings at all meetings of the Association.

- a. To prepare and sign all checks;
- b. To receive and answer all communications pertaining to the Association;
- c. To collect all monies due the Association;
- d. To keep an accurate account of receipts and make a report of all such receipts at the Annual Meeting of the Association;

- e. To collect information;
- f. To receive and collect all monies belonging to the Association and deposit the same in a FDIC insured depository approved by the Executive Officers of the Association immediately upon receipt of such funds;
- g. To issue checks when countersigned by the President;
- h. To prepare a complete monthly report of all receipts and disbursements for the Directors of the Association;
- i. To prepare a complete fiscal report to be presented to the membership at the Annual Meeting of the Association.

He/she shall execute a bond in the sum of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00) approved by, and filed with the President. Said bond to conform to all requirements of the State laws governing corporate Officers and be paid for by the Association. He/she will turn over to his/her successor all property in his/her possession belonging to the Association as soon as his/her successor has qualified.

The salary of the Secretary/Treasurer shall be set by the Directors of the Association and they shall be paid from the General Fund.

Section 4. **Duties of Directors:** Directors shall support the president and the Association by acting on issues and /or projects as they arise and brought to the attention of the directors in the best interest of the Association and Firefighters of Illinois. Directors shall also serve on Committees as appointed by the President and carry out the duties and/or responsibilities associated with those committee positions.

Directors shall attend meetings as called by the president to conduct the business of the Association. Failure to attend at least fifty percent (50%) of the meetings called by the president in any twelve month period shall be cause for removal from the board.

Section 5. **Reimbursements.** The Association shall defray the expenses of the Directors of the Association and/or authorized committee members while on official business of the Association. The President and/or Executive Committee of the Association shall review, and if reasonable and appropriate, shall approve and authorize

all such expenditures of the Illinois Firefighters Association, Incorporated.

Directors of the Association or other authorized committee members and/or delegate(s) shall receive reasonable travel expense and food allowance per day as established by the Executive Committee of the Association to meet current economic conditions. Travel expense to be paid per mile based on actual road miles driven or by an approved road mileage chart or upon submittal of receipts in actual expenses incurred for other methods of travel. In addition, members will be reimbursed for actual amount expended for lodging. These expenses to be paid to members while on official business of the Association, as approved by the Directors of the Association. For the Annual Meeting, Directors of the Association shall receive expenses not to exceed mileage, one day's food allowance and one day's lodging.

Section 6. **Expenditures.** All expenditures of the Association presented to the Secretary/Treasurer for payment shall be paid in the following manner:

- a. The Secretary/Treasurer shall prepare a check stating the purchase or expenses incurred and the amount of such expenditure, sign check, and forward the President for his approval.
- b. The President shall approve the expenditure by signing the check. The President shall then forward the check to the debtor of the Association.
- c. The Secretary/Treasurer, upon receiving a copy of the check signed by the President of the Association, shall file the copy with his records.
- d. All monies, accounts with financial institutions, and checks of the Association are to be established so that any two signatures of the President, Secretary/Treasurer, Vice-President, Immediate Past President, or Executive Manager are required.

ARTICLE VI

Executive Manager

Section 1. **Executive Manager.** The president may appoint, with the advice and consent of the Directors of the Association, an executive manager to assist with the business of the Association.

Section 2. **Executive Manager General Duties:**

The Executive manager shall serve the Directors of the Association, and membership as a manager of the day-to-day operations of the Association providing support services to all and serves the Illinois Firefighter's Association Foundation *Directors* and membership as the manager of the day-to day operations of the Foundation providing support services to all. Actual expectations for the position may change based on the direction of the Association President and Directors of the Association and as set forth in the position's job description. This position serves at the will of the Directors of the Association. This position is expected to be a part-time position unless work load demands change, at which time the Directors shall review the position requirements. The Executive Manager will report to the President of the Association.

ARTICLE VII

Meetings - Quorum - Fiscal Year

Section 1. **Annual Meeting:** The Annual Meeting of the Association shall convene on any date between the end of our fiscal year (December 31) and the end of the next calendar year. This date to be set by the Directors of the Association in each and every year at such a place as the majority of the members present designate.

Section 2. **Cancellation.** Failure to hold any meeting at the time designated in the constitution shall in no way indicate a dissolution of the Association.

Section 3. **Quorum.** A quorum at any regular or special meeting of the Association shall consist of forty (40) *Delegates in good standing*. Conference registrations will be used as credentials.

Section 4. **Fiscal Year.** The fiscal year of the Association shall be from January 1 through December 31.

Section 5. **Dues.** Membership dues of the Association shall run concurrently with the Fiscal Year of the Association, January 1 through December 31.

