

# **CONSTITUTION**

## **ARTICLE I - LEGAL NAME**

*The legal name of this organization shall be, Blades Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. located at 200 E. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Blades, Delaware 19973 (hereinafter referred to as the "Company")*

## **ARTICLE II – PURPOSE**

*The purpose of the Blades Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. shall be to provide fire prevention, fire suppression, rescue and emergency medical services (EMS) to the residents of the Blades area and to the neighboring communities, while safeguarding and preserving life and property.*

*The Constitution and By-Laws of the Company are the documents that govern the entire operations of the organization, whether they are fire related or administrative related. They are the back bone of the Company and shall at all times be adhered to by its membership. The Board of Directors is hereby duly charged with the responsibility of overseeing that the Company follows the intent, as written, within both the Constitution and By-Laws.*

*As with any documents that govern the operation of an organization, (state, county, city or local), they are subjected to constant change. This change is brought about as time renders them either obsolete or lacking in the content matter to deal with current issues of the day. For that reason, proposed amendments are both expected and sought, to bring the organizations rules of order into the proper focus with the times.*

## **ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP**

*The membership of the Blades Volunteer Fire Company shall consist of six (6) classifications of membership:*

*To be an active member you must live within one (1) mile of the Blades Fire District as defined by the State of Delaware.*

### **Section 1: ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP**

*Shall consist of individuals 18 years of age or older, who reside within the Company's fire district.*

### **Section 2: JR. MEMBERSHIP**

*Shall consist of individuals between the ages of 15 to 18 years of age, who reside within the Company's fire district, and have not completed high school.*

**Section 3: LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP**

*Shall consist of members who have completed twenty (20) years of service with the Company. This class of membership shall include their probationary period and will be automatic.*

**Section 4: ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP**

*Shall consist of individuals 18 years of age or older and deemed beneficial to the Company that do or do not live in the Company's fire district.*

**SECTION 5: ASSOCIATE AUXILIARY MEMBERSHIP**

Shall consist of individuals 18 years of age or older and deemed beneficial to the company that do or do not live in the Company's fire district.

**Section 6: HONARY MEMBERSHIP**

*This honorable membership shall be bestowed on any citizen of the United States when by the members of the Company present and voting by a vote of 51% deem it proper.*

**ARTICLE IV – BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

*The Board of Directors of the Company shall be comprised of the following officers:*

*President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Fire Chief, Deputy Fire Chief, Ambulance Captain, and four (4) at-large individuals elected from the general membership.*

**ARTICLE V – MEETINGS AND TIME PERIODS**

**Section 1: REGULAR MEETINGS**

*Stated meetings of the Company shall be held at the fire station on the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) Wednesday evening of each month except when it may fall on a national holiday. All meetings will begin promptly at 7:00 pm and twelve (12) active voting members shall constitute a quorum to do business.*

**Section 2: SPECIAL MEETINGS**

*The President may call a special meeting at any time when, in their judgment, it shall be necessary or proper. If a special meeting is called, there shall be a minimum of forty-eight (48) hour notice, they shall state the business of that meeting immediately after it is called to order and no other business shall be conducted therein.*

**Section 3: BOARD MEETINGS**

*Board meetings will be held the first (1) Thursday of each month and at any other time deemed necessary by the President. Seven (7) Board members shall constitute a quorum to do business.*

**Section 4: FISCAL YEAR**

*The Company's fiscal year shall be July 1<sup>st</sup> through June 30<sup>th</sup>, (hereinafter referred to as "Fiscal Year").*

**Section 5: Membership Stat Year**

*The Company's voting year shall be October 1<sup>st</sup> through September 30<sup>th</sup>, (hereinafter referred to as "STAT YEAR" ).*

**Article VI – ELECTION OF MEMBERSHIP**

*Election of probationary membership shall be by secret ballot. It shall take a 51% majority of the votes cast, by the eligible voting members in attendance at a regular scheduled Company meeting, for the individual to be elected to probationary membership. All new probationary members will serve a one (1) year probationary period unless a letter can be provided from the Fire Chief or President of their current or previous Company or Department prior to being voted on for membership. All previous members in good standings of the company will serve a six (6) month probationary period.*

**Section 1: ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP**

*Election of active membership shall be by secret ballot. It shall take a 51% majority of the votes cast, by the eligible voting members in attendance at a regular scheduled Company meeting, for the individual to be elected to active membership.*

**Section 2: JR MEMBERSHIP**

*Election of Jr. Membership shall be by secret ballot. It shall take a 51% majority of the votes cast, by the eligible voting members in attendance at a regular scheduled Company meeting, for the individual to be elected to Jr. Membership. All Jr. Members will remain on probation until they are 18 years of age and upon completion of High School.*

**Section 3: LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP**

*No election necessary for this classification of membership. Once an active or associate or auxiliary associate member obtains twenty (20) years of service, including their probationary period, they shall automatically become a lifetime member.*

**Section 4: ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP**

*Election of associate membership shall be by secret ballot. It shall take a 51% majority of the votes cast, by the eligible voting members in attendance at a regular scheduled Company meeting, for the individual to be elected to associate membership. After one year probationary period member will have voice on the floor but may not vote.*

**Section 5: Associate Auxiliary**

*1: Election to Associate Auxiliary Membership will be by written secret ballot and require 51% favorable vote of the company present and voting. After one year probationary period member will have voice on the floor, but may not vote.*

**ARTICLE VII – EXPULSION/SUSPENSION**

*Any member may be suspended or expelled from the Company for breach of trust, improper conduct, conduct that is unbecoming to the Company, disregard of orders from the Company’s officers or disregard of the Company’s Constitution and By-Laws, provided however, the member shall be given the opportunity of making an appeal before the Board of Directors. When a member has been expelled, it will require a waiting period of 6 months from the date of expulsion, before they can reapply for membership.*

**ARTICLE VIII – CLARIFICATION**

*Section 1: Any doubt which may arise to the true meaning of any article, section or clause of this Constitution, shall be submitted to the By-Laws committee. The decision of the By-Laws committee, if accepted by 2/3 majority of the eligible voting members in attendance at a regular scheduled Company meeting, shall be final and recorded by the Secretary for future reference.*

*Section 2: Definition of the words SHALL and WILL according to Webster dictionary the words shall and will mean the same thing:*

*Shall / verb - used to say that something is expected to happen in the future.*

*Used to give a command or to say that you will or will not allow something to happen.*

*Will / Verbal auxiliary- Will have to :must*

*Used in laws, regulations or directives to express what is mandatory <it shall be unlawful to smoke inside >< we shall see>*

**ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENTS / Additions**

*Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws shall be made in writing and presented to the company and read by the member requesting a change or addition. The company will then vote and will require 51% to send it to the By-Laws committee for further action.*

**BY LAWS**

**ARTICLE I – MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1** **Process of election to membership**

- 1 All applicants will meet all requirements for the application process.
- 2 Interview by the membership committee.
- 3 Brought to the company floor for a yes or no vote of acceptance.

**Section 1.1** **VOTING ON APPLICANTS**

All applicants will be voted on for membership by secret ballot. It will take 51 % majority favorable vote of the votes cast, by the eligible voting members in attendance at a regular scheduled Company meeting, for the individual to be elected as a Probationary Member. The membership committee will notify the member that they have been accepted to serve a probationary period. If the applicant does not receive 51% majority favorable votes, they must wait a minimum of six (6) months before reapplying for membership.

**Section 1.2** **Change of Membership**

1. Active Membership to any other then Lifetime:

Any member wishing to change their membership status from active to any other status must submit a letter to the membership committee and that letter must be read on the floor at a regular company meeting. No voting is required for this change. Said member making change will not have to serve a probationary period.

2. Associate membership to active membership:

Any associate or associate auxiliary member wishing to change their membership status to Active Membership must submit a letter to the membership committee and that letter must be read on the floor at the next regular company meeting. After reading the letter a secret ballot will be held to which it will take 51% majority favorable vote of the votes cast, by the eligible voting member in attendance at a regular scheduled company meeting, for the individual to be elected as a active member. Member(s) making change will not have to serve a probationary period. If member(s) do not receive 51% favorable vote member will stay an associate member and can resubmit another letter consecutively.

