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CONSTITUTION

TOWN OF WATERTOWN FIRE DEPARTMENT

ARTICLE 1: TITLE

This department shall be known as the Town of Watertown Fire Department, Incorporated, and shall consist of not more than (70) active members at any one time. The Town of Watertown Fire Department Board of Fire Commissioners shall determine the number of members from outside the Town of Watertown limits.

ARTICLE 2: PURPOSE

This department is an organization of volunteers for the purpose of fighting fires, saving lives, property, and the environment.

ARTICLE 3: OFFICERS

SECTION ONE

The officers of this department shall be: Chief, First Assistant Chief, Second Assistant Chief, Third Assistant Chief, Captains, Truck Foremen, President, Secretary, Treasurer, Training Officer and Safety Officer. These officers are to be elected at each annual meeting for a term of one (1) year, with the exception of the Training Officer, Safety officer and President, who will be appointed by the Chief. In the event the Chief or any Assistant Chief becomes unable to fulfill his/her duties, then there will be an automatic progression up to the next position, of all Chief Officers. If the Third Assistant Chief, Secretary, or Treasurer become unable to fulfill his/her duties for the year elected, the Executive Committee will appoint a member from those eligible from general membership to fulfill those duties until the next election. If the President, Training Officer, Safety Officer or a Station Captain should become unable to fulfill his/her duties, for the year appointed, the Chief will be empowered to appoint another. The duties of Assistant Chief shall be as follows: 1) Oversee Station Captains and firematic equipment of assigned stations and ensure truck maintenance reports are completed. 2) Each Assistant must conduct 1 training session per year. 3) Attend 75% of all Executive Committee meetings and 3 Commissioners meetings per year (excluding regular employment, illness or Fire/EMS schooling, or at the discretion of the chief). 4) Assist Chief in office duties, including; signing purchase orders, inspecting Fire District bills and oversee apparatus maintenance and repairs.

SECTION TWO

The Executive Committee will consist of the Chief, First Assistant Chief, Second Assistant Chief, Third Assistant Chief, President, Secretary, Treasurer, Training Officer, Safety Officer, Station Captains, Foremen, and one delegate from the Town of Watertown Board of Fire Commissioners.

45 **SECTION THREE**

46 The Chief shall: preside, or shall have the power to appoint a junior officer, or if a junior
47 officer is not present, a member to preside in their stead, at all meetings of this department;
48 preserve order; appoint all committees that are not otherwise appointed; and must, at the
49 written request of seven members, call extra meetings, vote on all questions, have charge
50 of all parades, have authority to excuse members from meetings while in session, and
51 perform all other acts and duties necessary for the good of the department, not otherwise
52 provided for herein.

53

54 **SECTION FOUR**

55 The First Assistant Chief shall, at the request of the Chief, or in his absence, fulfill the
56 above duties. He/she shall oversee the completion and filing of NYS Incident Reports.
57 He/she shall assist the Chief in performing his/her duties and shall complete a NYS officers'
58 training course within one year.

59

60 **SECTION FIVE**

61 The Second Assistant Chief shall, at the request of the Chief, or in the absence of the Chief
62 or First Assistant Chief, fulfill the above duties. He/she shall conduct inventory and
63 inspection of all District owned turn-out gear annually. He/she shall assist the Chief in
64 performing his/her duties and shall complete a NYS officers' training course within one
65 year.

66

67 **SECTION SIX**

68 The Third Assistant Chief shall, at the request of the Chief, or in the absence of the Chief,
69 First Assistant Chief, or Second Assistant Chief, fulfill the above duties. He/she shall
70 oversee training and oversee members on probation. He/she shall assist the Chief in
71 performing his/her duties and shall complete a NYS officers' training course within one
72 year.

73

74 **SECTION SEVEN**

75 The President shall appoint all committees and may serve as a member of same unless
76 otherwise provided under these bylaws. He/She shall enforce the observance of the
77 Constitution and Bylaws. He/she shall abstain (when presiding over the meetings) from
78 any vote of the organization other than in the election of officers and members except in
79 the case of an equal division of votes and then his/her vote shall decide the issue. He/she
80 shall appoint a member to the position of Chaplain of the Town of Watertown Fire
81 Department, Inc., at the Annual Meeting of the department. If this member is a recognized
82 member of the clergy, the said member can be exempted from fulfilling the duty
83 requirements of an active member by vote of the general membership. The President shall
84 serve as manager of all non-firefighting property of the organization, keep an accurate
85 record of same, and assure that no property of the organization is removed from its place
86 of use or storage unless he/she has given permission for such removal.

