

The Allegany-Garrett Counties Volunteer Fire & Rescue Association By-Laws

MISSION STATEMENT: “The mission of the Allegany and Garrett Counties Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association is to serve, promote, advocate and represent the interests of the volunteer fire, rescue and emergency medical services in Allegany and Garrett Counties”.

Table of Contents

Article I Name

Article II Purpose

Article III Members

Article IV Officers

Article V Executive Committee Meetings

Article VI Annual Meeting or Convention

Article VII Committees

Article VIII Parliamentary Authority

Article IX Amendment of By-Laws

Article X Dissolution

Article XI Discrimination

Standing Rules

Article I

Name:

The name of this association shall be the "Allegany and Garrett Counties Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association, Inc. (the Association)

Article II

Purpose:

The purpose of the Association shall be to promote and coordinate activities of the member companies, departments and squads (the companies); to provide a forum for the discussion of matters pertaining to the operation of member companies; to make available and disseminate information on fire fighting and rescue activities, safety, training and other pertinent information of value to member companies; to act as the representative of the member companies before local, state or federal administrative bodies; and, in general, to do all things for the promotion, benefit and general welfare of the member companies.

Article III

Members:

Section 1. Membership in the Association shall be open to all fire and rescue companies operating within the geographical limits of Allegany and Garrett Counties.

Section 2. Any fire or rescue company that wishes to be a member of this Association may do so by requesting membership, in writing, addressed to the Secretary of the Association. The request for membership must include the following information to be used in determining that the requestor is a bona-fide fire and/or rescue company:

Evidence of incorporation papers

Evidence of fire and/or rescue apparatus Evidence of permanent housing for such apparatus Evidence of proper radio communications equipment capable of two way communications with the appropriate Office of Emergency Management Evidence that the company or squad is staffed with at least ten active members who have completed fire basic training or EMT training. Evidence that agreeable boundary lines have been established for the purpose of defining first due assignments for the company requesting membership and for their mutual aid partners. Provide a check in the amount of \$25.00, payable to the Association, for an initiation fee. (This fee will be returned if membership is denied for any reason).

Section 3. The Secretary shall, after receiving the membership application and evidence requirements specified in Section 2 of this Article, refer the membership request to the Association membership for consideration. A majority vote of the Association members present and voting shall be necessary to approve membership.

Section 4. Each member company shall pay annual dues. The dues shall be established annually at the annual meeting. Dues are required to be paid on or before 1 May of each calendar year. Dues for new member companies shall be pro rated from the date of membership. Dues received after 1 May shall be subject to a \$10.00 late charge. Member companies that default on their dues payment shall not be entitled to any of the benefits and/or privileges of this Association until such debt is satisfied.

Section 5. Each member company shall appoint one of its members, and alternates if desired, to be a member of the Executive Committee. The name of each representative to the Executive Committee shall be on record with the Secretary prior to each meeting. Executive Committee members, or their alternate, shall be entitled to vote at the monthly Executive Committee meetings.

Article IV

Officers: Section 1. The officers of the Association shall be a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, a Chaplain and an Editor.

Section 2. Association officers are elected at the Annual Meeting (Convention) and shall hold office for one year or until their successors are elected. Officers shall not hold more than one elected office at one time. Members of the same company shall not serve in the offices of Secretary and Treasurer during the same term.

Section 3. Nomination of all officers shall take place at the first session of the Annual Meeting with election of officers taking place at the second session. Officers are elected by majority vote of the membership, present and voting. Each member company, in good standing, shall be entitled to cast five votes for the candidates of their choice. Whenever there are more than two candidates and none receive a majority of the votes cast, the candidate receiving the fewest votes shall be dropped from the next ballot. If there is no contest for any or all candidates, including the place of next Convention, said candidates and/or place of next Convention are elected/approved by acclamation; no ballot necessary.

Section 4. If a vacancy shall occur during a term in office, said vacancy shall be filled by election by the membership after giving previous notice to the membership.

Section 5. The duties of the President shall be as prescribed in the parliamentary authority adopted by the Association. The President shall appoint all committees (Executive Committee excluded) and shall be an ex-officio member of all committees. The President shall countersign all checks in payment of Association debts as authorized by the membership. The President shall prepare an annual report and perform such other duties as may be required by the Association membership. The President shall visit member companies, and/or promote visits by other members of the Association, to promote the welfare of the Association.

Section 6. The duties of the Vice President shall select the Association meeting dates and locations for the upcoming year. This shall be done on a rotating basis with a minimum of 25% and a maximum of 75% of the meetings held in each of Allegany and Garrett Counties excluding the annual meeting.