**Section 1.3 TRANSFERRING APPLICANTS**

*Transferring applicants who have been a member of another fire company may have their training requirements waived, if the applicant can show documented evidence of their previous training and that such training would be accepted by the Delaware State Fire School. The Membership Committee would contact the applicant's previous company for a recommendation and could get their probation period reduced to 6 months if approved by the membership committee.*

**Section 1.4 COMPANY ACCEPTANCE:**

*At the end of the Individual's probationary period, the probationary member will be asked to leave the room, the Membership Committee and the Line Officers shall make a report to the voting membership, as to the training, attendance and any other pertinent information. The membership will have the opportunity to question the probationary member's status, before a secret ballot is taken, to either accept or reject full active membership. It will take a 51% majority favorable vote, by the eligible voting members in attendance at the regular scheduled Company meeting, to accept the probationary member as a full active member. If the probationary member does not receive a majority favorable vote, they will be terminated from the roster and they must wait a minimum of six (6) months before reapplying.*

**Section 1.5 EXTENSIONS:**

*The Fire Chief, along with the Membership Committee, shall be empowered to grant a reasonable extension of time, not to exceed two (2) years, to a probationary member, to complete their training, provided they can show due cause of a hardship in obtaining their training in the allotted time frame.*

**Section 1.6 RETURN OF PROPERTY:**

*Any member, of any classification, that leaves the Company for any reason, except for a personal or a medical leave of absence, must within seven (7) days, return to the President or the Fire Chief, all assigned equipment or property belonging to the Company. The Company, if deemed necessary, shall pursue the return of the assigned equipment or property or its stated value through the local judicial system.*

**Section 2**

**PROBATIONARY MEMBERSHIP:**

*This group of membership is open to all individuals over the age of eighteen (18) who are applying for membership.*

**Section 2.1 PROBATIONARY POLICY:**

- (1) All applicants must sign and date the statement swearing to or affirming that they have never been convicted of an offense that constitutes any of the crimes in 16 Del. C. ss6647 or any similar offence under any Federal, State or Local law. All applicants will be denied membership if they cannot swear to or affirm the statement.*
- (2) If membership is denied due to non-compliance with 16 Del. C. ss6647, an appeals process is available through that statute.*
- (3) All applicants accepted for membership must make the company meeting the night of being voted on, or the next regular scheduled company meeting to be accepted or that member(s) will forfeit their membership of the Blades Volunteer Fire Company.*
- (4) All members under any classification of membership must make their required stats during their probation period or that member(s) will forfeit their membership of the Blades Volunteer Fire Company unless valid excuses were taken into consideration and excused by the Membership Committee, if not excused that member(s) must return all Company property and must wait a period of six (6) months before reapplying for membership.*
- (5) All applicants applying for any type of membership must receive a background check. Only exception is members applying for Jr. Membership under the age of 16 and one must be obtained within 30 days after their birthday. The applicant will submit back ground fee to the membership committee and will be reimbursed when there probation period is over*
- (6) Any person joining the Blades Vol. Fire co. will have to complete the following classes taught by the Delaware State Fire School or equivalent within a two year period. If completed after 1 year they can be voted on to an active member. Must complete one of the following pathways.*
- (7) Firefighter**
  - 1) Emergency vehicle operator (EVO)*
  - 2) Basic firefighting skills*
  - 3) Vehicle Rescue*
  - 4) CPR/AED( Must remain current for duration of membership)*
  - 5) Structural firefighting*
- (8) EMT**
  - 1) Intro to Emergency Services*
  - 2) Vehicle Rescue*
  - 3) CPR / AED (Must remain current for duration of membership)*
  - 4) Become NREMT*



### **Section 3: JR MEMBERSHIP**

*This class of membership shall be limited to fifteen (15) members at any given time and shall consist of Individuals ages fifteen (15) and older who reside in the Company's fire district who are also enrolled in high school or equivalent. Individuals under eighteen (18) years of age must be enrolled in school if they wish to become a member. Individuals that have completed high school and/or equivalent must be eighteen (18) years of age before leaving this classification of membership. This group of membership will also follow*

#### **Section 3.1**

*Jr. Members that have not had the required training are not allowed to actively engage in actual firefighting or rescue operations and may only be utilized to wash hoses, clean equipment, repack hose or assist in placing the apparatus back in service after an alarm, unless directed by the Chief or other fire line officer. **NO** Jr. Member under the age of eighteen (18) is permitted to ride on the ambulance at any time.*

#### **Section 3.2**

*Once Jr. Members have reached the age of eighteen (18) and completed High School and/or equivalent, they will be brought before the general membership for the possibility of moving up as an active member. It will take a 51% majority favorable vote, by secret ballot, of the voting members present at the regular Company meeting to accept the move to active membership. This classification of membership will act as the individual's minimum one (1) year probationary period. If the applicant does not receive 51% majority favorable votes, they will be dropped from membership and must wait a minimum of six (6) months before reapplying for membership.*

#### **Section 3.3**

*Jr. Membership will be governed by the guidelines, rules and regulations as set forth by the Company. They are an extension of the Company and should act accordingly in the public. The Jr. Advisor(s), along with membership committee will monitor and discipline Jr. Members, as is deemed necessary.*

#### **Section 3.4**

*Jr. Members are not allowed in the building on school days prior to 2:45PM and not after 10:30PM prior to school days unless they are here for a special Company event, function, training session, or alarms if permitted. Exceptions to be tolerated are as follows: school holidays, vacation days, and summer vacation when the curfew will be from 12:00AM to 6:00AM daily.*

### **Section 3.5**

*All Jr. Members will not be permitted to use tobacco products or alcohol on the fire company property, during an alarm, or during fire company functions. Penalty for the first offense will be a suspension of thirty (30) days. Penalty for the second offense will be automatic expulsion from the company.*

### **Section 3.6**

*Jr. Members must keep their grades favorable at school. Jr. Members must turn in their mid-term report within three (3) days of receiving it and if requested by the Jr. Advisor, the company may provide some kind of tutor if available at no cost to help maintain good grades. Jr. Members must turn in their report card at the end of the marking period within three (3) days of receiving it. If grades are not favorable at the end of the marking period, they will be placed on suspension from participation of all fire company activities and fire company grounds until their grades have returned to good standing. The exception to this suspension is to meet with a tutor only. Favorable grades will mean an individual will pass all subjects. Suspension will last until passing grades are obtained.*

### **SECTION 3.7**

*If any Jr. Member is suspended from school, the Jr. Member will also be suspended for equal amount of days suspended from school from the Company. If a Jr. Member quits school and/or expelled, they will be terminated from the Company and must wait a period of six (6) months before reapplying for membership. All Jr. Members will have to report their suspension or expulsion to the Jr. Advisor, Chief or President within 48 hours or suspension is doubled. If not notified at all Jr. Member will be removed from the roster and must wait a period of six (6) months before reapplying for membership. The Jr. Advisor will have the authority to recommend suspension of any Jr. Member if found to be in violation of the Fire Company by-Laws. Any suspended Jr. Member may in writing, request to appear before the Membership Committee to appeal their suspension. This written request must be made within forty-eight (48) hours of the suspension. This written request must be submitted to Vice President. The committee shall meet in a timely manner to review such suspension and shall recommend to sustain or to overrule the suspension, by majority vote. The General membership will have final decision.*

### **Section 4 ACTIVE MEMBERS:**

#### **Section 4.1**

*Requirements: To remain an active member of the Company, the member must, during the Voting Year, make the minimum required Stats / Percentages. The Membership Committee will review and determine the reason why the required Stats / Percentages were not obtained, taking into account allowable reasons; work, illness, family issues, medical or personal leave of absence, military service, and suspension(s).*

## **Section 4.2**

*All active members shall be voted on for membership by secret ballot. It shall take 51% majority favorable vote of the votes cast, by the eligible voting members in attendance at a regular scheduled Company meeting, for the individual to be elected as an active member. The membership committee will notify the member that they have been accepted to serve a probation period of one (1) year. If the applicant does not receive a majority vote, they must wait a minimum of six (6) months before reapplying.*

## **Section 4.3**

*Any Active Member may be dropped from the roster, by 51% majority vote of the votes cast by secret ballot, by the eligible voting members in attendance at a regular scheduled Company meeting, as long as there is cause for removing said member (See Article VIII Section 2 Expulsion). A dropped member will be notified, in writing, that they have been dropped from the roster and must wait a minimum period of six (6) months before reapplying for membership.*