87

88

89

90 **SECTION EIGHT**

91 The Secretary shall record the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee and of
92 the General Membership meetings. He/she shall notify all members of special meetings,
93 of Bylaw and Constitution changes, record all incidents as reported by the Chief, and keep
94 an up-to-date list of members both active and inactive.

95

96 **SECTION NINE**

97 The Treasurer shall be responsible for all monies paid into this Department and keep an
98 accurate accounting of the same. He/she shall report to the Executive Committee and
99 General Membership monthly as to monies owed, received, and on hand. He/she shall be
100 bonded.

101

102 **SECTION TEN**

103 The Safety Officer shall assist all officers in the instruction of proper operation of all
104 Department equipment.

105

106 **SECTION ELEVEN**

107 The Training Officer shall oversee all department training.

108

109 **SECTION TWELVE**

110 The Chief shall have charge of all firefighting equipment owned by or in the care of the
111 Department. He/she will, with the assistance of his/her junior officers, be in charge of all
112 incidents, have full supervision of all members, and report to the Executive Committee,
113 any member showing disrespect or disobedience at the time of any incident, function, or
114 any other action unbecoming to the Department, and will suspend any member who refuses
115 to perform his/her duties, or who is engaging in acts detrimental to the Department. Such
116 suspension is to be reviewed by the Executive Committee at its next regular meeting, and
117 then referred to the General Membership for action.

118

119 **SECTION THIRTEEN – STATION CAPTAINS**

120 Station Captains for this department will be elected by the entire fire department for a term
121 of one year. To be eligible for election one must meet the following minimum
122 requirements:

- 123
- 124 • -Having successfully served as a Truck Foreman for 2 years
 - 125 • -Have met attendance requirements as per the constitution and bylaws
 - 126 • -Be department qualified on the equipment

127 Their duties will be to assist the Chief, assistant chiefs, or the designated officers at the
128 time of fires, incidents and department functions. They will be in charge of incidents
129 utilizing the incident command system until a chief arrives. He/She will report to a Chief
130 Officer any member showing disrespect, disobedience or a life safety violation at the time
131 of any incident or function. Captains shall also be required to:

- 132 • -Review Truck Foreman's yearly truck inventory & Item request.
- 133 • -Ensure Truck Foremen are completing truck checks by the 15th of each
134 month
- -Attend 75% of Executive & General Membership meetings (with the

- 135 exception of a valid excuse).
136 • -Ensure cleanliness and readiness of assigned station and apparatus.
137 • -Train, document and recommend to the chief new members for
138 certification to operate vehicles and equipment.

139 Prior to the annual election of officers, a report of each Station Captain's adherence of the
140 above requirements will be presented to the general membership.

141

142 **SECTION FOURTEEN – TRUCK FOREMAN**

143 A Truck Foreman for this department will be elected by the entire fire department for a
144 term of one year. To be eligible for election one must meet the following minimum
145 requirements:

- 146 Having successfully served at least three years in this department.
147 Having met attendance requirements as per the constitution and bylaws.
148 Successfully completed New York State Firefighter 1 or equivalent.
149 Be department qualified on the equipment.
150 Have completed or complete a New York State course, specifically related to the
151 equipment as follows:

- 152 Engines-Pump Operations, EVOC
153 Tankers-Pump Operations, EVOC
154 Ladder-Ladder Operations, Pump Operations, EVOC
155 Rescue-Rescue Operation or Auto Extrication, EVOC, Pump Operation
156 (46-1-1)

157 Duties of a Truck Foreman

- 158 • Complete and submit to designated Station Captain monthly truck reports and
159 repair requests by the 15th of each month.
160 • Conduct one training session per year
161 • Complete an annual inventory of apparatus to be turned into designated Station
162 Captain.
163 • Attend at least 75% of department meetings (excluding regular employment,
164 illness, family emergency or department schooling).
165 • Train, document and recommend to designated Station Captain - new members for
166 certification to operate the vehicle and equipment the Truck Foreman is responsible
167 for.
168 • Prior to the annual election of officers, a report of each Truck Foreman's adherence
169 of the above requirements will be presented to the general membership.