Section 7. The duties of the Secretary shall be as prescribed in the parliamentary authority adopted by the Association. The Secretary shall collect and duly record all money due the Association and turn it over to the Treasurer; shall receive and answer all communications pertaining to the business of the

Association, keeping appropriate records; shall make an annual report to the Association and such other reports as the President and/or the Executive Committee may require; shall prepare a roll of all member companies and another roll of all Past Presidents and distinguished guests prior to each meeting; shall mail notification of dues to be paid to member companies by January of each year; shall give bond to be approved by the Executive Committee, who shall fix the amount thereof to be held by the President. The Association will pay the bond premium.

Section 7.1. Due to the increased duties of the Office of Secretary, the Secretary shall or may recommend for appointment, an Assistant Secretary.

Section 8. The duties of the Treasurer shall be as prescribed in the parliamentary authority adopted by the Association. The Treasurer shall receive money belonging to the Association from the Secretary and deposit it in a bank in the name of the Association; shall issue checks, on the date of authorization, unless directed otherwise by the Executive Committee, to be countersigned by the President or Vice President and approved by the Executive Committee; shall keep a current, correct account of all money received and expended and give a report on the financial condition of the Association at each meeting; shall give bond, to be approved by the Executive Committee, who shall fix the amount thereof to be held by the President; shall, before the bond expires, turn over to the successor, all books, money, papers and other property of the Association. The Association will pay the bond premium.

Section 9. The duties of the Chaplain shall be as prescribed in the parliamentary authority adopted by the Association. The Chaplain shall deliver all religious invocations as required, attend memorial services and funerals for all Association members past and present and assist in producing the memorial service at the Annual Meeting.

Article V

The Executive Committee Meetings:

Section 1. The Association shall hold monthly meetings for the Executive Committee and an Annual Meeting or Convention shall be held in the month of June. The Executive Committee meetings shall be held on the first Sunday of the month except as may be otherwise ordered by the President.

Section 2. Each member company shall be entitled to representation at the Executive Committee meetings and such representative shall be considered a member of the Executive Committee. Company representatives shall make their names known to the Association Secretary prior to any Association meeting before participating in any Association business. Executive Committee members shall be entitled to participate in the business meetings and shall have one vote for their member company.

Section 3. All Past Presidents shall be entitled to seats in and participate in the proceedings of the Annual Meeting and the monthly Executive Committee meetings. Past Presidents shall have the right to make motions and second motions, but shall not have a vote unless duly registered as a company representative.

Section 4. A quorum of one third of the member companies shall be present at any Executive Committee meeting for the transaction of business.

Section 5. The President shall have the ability to expand and re-arrange the meeting agenda as needed.

Section 6. Failure to comply with any of the provisions of these bylaws shall be deemed just and sufficient cause for suspension or expulsion from the Association. A recommendation for suspension or expulsion shall be formally prepared, in writing, and delivered to the affected parties at least one month prior to bringing the matter before the Executive Committee for disposition. A two-thirds vote of the Executive Committee members present and voting shall be required to suspend or expel.

Section 7. The Executive Committee shall allow the President, the Vice President, the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Editor and the Chaplain an allowance for the operation of their office. Such allowance shall be subject to Executive Committee approval. Certain expenses for other Officers and committees may be approved by action of the Executive Committee.

Section 8. Upon the death of any Officer of the Association, past or present, the Secretary shall send a donation in an amount as approved annually by the Executive Committee to the Bessie Marshall Hospital Fund in memory of that member. The Secretary shall send notice of such memorial donation to the family of the deceased.

Article VI

The Annual Meeting or Convention:

Section 1. The Annual Meeting (Convention) shall be held on the date and at the place as approved at the previous years Annual Meeting. Should there, for any reason, be a need to change the place for holding the Annual Meeting, the Executive Committee shall have the authority to select that place and so notify all member companies.

Section 2. A Memorial Service will be held, prior to the business meeting, according to arrangements made by the Chaplain and the host company.

Section 3. The business meeting shall be held in two sessions. The first session shall open the Annual Meeting, register credentials of all delegates to the Convention, recognize guests, call for floor nomination of Officers and begin hearing the annual committee reports. The second session shall continue with the annual committee reports and finish the order of business including election of

Officers, vote on the time and place for the next Annual Meeting and the installation of Officers for the coming year.

Section 4. A quorum of at least one delegate from sixteen different member companies in good standing shall be required for the transaction of business.

Section 5. Each member company, in good standing, is entitled to send five delegates to the Annual Meeting for the purpose of transacting business. The member companies shall furnish such delegates with credentials certifying that they represent the member company and are authorized to vote in accordance with the wishes of the member company. Credentials shall be forwarded to the Association Secretary by the May Executive Committee meeting. Credentials received after the May meeting shall result in a ten dollar (\$10.00) late fee. All delegates entitled to seats at the Annual Meeting shall be entitled to vote. Each company is entitled to five votes to be cast by the seated delegate(s).