## **Section 5 LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP:**

### **Section 5.1**

*Any member who has completed twenty (20) years' service in the Company, including their probationary period, including junior membership time will automatically become a Lifetime Member on their anniversary date.*

### **Section 5.2**

*If a Lifetime Member desires to remain an active member, they shall make the same requirements as an active member (requirements only needed to run for and hold elected office).*

### **Section 5.3**

*Any Lifetime Member shall be allowed to attend any and all Company's sponsored functions or events for as long as they shall live. A Lifetime Member will be allowed a voice in Company matters. They must make one meeting in each of the previous (4) four quarters to be eligible to vote on any issue, including the election of officers.*

### **Section 5.4**

*A member not having twenty (20) years' service, but due to health reasons, upon company recommendation, may be voted a Lifetime Member by the company if the member attains 2/3 majority favorable vote, of the voting members present at the regular company meeting.*

### **Section 5.5**

*Any member hurt in the line of duty beyond his/her ability to hold an active position as determined by the Membership Committee and Board of Directors will automatically become a Lifetime Member.*

### **Section 5.6**

*Any Lifetime Member who is removed from BVFC will return all fire company property to the Chief or the President.*

## **Section 6 ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP:**

### **Section 6.1**

*This class of membership shall be bestowed upon individuals whose membership shall be deemed beneficial to the Company and are not required to live in the Company's fire district. After their probationary period they shall have voice on the floor, but shall not vote. Associate members must have three (3) years' service to run for office but shall not hold the position of President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary or any elected line officer's position. Upon being voted into office, the associate member will hold voting privileges when acting in that office.*

### **Section 6.2**

*The Associate member shall be bound by the rules and guidelines, as any other member of the Company. They must complete an application for membership to be presented to the membership committee, who will make sure that the necessary data has been filed with the application, to include the background check.*

### **Section 6.3**

*Any Associate member may be dropped from the roster, by 51% majority vote of the votes cast by secret ballot, by the eligible voting members in attendance at a regular scheduled Company meeting, as long as there is cause for removing said member (See Article VIII Section 2 Expulsion). A dropped member will be notified, in writing, that they have been dropped from the roster and must wait a minimum of six (6) months before reapplying for membership.*

### **Section 6.4**

*All Associate members shall be voted on for membership by secret ballot. It shall take 51% majority favorable vote of the votes cast, by the eligible voting members in attendance at a regular scheduled Company meeting, for the individual to be elected as an Associate member. The membership committee will notify the member that they have been accepted to serve a probation period of one (1) year. If the applicant does not receive a majority favorable vote, they must wait a minimum of six (6) months before reapplying for membership.*

**Section 7: Associate Auxiliary Membership**

**Section 7.1** *Member will not be required to live in the Blades Fire District.*

**Section 7.2** *Member will not be allowed to run for any office or line officer position.*

**Section 7.3** *Member will not be issued gear.*

**Section 7.4** *Election to Associate Auxiliary membership will be by written secret ballot and require 51% favorable vote of the company present and voting to be accepted. After one year probationary period member will have voice on the floor, but may not vote.*

**Section 7.5** *Member will have to attend 1 meeting per quarter.*

**Section 7.6** *Member will have to attend 3 functions per quarter. Functions include, but are not limited to yard sales, Breakfast, Car show, and bringing food and water to fire scenes.*

**Section 7.7** *If the member wishes to drive utility pieces, then the member will have to take an Emergency Operator class and be cleared by the Chief.*

**Section 7.8** *This class of membership will not have to make drill stats.*

**Section 7.9** *This class of membership will not have to make fire stats.*

**Section 7.10** *Any Associate member may be dropped from the roster, by 51% majority vote of the votes cast by secret ballot, by the eligible voting members in attendance at a regular scheduled Company meeting, as long as there is cause for removing said member ( See Article VIII Section 2 Expulsion). A dropped member will be notified, in writing, that they have been dropped from the roster and must wait a minimum of six (6) months before reapplying for membership.*

**Section 8 INTERRUPTIONS IN SERVICE:**

**Section 8.1**

*Any member, of any classification, leaving the Company under any circumstances must wait a minimum of six (6) months before reapplying for membership again. The individual must follow the normal application process, to include a new background check, and must serve a one (1) year probation period with an exception of members that left in good standing with a probation period of six (6) months if approved by the Membership Committee.*

## **Section 8.2**

*Any member called to the armed services of our country, shall be placed on a "leave of absence" (LOA) status. Upon their discharge of active service, said member shall request, in writing, to be placed back on the appropriate membership roster. Their military service will count as active service to the Company, without any interruptions.*

## **Section 8.3**

*Any member, of any classification, who becomes physically unable to fulfill their duties, must in writing, request a "medical leave of absence". The written request shall state the length of time that the member will be unable to fulfill their regular duties. It shall be accompanied by a letter or a form from the attending physician, certifying to the members inability to fulfill their duties. The member will not be allowed to return to their regular duties without a letter from their physician, stating that they are able to perform the duties required as a volunteer firefighter, based on their particular membership classification. If this is a long term leave written quarterly reports must be submitted to the President, Fire Chief, and Membership Committee. Members on Medical leave for more than twelve (12) months and not approved by a doctor to be an active member will be moved to associate membership. After being released by a doctor with a letter stating they are released to be an active member will go back to active membership.*

## **Section 8.4**

*Any member, of any classification, who becomes unable to fulfill their duties due to personal reasons, may in writing, request a "personal leave of absence" to the President and Membership Committee. The Membership Committee will decide whether or not to grant the "LOA" and will take effect the day of the letter. The President and Membership Committee will decide whether time will be counted or NOT counted toward your years of service. This written request shall state the length of time that the member will be unable to fulfill their regular duties. No personal leave of absence shall be requested for more than six (6) months at a time. Only one (1) personal leave of absence will be granted per calendar year. At the end of a personal leave of absence, the member will submit a letter to the President, and Membership Committee stating they are ready to return to their duties, based on their particular membership classification.*

## **Section 8.5**

*Any member, of any classification, involved in any legal issue(s) that pertains to the **BLADES VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY** will automatically be placed on an "administrative leave", by the President pending the outcome of the issue(s). While on "administrative leave", said member(s) will return their building key and pager to the President and will not be permitted on Fire Company property, unless meeting with the Board of Directors.*

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**ARTICLE II – MEETINGS**

**Section 1 REGULAR MEETING:**

*Stated meetings of the Company will be held at the fire house, on the second (2) Wednesday night of each month, at 7:00pm, unless that night falls on a national holiday or during the Delaware State Conference, at which time the meeting may be cancelled or rescheduled by the President.*

**Section 2 SPECIAL MEETINGS:**

*The President may call a special meeting at the fire house at any time, when in their judgment, it shall be necessary and proper to do so. In the event of a special meeting, only the business, for which the special meeting was called for, may be discussed. The President shall have the Secretary post a notice on the board, at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the meeting stating the purpose of the special meeting. The President shall try to contact all members of the Company at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting by, phone, e-mail, electronic messaging or personal contact.*

**Section 3 BOARD MEETINGS:**

*The Board of Directors will meet on the first (1) Thursday night of each month and at any other time that may be necessary.*

**Section 4 QUORUM**

*The presence of twelve (12) voting members of the Company will constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at a Company meeting. If a quorum is not reached within fifteen (15) minutes after the stated time of the meeting, those present will be given credit for the meeting and then they may adjourn. The presence of seven (7) members of the Board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at a Board meeting.*



**Section 5 ORDER OF BUSINESS:**

- 1) *Call to order*
- 2) *Flag salute*
- 3) *First roll call*
- 4) *Introduction of guests*
- 5) *Appoint a Parliamentarian*
- 6) *Reading of minutes of previous meeting*
- 7) *Reading of minutes of special meeting*
- 8) *Reading of minutes of Board meeting*
- 9) *Proposals for membership*
- 10) *Election of new members*
- 11) *Proposed amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws*
- 12) *Fire Record's report*
- 13) *Chief report*
- 14) *Chief Engineer's report*
- 15) *Ambulance Captain's report*
- 16) *Treasurer's report*
- 17) *Corresponding Secretary's report*
- 18) *Report of standing committees*
- 19) *Old business*
- 20) *New business*
- 21) *Nominations of officers*
- 22) *Election of officers/ Installation of Officers*
- 23) *Good of the Company*
- 24) *Final roll call*
- 25) *Adjournment*