170

171 **SECTION FIFTEEN**

172 A Firefighter shall not be eligible for election as Assistant Chief, until he/she has served at
173 least one year as Station Captain, or has shown outstanding service and have the
174 education/qualifications set forth in the bylaws. A member shall not be eligible to be
175 elected Chief until he/she has served a minimum of two years as an Assistant Chief.

176

177

178

179

180 **ARTICLE 4: COMMITTEES**

181 **SECTION ONE**

182 The Executive Committee shall meet at least once before each general membership
183 meeting. This meeting will make recommendations for constitutional changes before the
184 regular general membership meetings. These changes can only be acted on by the general
185 membership. The Executive Committee will act upon all disciplinary measures prior to
186 the general membership meeting and make recommendations as to what actions may be
187 taken. At no time, may this committee make a decision and invoke it without the approval
188 of the general membership, unless otherwise indicated in the Constitution. They shall
189 review membership applications, investigate completely, and, if deemed appropriate,
190 recommend approval to the general membership.

191 **SECTION TWO**

192 The Nominating Committee shall be selected by the President and must have one member
193 who was a past officer. Recommendations from this committee must be for one
194 man/woman for each elected office only.

195 **SECTION THREE**

196 Other Committees to be established as needed.
197
198
199
200

201 **ARTICLE 5: MEMBERS (Introduction)**

202 **Goal:** To develop a dynamic and active membership that allows each person to
203 provide service to the department and community to the best of their ability,
204 meeting the mission and goals of the department and the personal goals of the
205 member.

206 **Structure:** There will be six categories of active membership in the department. These
207 categories will be based upon the training requirements set forth by the department,
208 advisory and oversight agencies and legal requirements. Members are encouraged
209 to select the membership category which best suits their goals, physical ability,
210 training, personal time commitment and development objectives. During the
211 course of a career with the department, it is expected that members will move
212 between categories depending upon their personal circumstances.

213 The Executive Committee will review written requests from members who
214 wish to be reassigned to a different membership category and approve such
215 reassignment by majority vote. The Executive Committee reserves the right to meet
216 with members who request such reassignment in order to assess their request and
217 ensure that mutual needs are met.

218 **Application:** The membership application process will follow existing protocols.

219 **Probation:** All newly appointed members of the department will be on a probationary
220 status for at least 12 months, commencing on the date that they have been accepted
221 into the department.

222 Probationary members are not granted voting privileges.

223 Probationary members will be expected to meet all membership
224 participation and training requirements for their membership category during the
225 probationary period.

226 Probationary members will not accept any assignment, duty or work detail
227 nor perform any function, whether at an emergency scene or otherwise, which they
228 have not been properly trained to perform.

229 The Executive Board will periodically review the training and participation
230 of the probationary member at the Executive Board Meetings. Those members that
231 have not yet achieved the training and/or participation as necessary for their
232 assigned category will meet with the Executive Board to assess their development
233 goals. The Executive Board will determine, by majority vote, if the probationary
234 member should be reassigned to a different membership category of which they
235 have been properly trained and participated for, if the probationary period should
236 be extended for a period of six months or if the member should be discharged from
237 the department.

238 In situations where the probationary period has been extended, the
239 Executive Board review process will be repeated at the Executive Board Meeting
240 of the month that the probation extension ends.

241 **Voting:** All members, regardless of category, will be given full voting privileges
242 following the successful completion of their probationary period.

243 **Physicals:** All members, regardless of category, must have an annual physical on file
244 with the TWFD office.

245 **Fund Raising:** All members, regardless of category, must participate in a minimum of one
246 fund raising event each year.

247 **Committees:** All members, regardless of category, shall participate in a minimum of three
248 committees.

249 **EVOC:** All members, regardless of category, must receive EVOC training prior to
250 being allowed to drive fire department vehicles.

251 **NIMS:** All members, regardless of category, must complete ICS 100, 200 and 700
252 within the first year.