Section 6. The place of the next Convention shall be determined by majority vote of the delegates present and voting. Any company seeking to hold the Annual Convention of the Allegany and Garrett Counties Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association must have had representatives attend at least seven out of the past twelve meetings preceding their request for the Convention, one of which must have been the last Convention. If there is no contest for the place of the next Convention, a ballot is not necessary and the President may declare the unopposed nomination to be selected.

Section 7. The host company for the Convention shall pay for the Convention meals of the Officers of the Association.

Section 8. Raffles, or other solicitations not for the express benefit of the Association, shall not be permitted on the floor of the Allegany and Garrett Counties Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association Annual Meeting.

Section 9. No company or members of same shall solicit advertising supplies or any material in the name of the Association without the permission of the Association.

Article VII

Committees:

Section 1. The following standing committees are required:

The Executive Committee

The Legislative Committee

The Fire Prevention Committee

The Public Relations Committee

The Convention Committee

The Insurance & Benefits Committee

The Safety Committee

The Training Committee

The Constitution and By-laws Committee

The Fund Raising Committee

The History & Archives Committee

The Recruitment/Retention Committee

Section 3. The Legislative Committee shall formulate and look after the passage of such legislation as may be in the best interest and benefit of the fire and rescue services. Monthly reports shall be made during months January through April of each year to relate the standing and progress of bills during each Legislative session. A final report of the Session's outcome will be given at the annual meeting of the Association.

Section 4. The Fire Prevention and Education Committee shall develop and promote a year round fire prevention program. The program shall be developed and carried forward in cooperation with the Maryland State Firemen's Association, The Maryland State Fire Marshall's Office, The Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute, the Maryland Fire Chief's Association, the Maryland State Department of Education and all other interested groups. A Miss Fire Prevention Program shall be developed and held each year as an annual activity to promote fire prevention and public education throughout the bi-county area. Monthly fire prevention tips shall be provided at each Executive Committee meeting and to the Editor and Secretary to be placed in "The Bulletin" and the minutes respectively. The Committee shall present a written report for the year at each Annual Meeting. A sum of one hundred dollars \$100.00 shall be made available by the Association and through the Fire Prevention Committee, to help defray expenses for Association sponsorship of any Miss Fire Prevention related to the Maryland State Firemen's Association convention.

Section 5. The Public Relations Committee shall compile information of interest to companies and the public, making this information generally known by publishing a monthly newsletter, to be known as "The Bulletin". The Public Relations Committee shall report at each Executive Committee meeting and shall submit a written report of its activities to the Annual Meeting. It shall be made known that the Association can provide speakers to promote interest between the Association and the general public.

Section 6. A Convention Committee shall consist of the Secretary and the Chaplain of the Association and will ascertain while working with the Host Company, pertinent information regarding the Annual Meeting/Convention. The Committee will assist and provide guidance to assure that plans are developed and carried out to promote a quality convention for all attendees.

Section 7. The Insurance & Benefits Committee, who represent a participating member company of the Insurance Plan shall have charge of the group insurance carried by participating member companies of this Association. The Insurance Committee shall secure bids each year from various insurance agencies in order to obtain the best proposition for the companies involved. The Insurance Committee shall collect premiums from each participating member company. All claims by the individual companies shall be made through the Insurance Committee. Each company participating in the group insurance plan selected shall pay an equal share of the premium within sixty days of billing notice sent by the Secretary/Treasurer of the Insurance Committee.

Section 8. The Safety Committee shall develop and promote a year round safety program and will provide monthly safety messages to the Executive Committee with copies given to the Editor and Secretary to be placed in "The Bulletin" and minutes respectively. The Safety Committee may work in conjunction with the Fire Prevention and Education and the Maryland State Firemen's Association Safety Committee in promoting safety and fire prevention messages as it relates to the general public, and the emergency service populations. The Safety Committee shall provide a safety message to all attendees of the Annual Convention and will provide an annual report.

Section 9. The Training Committee shall coordinate and collaborate with the Maryland Fire & Rescue Institute to arrange and conduct regional training courses of interest and need for the emergency service personnel within the Region. The committee shall encourage, develop and assist in conducting regional training courses to be held at least once annually to provide special training exercises for all fire/rescue personnel. The Committee will coordinate with the Convention Committee to schedule specific short course seminars at the Annual Convention for fire and EMS personnel.

A written report shall be submitted at the annual convention detailing the committee's activities.

Section 10. A Constitution and By-laws Committee shall maintain the Constitution and By-laws of the Association. They shall carry out any revision or additions according to the wishes of the Association as necessary. The Constitution and By-laws committee shall also serve as the Parliamentarian(s) and shall advise the president on matters of parliamentary procedure and shall rule on questions of order or answer parliamentary inquiries.