*"The President at any time can change the order of business with due cause"*

**Section 6 POSTPONEMENTS:**

*The person presiding over the meeting will be empowered to postpone or cancel a stated meeting of the Company due to abnormal conditions, acts of God or when there may be an extended waiting period, or due to an alarm involving a majority of the membership.*

**Section 7 PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES:**

*Questions that may arise, as to parliamentary procedures during any meeting may be governed by Robert's Rules of Orders. However, Robert's Rules of Order will not take precedence over the Company's Constitution, By-Laws or Certificate of Corporation.*

### **ARTICLE III – BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

#### **Section 1 NUMBER AND ELIGIBILITY:**

*The Board of Directors of the Blades Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. will consist of eleven (11) elected members as follows; President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Fire Chief, Deputy Chief, Ambulance Captain, and four (4) elected individuals at-large from the general membership.*

#### **Section 2 CHAIRMEN OF THE BOARD:**

*It is the intent of these By-Laws that the President of the Company will serve as Chairman of the Board of Directors.*

#### **Section 3 POWER AND DUTIES:**

*The Board is empowered to strictly and impartially enforce the Constitution, By-Laws and all other accepted rules of the Company, as well as having the authority to transact any emergency business on behalf of the Company that cannot wait until the next regular Company meeting. Such actions, however, will be subject to a complete report at the next regular Company meeting.*

#### **Section 4 ABSOLUTE POWER:**

*The Board of Directors will retain absolute power to suspend from office or from the Company, any Officer or member (regardless of classification) who has been charged with a felony crime under the provisions of the criminal code<sup>16</sup> Del. C. ss6647 of the State of Delaware, until such time as a court of law has decided any guilt or innocence.*

#### **Section 5 VACANCIES:**

*Any vacancy will be filled at the next regular scheduled Company meeting, following the vacancy. Nominations, elections and installations will occur on the same night and the elected person shall hold office for the remainder of the term of their predecessor. Any office that does not have a qualified member nominated will be open to any member excluding Jr. Members, Probationary and Associate Auxiliary Members.*

## **ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS**

### **Section 1 NOMINATION, CLASSES AND ELIGIBILITY OF OFFICERS:**

#### **Section 1.1 METHOD OF NOMINATIONS:**

*General election nominations will be made on the two stated meeting nights previous to the election only. Any member wishing to be nominated, but is unable to attend the nomination meetings, will submit a signed letter to the President or Secretary prior to nominations being closed, stating that they will accept a particular nomination for a particular office, if they are nominated from the floor during the normal nomination process. Any office that does not have a qualified member nominated will be open to any member excluding Jr. Members, Probationary Members and Associate Auxiliary members. At no time may an associate member hold any line officer position, or administrative position other than member at large.*

#### **Section 1.2 ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS:**

*The elected administrative officers will consist of; President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and four (4) at-large Board of Directors. The Secretary and the Treasurer will be empowered to appoint an assistant to help with those two positions as needed.*

#### **Section 1.3 FIRE LINE OFFICERS**

*The elected fire line officers will consist of, Fire Chief, Deputy Chief, 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Fire Chief, 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Fire Chief, Chief Engineer and Ambulance Captain.*

#### **Section 1.4 ELIGIBILITY FOR OFFICE:**

*Any member in good standing or lifetime member, “meeting position qualifications as set forth” will be eligible to hold one (1) administrative or one (1) fire line office.*

#### **Section 1.5 VOTING PROCESS:**

*All voting for elected Officers will be done by secret ballot and the person receiving the majority of the votes cast by the eligible voting members shall be declared the winner. If three (3) or more members are running for the same office, a vote will be taken under the normal voting process if neither member receives 51% of the votes cast, the two (2) top vote getters will run again and a final winner will be declared. Any member running unopposed, a vote will be cast by the secretary before being declared a winner. Absentee ballots may be requested from the President or Secretary, and must be completed and returned prior to the second Wednesday night in December.*

**Section 1.6 Terms of Office**

*The term of office for President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary will be two (2) years, and will be elected on odd years.*

*The term of office for all elected Fire Line Officers will be two (2) years, and will be elected on even years.*

*The term of office for all elected Members At Large will be one (1) year, and will be elected yearly.*

*All members will transfer any property of the Company, to include all books, papers, devices, documents and property entrusted in their care to their successor within twenty-four (24) hour, after leaving office.*

**Section 1.7 Eligibility to Vote**

*Any active member or lifetime member in good standing will be eligible to vote. Good standing for active members is defined in Article I, Section 4.1, whereas for lifetime members, it is defined in Article I, Section 5.3*

**Section 1.8 Installations**

*Installation of all elected Officers will be held on the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) Wednesday night in December of every year. Once installed, the new Officers will assume their new positions of January 1<sup>st</sup> at 00:01 of the following year.*

**Section 1.9 Method of Election**

- 1) The membership committee will certify all members that meet the eligibility requirements and are in good standing and entitled to vote for Administrative positions and Fire Line positions.*
- 2) The President will then advise the Secretary of the number of eligible voting members that are present, and only that quantity of ballots will be passed out.*
- 3) All ballots will be by secret ballot. The President will have two (2) members, not running for office, to assist with reading the votes.*
- 4) All absentee ballots will be marked and will continue to count as long as the member voted for remains in the running for that office.*

**Section 1.10 Vacancies**

*Any vacancy will be filled at the next regular scheduled Company meeting, following the vacancy. Nominations, elections and installations will occur on the same night and the elected person will hold office for the remainder of the term of their predecessor. Any office that does not have a qualified member nominated will be open to any member excluding Jr. Members, Probationary Members and Auxiliary Associate Members.*

**Section 2 QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES OF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS:**

**Section 2.1 QUALIFICATIONS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS:**

*All current Administrative Officers must meet the qualifications and duties for that office to be eligible to run for that position or a higher officer's position for a consecutive term.*

**Section 2.2 DUTIES OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS:**

**Section 2.3 PRESIDENT:**

- 1) The President must be an active member or lifetime member in good standing with a minimum of (5) five years with two (2) current consecutive years in Blades Volunteer Fire Company.*
- 2) It will be the duty of the President to preside at the meetings of the Company and preserve order at all times. The President will take their seat at the appointed hour and call the meeting to order.*
- 3) The President shall take the opinion of the Company on all questions and will announce the results thereof. The President will inspect all ballots and announce the results of the vote, appoint all committees, and announce those appointed at the next scheduled meeting.*
- 4) The President will be the judge of order and their decision will be immediately submitted to, unless the membership requests an appeal, which will be decided with a debate. If the President desires to engage in a debate, they will ask the Vice President or another ranking member to fill the chair.*
- 5) The President will prepare and submit an annual line item budget to the Board of Directors for the fiscal year, to include anticipated expenses for all administrative officers and committees.*
- 6) The President, when representing the Company may suspend for up to 30 days, effective immediately any member for any reason he/she deems necessary.*
- 7) The President must attend ten (10) of the twenty-two (22) SCVFA meetings during their term with a minimum of three (3) in either calendar year.*

**Section 2.4 VICE PRESIDENT:**

- 1) *Vice President must be an active member or lifetime member in good standing with a minimum of (3) three years with two (2) current consecutive years in Blades Volunteer Fire Company.*
- 2) *It will be the duty of the Vice President to perform the duties and responsibilities of the President when that officer is absent for any reason that incapacitates the President from performing their duties. Should the office of the President become vacant by death, resignation or otherwise, the Vice President will perform the duties of the said office until a President is so-elected by the membership.*
- 3) *The Vice President will be co-chair on all BVFC committees.*
- 4) *The Vice President must attend six (6) of the twenty-two (22) SCVFA meetings during their term with a minimum of two (2) either calendar year.*
- 5) *The Vice president will keep and track all attendance sheets for work details and all county and state association meeting attendance forward them to the membership committee for quarterly review.*