Section 6. **Director Meetings.** The President shall call a meeting of the Directors of the Association in conjunction with the Annual Meeting and other meetings as needed throughout the year to conduct the business of the Association. The time and place of said meetings to be at the discretion of the President, but it is intended that they be as centrally located as practical and/or coincide with other meetings or functions within the Association or other fire service related assemblies. Special meetings

will be called by the President at the request of any three (3) members of the *Directors* of the Association .

ARTICLE VIII

Audits

Section 1. **Annual Audit.** The accounts of the general fund and indemnity fund shall be audited immediately after December 31 of each year, by a Certified Public Accountant selected by the elected executive officers of the Association. The accountant's report shall be presented at the Annual Meeting each year.

Section 2. **Audit Review.** All books of the Secretary/Treasurer shall be available at the annual meeting for inspection by any member of the Illinois Firefighters Association.

ARTICLE IX

Committees

Section 1. **Standing Committees.** The Standing Committees of the Association shall be as follows: Budget/Finance, Bulletin/Redbook, Credentials, Education/Training/Conference Program, Conference/Exhibit, Legislative/Judiciary, Membership, Memorial, National Volunteer Fire Council, Registration, Resolution. Changes may be made in the Standing Committees as determined by the President of the Association.

Section 2. **Duties of Committees.** The duties of the Directors of the Association shall be to have published the proceedings of the Association, to transact all business of the Association during the time intervening between the annual meetings. They shall constitute a Board of Directors for the management of all funds of the Association. At all meetings of the Directors of the Association, a majority of the Directors shall constitute a quorum and a majority of such quorum may determine all questions.

Section 3. **Advisory Committee.** The Advisory Committee shall consist of all past Directors of the Association to serve as consultants to the Directors of the Association or to serve in special capacities at the invitation of the President or Directors of the Association when the best interests of the Association may require it.

Section 4. **Meetings.** All committees shall meet at such time and place as may be designated by the chairperson of the committee.

ARTICLE X

Election of Directors

Section 1. **Election.** All *Directors* shall be elected at the Annual Meeting of the Association by preprinted ballot furnished at the time of election by the Credentials Committee to duly authorized delegates.

Section 2. **Procedure.** The voter(s) shall check the name of the candidates of his/her choice for each office voted upon and deposit the same in the Ballot Box provided for that purpose.

In order to cast a vote, the individual must prove membership in the department for which he is casting a vote. This proof shall be members' conference registration.

The balloting shall be conducted by three (3) judges appointed by the President, who will count the ballots cast for each candidate and announce the election of the candidate receiving a plurality of votes cast.

Section 3. **Candidates.** Any person desiring to be a candidate for any office of this Association must submit a letter of intent to the office of the Secretary/Treasurer not more than 90 days nor less than 30 days prior to the starting date of the Annual Meeting. Said letter to be sent to the Secretary/Treasurer by email, fax, mail or in person. If by email, fax or mail, a record of the transaction should be made and kept.

All candidates for the office of President and Vice-President must come from the Directors of the Association and have no less than three (3) years as a Director of the Association in addition to submitting a letter of intent. The said letter of intent to the Secretary/Treasurer will place that person's name on the official ballot. Candidates must have attended, in person, at least 50% of the previous year's meetings.

All candidates for each office will be listed on the ballot in the order that their letters of intent have been received by the Secretary/Treasurer. The present Secretary/Treasurer must file his/her letter of intent with the President in accord with the above requirements.

Section 4. **Resumes.** A resume is required for any Director position and must be submitted with a request to be a Director or to run for any elected Director position in accord with the By-Law procedures. Present Directors

running for re-election must also submit a resume with their letter of intent, if not already on file with the Secretary/Treasurer.

ARTICLE XII

Amendments

Section 1. **Amendments.** This Association shall have full power, at the Annual Meeting to alter, amend, or revise this Constitution or By-Laws, but it shall be necessary for a two-thirds vote of the members of the Association present entitled to vote, to do the same, providing the proposed Amendment shall be submitted, in writing, to all member departments at least thirty days prior to the Annual Meeting. Publication in the Bulletin or email at least 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting shall serve as written notice.

ARTICLE XIII

By-Laws

Section 1. **Membership.** All individual members of each Department shall also by virtue of their membership in such Department, be members of this Association, so long as said Department is organized as such by a Fire Protection District, City, Village, Town, Special District, or any other political subdivision wherein located; also, private Fire Departments owned and controlled by Corporations, Departments of Military Installations, or Departments of State Institutions working under the authority of the political subdivision wherein situated may become members of the Association, and shall remain a member of the Association so long as it operates under and complies with the Constitution and By-Laws of this Association. Should any Department refuse to pay its annual dues when called upon to do so or for other just cause, it shall be debarred from any of the privileges of this Association, and may be dropped from the Roll by vote of the Directors of the Association.