Section 11. A Fund Raising Committee will coordinate any means of fund raising ideas sanctioned by the Association. They shall distribute any tickets to member departments to help maintain funding for the Association. The committee will turn over funds to the Treasurer and will make a formal report in writing to the Executive Committee following each fund raising activity.

Section 12. A History and Archives Committee shall maintain the history of the Association by means of photography, and other documents as it pertains to the ongoing work of the Association.

Section 13. A Recruitment and Retention Committee shall work to assist departments in recruiting efforts by organizing activities and/or providing suggestions to maintain their membership roles.

Section 14. All Standing Committees, except the Executive Committee, shall be appointed annually by the President within thirty days after the adjournment of the Annual Meeting. Standing Committee appointments are effective upon notice.

Section 15. The President may appoint any member of a Department/Company belonging to this Association to serve on an Association Committee. Special short-term committees shall be established by the President of the Association as he/she shall deem necessary to carry out the tasks of this Association. The minimum amount of members on any committee shall be five with the maximum established by the President. Any Delegate or Alternate Delegate of a Department/Company belonging to this association is eligible to serve as a committee chairperson. The Committee Chairperson, in conjunction with the committee members, will prepare a budget request (if requesting funds for any project for the upcoming fiscal year. The request shall be delivered to the Vice President on or before the April Meeting.

President, Vice President and Treasurer will meet prior to the May meeting to formulate an association budget for the next fiscal year. The Vice President shall present the budget at the May meeting for membership review and input. The Budget will be adopted at the annual meeting in June. The Statistics Committee shall obtain and complete statistics of companies in the Association and report, in writing, what they have done at each Annual Meeting. A special Auditing Committee shall be appointed by the President at the May Executive Committee meeting. The Auditing Committee shall examine and audit the accounts of the Secretary and Treasurer, and all others holding money belonging to the Association in May and report, in writing, the results of their examination at each Annual Meeting. A 5 – 10 Year Planning Committee shall develop goals for the Association, both short and long term to promote harmony, success, and pecuniary benefits for the member companies.

Article VIII

Parliamentary Authority:

Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the conduct of any regular, special or annual meeting pursuant to these bylaws, unless otherwise provided herein.

Article IX

Amendment of Bylaws:

These bylaws may be amended at the Annual Meeting or Convention by a two thirds vote of the members present and voting, provided that the amendment has been properly submitted to the Bylaws Committee and has been presented to the membership for consideration, in final form, on or before the April Executive Committee meeting.

Article X

Dissolution:

Upon dissolution of the Allegany and Garrett Counties Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association for any reason, the then remaining assets and existing money will be distributed as follows: Money designated for certain projects, i.e. training ground, shall be forwarded to a representative of that organization to be used as originally assigned when held by this Association. Money remaining in the Relief Fund shall be divided in accordance with the number of persons each company has participating in the fund at the last payment period, providing said company has paid their premiums/assessments to date. All other remaining assets and money will be equally divided among all member companies in good standing.

Article XI

Discrimination:

This Association prohibits discrimination in membership or other activities on the basis of race, religion, sex, age, national origin or, physical or mental challenge.

STANDING RULES

The STANDING RULES is reserved for rules which are related to the details of the administration of an organization and can be adopted or changed upon the same conditions as any ordinary act of importance and may be kept with the by-laws, but will not be an official part of the by-laws per say. Standing Rules items will be those items deemed necessary to serve as reminders for all concerned. They may include the current meeting agenda, current goals of this association, parade prize listing, etc. STANDING RULES items may be changed, added or updated by the President at will, or by the Executive Committee at any meeting.

Meeting Agenda

Goals of the Association

Parade Prize Listing

Convention Meeting Agenda as Printed in the Convention Booklet

Allegany and Garrett Counties Vol. Fire & Rescue Assn. Convention Parade Prize Listing

Updated: March 7, 2004

The host company for the Convention shall pay to the Association the sum of \$275.00 for member company parade prizes as approved by the Association. The host company shall at their discretion, decide to distribute prize monies or trophies. If trophies are provided the association will pay said bill not to exceed prizes as approved by the Association. The host company shall also provide prize money

or trophies for participating companies that are not members of the Association. Prize money shall be paid not later than the May meeting. All prize money or trophies to be paid or distributed by the Association upon receipt of official list, signed by the judges of the Convention Parade. All un-awarded prize money or trophies shall be returned to the host company.

IN ASSOCIATION PRIZES

Prizes to be awarded: \$25.00 or Trophy (discretion of host company)

Best Appearing Engine/Pumper 1500 gpm or more

Best Appearing Engine/Pumper 1250 gpm

Best Appearing Engine/Tanker

Best Appearing Engine/Rescue

Best Appearing Tanker

Best Appearing Aerial Truck

Best Appearing Rescue Vehicle

Best Appearing Mini Pumper

Best Appearing Brush Unit

Best Appearing Utility Vehicle

Best Appearing Ambulance