**Section 2.5 SECRETARY:**

- 1) *Secretary must be a member in good standing with a minimum of (3) three years service in the Blades Volunteer Fire Co. This position is open to the following classification of membership, Active, Lifetime.*
- 2) *It will be the duty of the Secretary to keep an accurate record of all meeting proceedings in a book or device provided for that purpose. The Secretary will submit for approval of the Company at each meeting. Minutes must include an accurate accounting of the votes taken in all issues.*
- 3) *All minutes will be typewritten and signed by the Secretary or their Assistant.*
- 4) *The books, papers and documents of the Company will always be subjected to the inspection of any member, but will not be loaned out. Personnel matters will not be open for review. The Secretary will transfer any property of the Company, to include all books, papers, computer disc and documents to their successor within twenty-four (24) hour, after leaving office.*
- 5) *The Secretary will maintain and keep, in a safe place, the Corporate Seal. The Secretary, upon direction of the Company or President will affix the corporate seal to all legal and other documents, as appropriate and approved.*
- 6) *The Secretary will pick up all mail and distribute. The Secretary will also act as the Corresponding Secretary of the Company and will attend to all matters of communication as directed by any elected officer.*
- 7) *The Secretary must attend four (4) of the twenty-two (22) SCVFA meetings during their term with a minimum of two (2) either calendar year.*

**Section 2.6 TREASURER:**

- 1) *The Treasurer must be an active member or lifetime member in good standing with a minimum of (3) three years of service in Blades Volunteer Fire Co.*
- 2) *The Treasurer will be responsible for the accurate accounting of all financial transactions of the Company and shall keep accurate records of all accounts.*
- 3) *The Treasurer will deposit all funds into the appropriate bank accounts within a timely manner from the time they are received.*
- 4) *All checks will be signed with two (2) authorized signatures as per the bank signature cards. The only authorized signatures are as follows; President, Treasurer, and Secretary.*
- 5) *The Treasurer will draw checks on the appropriate accounts to pay the bills that have been authorized. The Treasurer will transfer any property of the Company, to include books, papers, computer disc and documents to their successor within twenty-four (24) hours, after leaving office, and will attend the meeting of the auditing committee when notified by them.*
- 6) *The Treasurer will keep his accounts with the Company in such a manner that the state of funds may at any time be ascertained and will pay no money without approval of the President or Chief.*
- 7) *The Treasurer will have audits, and such audits are to be made at least once during a twelve (12) month period by a certified public accountant, immediately following the calendar year end.*
- 8) *All bills will be paid by the Treasurer when accompanied by a valid purchase order or check request.*
- 9) *The Treasurer must attend four (4) of the twenty-two (22) SCVFA meetings during their term with a minimum of two (2) either calendar year.*

**Section 2.7 MEMBER AT-LARGE:**

- 1) *Members at large must be a member in good standing with a minimum of (2) year service in the Blades Volunteer Fire Co. This position is open to the following classification of membership, Active, Lifetime or Associate.*
- 2) *The four (4) Members at-large will be elected to serve a one (1) year term as a member at-large on the Board of Directors. All at-large Directors will have the power and duties as stated in Article III, Section 3 and 4.*
- 3) *Must make two (2) county meetings.*
- 4) *Each position will be voted on separate.*

**Section 3**

**QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES OF FIRE LINE OFFICERS:**

**Section 3.1 FIRE LINE OFFICERS:**

- 1) All current Fire Line Officers must meet the qualifications and duties for that office to be eligible to run for that position or a higher officer's position for a consecutive term.

**Section 3.2 FIRE CHIEF QUALIFICATIONS:**

The minimum qualifications for the position of Fire Chief are as follows;

- 1) Must have five (5) active years service with two (2) current consecutive years in Blades Volunteer Fire Company.
- 2) Must have successfully completed training through Fire Officer II, or its equivalent.

**Section 3.3 DUTIES OF THE FIRE CHIEF:**

- 1) It shall be the duty of the Fire Chief to command the Company at emergencies and other functions that the Company responds to as a complete unit.
- 2) It will be the duty of the Fire Chief to enforce the fire and rescue training of the Company. They will appoint a training officer to see that all training records are kept up to date.
- 3) They will keep attendance records on all emergency responses of the Company, pertaining to fire and rescue operations. These records will be kept in a manner that at any time they may be reviewed by the Company.
- 4) The Fire Chief is responsible for all apparatus and emergency equipment and the operation thereof.
- 5) The Company will consist of the following line officers whose duty it will be to follow the orders of the Fire Chief and take over the Chief's duties in his absence: Chief, Deputy Chief, two (2) Assistant Chiefs, Chief Engineer, and two (2) Captains.
- 6) The Chief when representing the Fire Company may suspend up to thirty (30) day, effective immediately, any member for any reason they deem necessary. The suspended member may appeal the suspension to the Board of Directors. (Appeal see Article VIII, Section 1 )
- 7) The Fire Chief will prepare and submit an annual line item budget to the Board of Directors for the fiscal year, to include anticipated expenses for all fire line items.
- 8) The Chief will attend at least eight (8) of the twenty-two (22) SCFCA meetings during their term with a minimum of three (3) either calendar year.

**Section 3.4 DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF QUALIFICATIONS:**

The minimum qualifications for the position of Deputy Fire Chief are as follows;

- 1) Must have four (4) years active service with two (2) current consecutive years in Blades Volunteer Fire Company.
- 2) Must have successfully completed training through Fire Officer II, or its equivalent.



**Section 3.5 DUTIES OF THE DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF:**

- 1) *They will have the power of the Fire Chief when the Fire Chief is not present and they will carry out all duties assigned to them by the Fire Chief to the best concern of the Company.*
- 2) *The Deputy Chief will attend at least six (6) of the twenty-two (22) SCFCA meetings during their term with a minimum of two (2) either calendar year.*

**Section 3.6 ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEFS' QUALIFICATIONS:**

*The minimum qualifications for the position of Assistant Fire Chief are as follows;*

- 1) *Must have three (3) years active service with two (2) current consecutive years in Blades Volunteer Fire Company*
- 2) *Must have successfully completed training through Fire Officer I, or its equivalent*

**Section 3.7 DUTIES OF THE ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEFS:**

- 1) *They will have the power of the Fire Chief, and Deputy Fire Chief if not present. The highest ranking officer present being in charge and carrying out the Fire Chief's duties.*
- 2) *They will carry out all duties assigned by the Fire Chief to the best concern of the Company.*
- 3) *The Assistant Fire Chiefs will attend at least four (4) SCFCA meetings during their term with a minimum of two (2) either calendar year.*

**Section 3.8 CHIEF ENGINEER QUALIFICATIONS:**

- 1) *Must have three (3) years active service with two (2) current consecutive years in Blades Volunteer Fire Company*
- 2) *Must have successfully completed training through Fire Officer I, or its equivalent*
- 3) *Must have successfully completed Driver Operators Course or equivalent.*

**Section 3.9 DUTIES OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER:**

- 1) *The Chief Engineer will be in charge of the maintenance of all apparatus and equipment. It will be their duty to see that it is kept in perfect working order at all times at the direction of the Fire Chief.*
- 2) *The Fire Chief and Chief Engineer will appoint Engineer driver operators.*
- 3) *They will keep DOT records on each apparatus, in books or devices provided by the Company (major repairs, installing of batteries, oil changes and any other information that may help to give a record of what has been done to the apparatus). Each apparatus will be checked after every operation using a check list made for that purpose. They will keep monthly list of repairs from these check list.*
- 4) *They will be responsible for all company fuel cards. They will keep the following information on all fuel cards in case of being lost or stolen: Fuel card number, Fuel card Company name, and address of who to notify. They will assign fuel cards to the Ambulance Captain for the ambulance.*

- 5) *They will have the power of the Fire Chief when the Deputy Fire Chief and two (2) Assistant Fire Chiefs are not present.*
- 6) *The Chief Engineer will attend four (4) of the twenty-two (22) SCFCA meetings during their term with a minimum of two (2) either calendar year.*

*3.9(A) Engineer Driver Operators of fire apparatus*

- 1) *Must have a valid driver's license and Delaware EVO.*
- 2) *Must have completed the in house driver training and driving course. May drive apparatus as approved.*
- 3) *Must have pump operator class.*
- 4) *Will assist the Chief Engineer with appointed duties and maintenance of equipment and apparatus and any and all repairs that can be done in house.*

**Section 3.10 CAPTAIN'S QUALIFICATIONS:**

- 1) *Must have three (3) years active service with two (2) current consecutive years in Blades Volunteer Fire Company.*
- 2) *Must have successfully completed training through Crew Leader, or its equivalent.*
- 3) *Two (2) will be appointed by the fire line officers.*