Section 2. **Delegates.** Every Fire Department in the State of Illinois, which is a member of this Association, shall be entitled to two (2) delegates to the Annual Meeting and when represented by two delegates shall be entitled to two (2) votes. If a department is represented by only one (1) delegate, then that department and that delegate shall only be allowed one (1) vote. All elective directors, past and present, and lifetime members, in good standing shall be considered delegates and be entitled to one (1) vote each as long as they have not

already cast a vote as a delegate for their department.

Section 3. **Forfeiture of Membership.** All members and Associate Members represented in this Association must be in full accord and good standing in the Fire Department or organization where they are located; and if at any time they are not so, they shall forfeit all benefits of membership in this Association, except Past Directors.

Section 4. **Qualifying Membership.** Any Department in the State can become a member of the Association by remitting to the Secretary/Treasurer the fee of \$15.00 for Administrative expenses and dues for one year. The Secretary/Treasurer shall then issue a certificate of membership.

Section 5. **Dues.** The annual dues shall be set by a majority vote of the members attending the Annual Meeting. Any intent to change the dues during the Annual Meeting must be announced and published at least 30 days prior to the start of the Annual Meeting. Dues must be paid for ensuing year no later than February 1st to be eligible to vote. Departments that shall remain delinquent beyond the current year cannot again become members in good standing until making a new application and paying the prescribed fee for membership.

Section 6. **Individual Memberships.** Any firefighter that belongs to a Fire Department in the State of Illinois, or any firefighter that has satisfied the retirement requirements of their Fire Department, may become an individual member. The member fire department delegates retain all voting rights, if they are a member of this association. Dues for individual members are twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) per year, plus a one-time administrative fee of fifteen dollars (\$15.00). Benefits of the individual memberships include: bi-monthly *Bulletin*, application to the IFA Firefighter Scholarship Program, reduced registration fee to the Annual Conference and the "Down and Dirty Firefighter Training"

Section 7. **Lifetime Membership:** Lifetime membership shall be given to any member that has accrued a total of ten (10) years service as a Director of the Association (CONSECUTIVE YEARS NOT REQUIRED) and shall thereafter not be assessed dues.

Section 8. **Honorary Membership** - Honorary Membership may be given to any person, association, or company, having demonstrated a tradition of exemplary service to the Illinois Firefighter's Association and the fire service, at the discretion and majority vote of the board.

Honorary Membership shall be lifetime with no voting rights.

Section 9. **Associate Members.** Members of Actuarial Services, Fire Insurance Company Executives, and Sales Representatives engaged in servicing needs of the Fire Service, and persons engaged in any phase or facet of Fire Service Promotional work may become members of the Association by agreeing to abide by the Constitution and By-laws. They may not hold any office, nor will they exercise any voting privileges. Annual dues are set out in Article XIII, Section 5, Dues.

Section 10. **Special Fire Department Associate Members.** Any Illinois Firefighter's Association Member Fire Department that is absorbed by any other Fire Department, Fire District, Municipality, etc., may at the time of such absorption apply for a department membership in this Association. Annual dues are set out in Article XIII, Section 5, Dues. (This will be an Associate membership).

Said Associate Member Department upon payment of its annual dues may remain a member of this Association, but no member of this Associate Member Department may hold any office in the Illinois Firefighter's Association nor will they be allowed any voting privileges.

No member of said Associate Member Department will be allowed to remain in the Accident Indemnity Plan.

Section 11. **Resolutions:** All resolutions to come before the Annual Meeting shall first be presented to and approved by the Resolutions Committee. All approved resolutions will be presented to the general membership for adoption at the Annual Meeting.

Section 10. **Order of Business** - the following is an agenda guideline but the final agenda will be determined by the president:

1. Call to Order
2. Report of the President
3. Report of the Vice-President
4. Report of Secretary/Treasurer
5. Report of Committees
 - a. Bulletin/Redbook
 - b. Credentials
 - c. Education/Training/Conference
 - d. Conference/Exhibits
 - e. Legislative/Judiciary

- f. Membership
- g. Memorial
- h. National Volunteer Fire Council
- i. CRR
- j. Go Green Clean Initiative
- k. Registration
- l. Resolution
6. Unfinished Business
7. New Business
8. Report of the Credential Committee
9. Appointment of Election Judges
10. Election of Directors
11. Announcement of Next Annual Meeting
12. Report of Election Judges
13. Closing Remarks
14. Adjournment

As adopted and placed on file October 8, 2010 by membership vote at the Annual Meeting.

Revised and placed on file October 11, 2013 by membership vote at the Annual Meeting.

Revised and placed on file October 20, 2017 by membership vote at the Annual Meeting.

Revised and placed on file October 27, 2023 by membership vote at the Annual Meeting.