**Section 3.11 DUTIES OF THE CAPTAIN'S:**

- 1) *They will have the power of a Line Officer when no other Fire Chiefs or Chief Engineer are present.*
- 2) *They will act as a working Line Officer to advance crew and equipment in any and all situations so deemed by his superiors.*
- 3) *They will perform all duties as assigned by the Chief.*
- 4) *The Captain will attend four (4) of the twenty-two (22) SCFCA meetings during their term with a minimum of two (2) either calendar year.*

**Section 3.12 Lieutenant's Qualifications**

- 1) *Must have three (3) years active service with two (2) current consecutive years in Blades Volunteer Fire Company*
- 2) *Must have successfully completed training through Crew Leader, or its equivalent.*
- 3) *Two Lieutenants will be appointed by the fire line officers.*

**Section 3.13 Duties of The Lieutenant's**

- 1) *They will have the power of a Line Officer when no other Fire Chiefs or Chief Engineer are present.*
- 2) *They will act as a working Line Officer to advance crew and equipment in any and all situations so deemed by his superiors.*
- 3) *They will perform all duties as assigned by the Chief.*
- 4) *The Lieutenants will attend four (4) of the twenty-two (22) SCFCA meetings during their term with a minimum of two (2) either calendar year.*

**Section 3.14 EMS CAPTAIN QUALIFICATIONS:**

- 1) *Must have three (3) years active service with two (2) current consecutive years in Blades Volunteer Fire Company.*
- 2) *Must be currently certified by the State of Delaware as a NR-EMT for at least two (2) years as an EMT.*

**Section 3.15 DUTIES OF THE EMS CAPTAIN:**

- 1) *It will be the duty of the EMS Captain to preside over the operation of the Ambulance Service of the Company and the qualified members of the ambulance crews. They will be responsible to the Fire Chief of the Fire Company in their actions.*
- 2) *They may appoint two (2) Ambulance Lieutenants that must be approved by the Board of Directors, to assist the duties of the Ambulance Captain.*
- 3) *They will prepare rules and regulations (SOG's) for the proper and safe operation of the ambulances.*
- 4) *They will have the responsibility to see that all supplies and equipment are maintained in good order and repair.*
- 5) *They will manage the Associate EMS members, making sure that they maintain the required training and certifications, as required by the Company and the State of Delaware.*
- 6) *They will be responsible for the management of the Career staff, making sure that they maintain the required training and certifications, as required by the State of Delaware. The Career staff will be bound by and must follow the Company "Employee Handbook".*
- 7) *They will prepare and submit to the Board of Directors an annual budget for the fiscal year.*
- 8) *The EMS Captain will attend eight (8) out of the twenty-two (22) of the Sussex County Ambulance Association meetings during their term with a minimum of two (2) either calendar year.*
- 9) *The EMS Captain will be responsible for maintaining BVFC CPR/AED certifications.*

**Section 3.16 EMS LIEUTENANT QUALIFICATIONS:**

- 1) *Must have two (2) current consecutive active years in Blades Volunteer Fire Company*
- 2) *Must be currently certified by the State of Delaware for one (1) year as an EMT.*

**Section 3.17 DUTIES OF THE EMS LIEUTENANT:**

- 1) *The EMS Lieutenant will assume command in the absence of the Ambulance Captain and carry out all assigned duties to the best interest of the Company.*
- 2) *The two (2) EMS lieutenants will be of assistance to their Ambulance Captain in the operation of the service and will obey their commands and carry out responsibilities. They will be known as 41 and 42.*
- 3) *The two (2) EMS Lieutenants will be appointed by the Ambulance Captain with the approval of the fire line officers. Any person wishing appointment will apply in writing to the Ambulance Captain.*
- 4) *The two (2) EMS Lieutenants will attend six (6) of the twenty-two (22) Sussex County Ambulance Association meetings during their term with a minimum of two (2) either calendar year.*

**Section 3.19 TRAINING OFFICER:**

*The Training Officer(s) will be appointed to the office by the Fire Chief. They will act as Training Officer(s) for the Company and will be required to have monthly drills.*

**Section 3.20 FIRE RECORDER:**

*It will be the duty of the Fire Recorder to keep records of all fires to which the Company responded. They will also record all accidents, ambulance runs and rescues, or any other incidents to which the company responds. These records will be kept and filed monthly, and at the end of each year, records will be filed for the year in a folder marked for that year. These records will be filed in the fire house and be available for viewing at any time it may be deemed necessary. They will post the following; number of alarms, hours of service and the number of man hours in service for the preceding month on the company bulletin board. It shall be their duty to forward on a monthly basis, any and all information necessary or required to the Sussex County Fire Recorder, State Fire Marshall's office, or any other agency required by law. It shall be the duty of the Fire Recorder to present a list of all alarms and needed information to the newspaper in proper form for publication as approved by the Fire Chief.*

**Section 3.21 FIRE POLICE:**

*Any active, associate or Lifetime member interested in the position of fire police must first submit a letter of interest to the fire chief. The Fire Chief could replace any fire police member at any time. They will be required to successfully complete the required fire police classes that are needed to be certified by the company and the State of Delaware. They must also be sworn into duty as a fire police officer by the Sussex County Sheriff, before they can assume their duties and responsibilities. They must take the necessary recertification classes, as needed, to remain certified. The fire police will work under the direction of the Fire Chief. The requirements for fire police will be*

- 1) Fire Police must be approved by the fire line officers.*
- 2) The Fire Police will attend at least six (6) out of the twenty-two (22) Sussex County Fire Police Associations meetings during their term with a minimum of two (2) either calendar year.*
- 3) While holding this position you must make the same stats as an active member*
- 4) There may be up to six (6) Fire Police and they will be known as 71-30 through 35.*

**Section 1.18 SAFETY OFFICER:**

*May be appointed by any line officer as needed.*

**ARTICLE V – ANNUAL BUDGET**

**Section 1 FISCAL YEAR:**

*For budgetary purposes, the “fiscal year” of the Company will be July 1<sup>st</sup>, through June 30<sup>th</sup>, annually.*

**Section 2 BUDGET COMMITTEE:**

*The Budget committee will be the Board of Directors.*

**Section 3 PRESENTATION OF THE ANNUAL BUDGET:**

*The President or their designee will present to the General membership by the meeting night in June annually, its proposed budget for the Company’s approval.*

**Section 4 COMPANY APPROVAL OF THE ANNUAL BUDGET:**

*Upon presentation of the annual budget and clarifying any and all questions raised by the membership. The Company, by majority vote of the eligible voting members, shall approve the annual budget for the coming year.*

**Section 5 LIMITATIONS ON EXPENDITURES:**

*Any item or expense not in the annual budget with a cost of \$5000.00 or more will be presented at a regular Company meeting and with approval of majority of the voting members present shall be adopted. A 51% majority vote cast by the eligible voting members present, will determine the acceptance or rejection of the expenditure. Any budgeted line item amount approved in the acceptance of the annual budget need not come before the Company for another approval, however any line item that may exceed the budgeted amount must come back to the Company for approval of only the amount of the overrun, if the overrun exceeds \$100.00. The only exception will be that, the Board of Directors (with just cause) will have the power to approve any expenditure beyond the \$5000.00 limit for emergency items or repairs. The Board of Directors will report such action to the general membership at the next Company meeting following the expenditure.*

**ARTICLE VI – Stats/ Percentages / Requirements**

**Section 1 Stats All stats are calculated quarterly**

**Probationary Members:**

*Required to make stats according to their classification of membership.*

**Jr Members:**

*Required to make 50% meetings, 50% drills, 10% of alarms and 2 work functions. They must also fulfill their fire school requirements.*

**Active Members:**

*Required to make 50% meetings, 50% drills, 10% of alarms and 2 work functions. They must also fulfill their fire school requirements.*

**Life time Members Holding an Elected Office:**

*Required to make 50% meetings, 50% drills, 10% of alarms and 2 work functions.*

**Life time members not holding an office:**

*NO Requirements; other than they must make one (1) meeting in each of the previous four (4) quarters to be eligible to vote.*

**Associate Members:**

*50% meetings, 2 work functions. If they hold an elected position they must make 50% meetings, 50% drills. (Associate members given bunker gear will be required to meet active member's stats)*

**Associate Auxiliary Members:**

*1 meeting per quarter, 3 functions per quarter that support the fire co. or assist with helping to bring refreshment to a scene.*

**Honorary Members:**

*No requirements/ no voice / no voting privileges.*

**Drills:** *All Company scheduled drills occurring on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday night of each month January through May, September through November. The 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday night of each month for June through August and December. These can be fire, rescue or EMS related and the member must participate in order to receive credit. Only excused absences will be as follows; Work, Illness, Family issues, medical or personal leave of absence, military service, Fire School / School and suspension.*

**Meetings:** *All meetings of the Company, roll will be taken whether or not a quorum is met. Only excused absences will be as follows; Work, illness, Family issues, medical or personal leave of absence, military service, Fire School / School and suspension.*

**Section 2 Disciplinary action by the Membership Committee:**

*1<sup>st</sup> offense of missing stats:*

*Written reprimand to be placed in the member's personal file.*

*2<sup>nd</sup> offense, within an 18 month period of the first offense.*

*6 months probation / lose voice on the floor for 6 months, and lose voting rights for 6 months.*

*2<sup>nd</sup> consecutive offense/ 2 Quarters in a row*

*30 days suspension and 6 months probation / lose voice on the floor for 6 months and loose voting rights for 6 months.*

*3<sup>rd</sup> offense*

*When in an 18 month period from the first offense the member will be recommended for expulsion from the fire company.*

*After an 18 month time period with no offenses the process starts over.*

*Any appeal for expulsion will be handled by the company at a regular company meeting and must be presented to the floor by the person that was expelled.*

**Section 3 Disciplinary action for not fulfilling Administrative, Line Officers, Appointed positions Duties:**

***(To take effect starting October 1, 2016)***

All duties as outlined under each Administrative office and Line Officer positions will be totaled at the end of the fourth quarter of each year. If the person holding a position has not met and fulfilled their duties as out lined they will not be eligible to run for office at the next election.

As defined:

(A) Administrative offices will not be eligible to run in the election for any administrative position at the end of their current term of office.

(B) Line officer will not be eligible to run in the election for any line officer position at the end of their current term of office.

(C) Appointed positions Ambulance Lieutenant's, Fire police will not be eligible to be appointed to those positions at the end of their current term.

The President, Fire Chief, Ambulance Captain, Fire Police Captain will track and keep count of who attends the meetings and forward them to the membership committee every month or by the end of the fourth quarter of each year.

**ARTICLE VII – AMENDMENT PROCESS TO THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS:**

**Section 1 PROPOSED AMENDMENT:**

*All proposed amendments will be submitted, in writing and read, to the company on the floor by the person proposing the change. If the company accepts the proposed change it will be sent to the by- laws committee. (This does not constitute as a first reading)*

**Section 2 BY-LAWS COMMITTEE:**

*The By-Laws committee will review and examine the proposed amendments as to its impact and legality upon the Company's existing Constitution and By-Laws. The By-Laws committee shall, if it deemed necessary, contact legal counsel in order to clarify in the proposal. The By-Laws committee may also seek advice and input from any Company member, if deemed necessary. The By-Laws committee will be able to modify wording with author's permission.*

**Section 3 PRESENTATIONS BY THE BY-LAWS COMMITTEE:**

*The By-Laws committee will report to the membership as quickly as possible, at a regular monthly Company meeting, the proposed amendments and the committee's recommendation if given a thirty (30) day time frame to review the amendment. At the time of presentation the By-Laws committee will give a fore or against recommendation for the proposed change in regards to conflicting with the By-Laws.*



**Section 4 ADOPTIONS OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS:**

*The proposed amendments will be read as a final draft in entirety at two (2) Company meetings. If any changes are made to the amendment, the adoption of proposed amendments process must start over. After the membership is satisfied that all questions have been answered, it will take two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the eligible voting members present after the second reading to adopt the proposal.*

**Section 5 Over Riding or Deleting of By-Laws:**

*Any By-law can be removed or over-ridden by 2/3 vote of the members present and voting.*

**ARTICLE VIII – SUSPENSION, EXPULSION AND RESIGNATION OF MEMBERS:**

**Section 1 SUSPENSIONS:**

*The President and or Fire Chief shall be the only officers with the authority to suspend a member for a maximum of thirty (30) days for:*

- (a) Major violation(s) of the Company's Constitution or By-Laws*
- (b) For conduct that is unbecoming to the Company*
- (c) For disregard of an order from the Company's officers.*
- (d) For breach of trust and improper conduct*

*Any suspended member may in writing, request to appear before the Board of Directors to appeal their suspension. This written request must be made within forty-eight (48) hours of the suspension. This written request must be submitted to any member of the Board of Directors. The Board will meet within a week to review such suspension and will recommend to sustain or to overrule the suspension, by majority vote.*

*While on suspension, the member will not be permitted on Fire Company property, unless they are meeting with the Board of Directors, Membership Committee or General Membership regarding their appeal. Final appeal can be to the general membership and its decision is final.*

## **Section 2 EXPULSIONS:**

*Any member can be expelled from the Company for breach of trust, improper conduct, conduct that is unbecoming to the Company, disregard of orders from Company Officers or disregard of the Company's Constitution and By-Laws.*

### **Section 2.1 Process for expulsion or charges brought against any member**

- 1) The Membership and Review Board committee will have seven (7) days to hold a formal hearing on the charges brought against a member.*
- 2) At the Membership and Review Board Committee meeting, the accused will be given the right to speak in their defense as to each charge laid before them in written charges.*
- 3) The Membership and Review Board Committee will make a determination as to acceptance or denial of the defense given by the accused, in their defense of the charges.*
- 4) The Membership and Review Board Committee will then prepare a written recommendation that will be read to the general membership at the next Company meeting, under the proper order of business.*
- 5) The membership will then vote, by secret ballot, as to the concurrence with the Membership Committees' recommendation for expulsion. It will take two-thirds (2/3) vote of the voting members present at the meeting to expel the member.*
- 6) If expelled, it will require a waiting period of one (1) year from the date of expulsion before they can reapply for membership.*
- 7) If upon the rejection of the Membership Committees recommendation for expulsion, the member will be reinstated, in good standing. However, all documentation presented by the accuser, the accused and the Membership Committee will be retained in the member's personnel folder. All assigned equipment if taken will then be immediately returned to the member.*

### **Section 2.2**

*At anytime during the above proceedings, the accused will be given the right to resign from the Company or request a change in their membership classification. If member resigns all actions on their expulsion will cease. However, all pertinent information will be retained in the individual's personnel folder, for future reference.*

### **Section 2.3**

*The Board will suspend from office or from the Company , any officer or member who has been charged under the provisions of the criminal code of the State of Delaware for a charge listed under Title 16 chapter 66, until such time as a court of law has decided any guilt or innocence. Thereafter, the Board may pursue expulsion of the member in accordance with Section 2.2 above.*

**Section 3 RESIGNATIONS:**

**Section 3.1**

*Any member may, at their discretion, resign from any elected or appointed office, a committee or their membership with the Company, by submitting their written resignation to the President or Secretary. The resignation of any member, from any position, will be presented to the general membership at the next regular Company meeting.*

**Section 3.2**

*Any vacancy in any office will be filled by the membership at regular company meeting that the resignation is read. Nominations, elections and installation will take place on the same night the letter is read.*

**ARTICLE IX- MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS**

**Section 1 WORKMAN'S COMPENSATION:** Title 19, Delaware Code, Chapter 23

***§ 2312 Volunteer firefighters treated as State employees; election by volunteer fire companies; revocation; wage as basis for compensation.***

(c) The wage of volunteer firefighters on which compensation is based shall be the wage received in the regular employment of such firefighters.

**Section 2 LINE-OF-DUTY DEATH BENEFITS:** Title 18, Delaware Code, Chapter 66

***§ 6601 Definitions [For application of this section, see 79 Del. Laws, c. 434, § 3]***

(2) "Covered person" is defined as a member of 1 of the following:

a. Enrolled firefighters, auxiliary and volunteer ambulance and rescue company members in good standing, either according to the rules of their Delaware volunteer company, or through their assignment to a municipal fire company;

***§ 6602 Payment for beneficiaries; tuition payments; burial expenses [For application of this section, see 79 Del. Laws, c. 434, § 3]***

(1) Claims submitted on July 1, 1997, and thereafter, pay to the beneficiary or beneficiaries as designated or determined pursuant to § 6603(a) of this title of every covered person who dies in the line of duty an amount totaling \$150,000, payable in annual installments with the maximum amount payable in any 1 calendar year being \$30,000. Installments shall terminate with the expiration of the beneficiary's eligibility;

***SECTION 3 LINE-OF-DUTY DISABILITY BENEFITS TO COVERED FIREFIGHTERS: Title 18, Delaware Code, Chapter 67***

**§ 6701 Definitions.**

As used in this chapter, the following words and terms have the following meanings:

(1) "Covered firefighters" shall mean enrolled firefighters, ladies auxiliary members, and volunteer ambulance and rescue company members in good standing either according to the rules of their Delaware volunteer fire company or association or through their assignment to a municipal fire company. The use of the masculine gender throughout this chapter in referring to "covered firemen" shall also include the feminine gender where applicable.

(2) "Line of duty," with respect to enrolled firefighters, ladies auxiliary members and volunteer ambulance and rescue company members as defined in paragraph (1) of this section, shall mean while traveling to, performing their assigned duties or returning from, a fire alarm, rescue operation or any other emergency volunteer fire company action; provided, however, that the phrases "traveling to" and "returning from" shall include the time encompassed by the firefighter's, ladies auxiliary members' or volunteer ambulance and rescue company members' entrance into their personal vehicle or company emergency vehicle in response to the alarm or emergency call until their first disembarkation from their personal vehicle at their home, place of employment or other location.

(3) "Permanent disability" shall mean a permanent physical condition arising out of and in the course of actions in the line of duty, but shall not include permanent disability from an injury or disease, which, although aggravated in the line of duty, was not originally sustained in the line of

duty; provided, however, that said permanent disability must be sufficient to disable the covered firefighter so that the firefighter is unable to do the work normally required for the job or employment which he or she held at the time he or she was disabled.

**§ 6702 Payment of benefits.**

Upon certification by the Commissioner that a claim under this chapter has been approved, the State Treasurer shall pay to a covered firefighter who has been permanently disabled in the line of duty, a benefit of \$500 per month, plus \$50 per month for each child under the age of 18 years, for so long as such shall remain.

**SECTION 4 INSURANCE CODE FUNERAL EXPENSES: Title 18, Delaware Code, Chapter 67A**

**§ 6750 Funeral expenses for deceased volunteer firefighters.**

The reasonable funeral expenses of a deceased member of a volunteer fire company, volunteer fire company ladies auxiliary or volunteer ambulance and rescue company shall be paid in amount not to exceed \$7,000. If the deceased member of such company was a state employee entitled to a funeral benefit, this chapter shall not apply. A member of a volunteer fire company, volunteer fire company ladies auxiliary or volunteer ambulance and rescue company for the purposes of this chapter is one who has served as an active member of such organization in Delaware for at least 10 years.

**SECTION 5 VOLUNTEER FIREMAN'S PENSION PLAN BENEFITS: Title 16, Delaware Code, Chapter 66 A**

**§ 6655 Eligibility for pension.**

(a) A member shall become eligible to receive a pension beginning with the first month after attainment of age 60 if the member has 10 years of credited service.

**§ 6656 Vested right to pension.**

(a) A member who has 10 years of credited service shall have a vested right to a pension.

**§ 6658 Amount of pension.**

The amount of the monthly pension payable to an eligible member shall be \$5 times years of credited service up to a maximum of 25 years.

**§ 6659 Death benefit.**

Upon the death of a member, inactive member or retired member, there shall be paid to the designated beneficiary or beneficiaries or, in the absence of a designated beneficiary, to the estate of the member, a lump sum equal to the excess, if any, of the accumulated member contributions with interest over the aggregate of all pension payments made.

**Section 6 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:** *Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance, CFDA 16.171 “Public Safety Officers” Benefits Program.*

**Section 7 STATE OF DELAWARE:** *Income tax credit of \$400.00.*

**Section 8 DVFA MUTUAL RELIEF PROGRAM:** *Benefits are listed on the Internet at <http://www.dvfassn.com/documents.cfm>*

**Section 9 BLADES VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY:**

*While the Blades Volunteer Fire Company does not provide any additional pension benefits above and beyond that provided by the State of Delaware, the fire company does provide the annual funding for all members to complete the training the Blades Volunteer Fire Company requires to be a member.*

**ARTICLE X COMPANY POLICY and HOUSE RULES**

**SECTION 1**

- 1) All members must be on a minimum of two (2) committees.
- 2) No member other than the Vice President is allowed to be on both the Membership Committee and the Board of Directors.
- 3) Any member found to be operating any fire company vehicles while under the influence of alcohol, illegal substances and some prescription drugs when advised by a Doctor or the prescription bottle not to operate heavy equipment or may cause drowsiness will automatically be recommended for **EXPULSION** from the company. Any member having any type of accident involving any fire company vehicle will immediately be drug tested.
- 4) **Policy:** Tobacco Product Usage: The use of tobacco or tobacco-like substances is prohibited in Blades Volunteer fire Company buildings and in company vehicles. Smoking products may be used on property at designated smoking areas. **Purpose:** To provide a clean and healthy environment for company members, employees, and general public. This policy will also influence the company's image in a positive way. **Scope:** All employees, members, and visitors on Blades Volunteer Fire Company property (Including buildings and Vehicles). **Definition:** Tobacco use includes smoking and chewing tobacco or tobacco- like products as defined by the State of Delaware.

**5) Policy:** Social Media Policy

The following user policy governs the use of all-social media sites and pages to include social networking pages, blogs and file sharing sites, and instant technology (example: text messages, photo sharing, emails). Please read the rules contained in this Policy carefully.

This policy is not intended to limit your right to freedom of speech or expression: However, as a public entity, it has been put in place to protect the rights of this organization, its members and the public we are sworn to protect. As Emergency Personnel, we are held to a higher standard than the public.

To ensure constructive dialogue, please post only comments and photos beneficial to the Blades Vol. Fire Co. and its mission.

Submissions containing the following are NOT allowed:

- Obscene or threatening language or discrimination (hate speech) based on protected classes such as race, sex, gender, religion, national origin, age, or disability, when speaking as a member of the B.V.F.C.
- Any personal or sensitive information, including, but not limited to , photos of patients, patient's names, information about a call that is under any type of investigation, and photos containing blood.
- Material that would violate the law, or B.V.F.C bylaws, when speaking as a member of the B.V.F.C.
- Abusive threats, obscenity, defamatory or sexually explicit material when using the Blades Vol. Fire Company's or any other Fire or EMS Company or Departments name, officer title, photo containing, or anything that may be referencing them.
- Photos from fatalities
- Transmitting any photos or information of individuals receiving emergency medical assistance. Any such act may violate Delaware Laws and /or HIPPA privacy rights of individuals and may result in a criminal and /or civil proceeding being commenced against members violating this provision of policy. The B.V.F.C. will not be held liable should a member intentionally or unintentionally violate this policy.

Any questions regarding a post being in violation of this policy, contact the President or Chief for approval prior to posting.

Any person found in violation of the policy will receive disciplinary action from the President and or Chief as they see fit. Said person may appeal the decision to the Board. If not content with Board's decision they may appeal to the floor.

The term photo includes video and audio.

The term member includes any and all staff of B.V.F.C.

The wearing of any specialized apparel in photos deems you "speaking as a member of the B.V.F.C." ( Example: embroidered polo's, issued jackets, and bunker gear )

#### 6) Policy:

No one will drive any fire co equipment without the approval of two (2) of the four (4) people:

Fire Chief, Chief Engineer, Ambulance Captain, and Training Officer.

- 7) Any member that has been charged under the provisions of the criminal code of the State of Delaware Title 16 chapter 66 will report the offense to the Chief, President or their designee within 24 hours.



## **XII Supersede**

*These By-Laws supersede all previous By-Laws in the Secretary's minute book and will be the By-Laws the Blades Volunteer Fire Company goes by from this day forth.*

*Roberts rules of Order will be used for any and all situations for proper order of business if not covered by the Constitution and By Laws.*

*President* \_\_\_\_\_

*Date* \_\_\_\_\_

*Secretary* \_\_\_\_\_

*Date* \_\_\_\_\_

*Company Seal*