253 **Participation in a 2-hour in-service on department procedures (SOGs and protocols)**
254 **when first becoming a member**

255 **Annually** - 2 hours of OSHA Station House Safety and Scene Safety training

256 **Training** - Initial Training and Annual Training Requirements are determined by the Chief
257 Officers based on New York State best practices for individuals to the level of their
258 certification and participation.

259
260 **Membership Categories:**

261 Active

262 Firefighter- Fully trained and active in fire suppression and rescue
263 activities.

264 Scene Support- Trained in on-scene support operations (i.e. driving,
265 pumps, ladder placement, hose assistance, accountability, traffic
266 and water supply).

267 Light Duty Scene Support- Trained in on-scene support operations as
268 physically able.

- 269 EMS - Certified EMS provider that support rescue efforts within scope of
270 training.
271 Station Member- Non-emergency responder who provides administrative
272 support and minimal on-scene support (i.e. work details, food prep,
273 fund raising, committees and assist during major incidents).
274 Junior Firefighter- Junior firefighters must be at least 16 years old but not
275 older than 18 years old. (For details, see the Junior Firefighter's
276 Policy)
277 Active Deployed Military
278 Inactive
279 Inactive Medical
280 Active Reserve
281 Life
282 Honorary
283 Probationary
284

285 **SECTION ONE - ACTIVE MEMBERS**

286 **a. Firefighter**

287 **Annual requirements:**

- 288 • Categorical requirements (Reference TWFD Training Program
- 289 Standard Operating Guideline)
- 290 • Bi-annual Pulmonary Function Test and mask-appropriate Fit Test
- 291 • Response to at least 10% of alarms (EMS not used to determine total
- 292 calls)
- 293 • Attendance or approved absence from at least 75% of General
- 294 Membership Meetings

295 **Promotional to:**

296 Truck Foreman, Station Captain, Assistant Chief or Chief per guidelines for
297 each position
298

299 **b. First Responder - EMS**

300 **Annual Requirements:**

- 301 • Response to at least 10% of EMS calls
- 302 • Attendance or approved absence from at least 75% of General
- 303 Membership Meetings
304

305 **c. Scene Support Operations (SSO)**

306 **Annual Requirements:**

- 307 • PPE Fit Test as determined by the Chief Officers
- 308 • Response to at least 10% of alarms (EMS not used to determine total
- 309 calls)
- 310 • Attendance or approved absence from at least 75% of General
- 311 Membership Meetings
- 312 • Participation at 25% of all scheduled work details.
313

Promotional to:

314 Truck Foreman, Station Captain, Assistant Chief or Chief per guidelines for
315 each position.

316

317 **d. Station Members**

318 **Annual Requirements:**

- 319 • Attendance or approved absence from at least 75% of General
- 320 Membership Meetings
- 321 • Attendance or approved absence from at least 50% of scheduled
- 322 work details
- 323 • Participation at 75% of fund raising events
- 324 •

325 **e. Active Deployed Military**

326 The Town of Watertown Fire Department is proud of our members who
327 serve in the United States Armed Services. In the event that one of our
328 members who serve in the military is deployed they will be moved to the
329 “Active Deployed Military” category and their status, credits and standing
330 will remain unchanged until they return from their deployment. They will
331 continue to receive points toward their retirement.

332

333 **Membership**

334 To be a member of this department (other than Junior members), a person shall be
335 at least 18 years of age. A candidate for membership shall make written application to the
336 department and shall appear in person before the Executive Committee for a personal
337 interview. The purpose of this interview is to inform the candidate of the membership
338 requirements and to evaluate the candidate's potential as a member of the Department.
339 Town residents will have preference over non-residents. Such application shall be
340 approved or disapproved by the Executive Committee before being presented to the general
341 membership. Upon the next available opening, such application shall be presented to the
342 general membership at the regular meeting for review. This application shall be voted on
343 at the next regular meeting following the review and approved by a simple majority of the
344 ballots cast. If an applicant is rejected, the applicant must wait six (6) months before
345 submitting a new application. Once approved, a member must receive a department
346 approved physical exam before responding to any call.

347 Each member will be evaluated quarterly and must maintain at least 10% of calls.

348 The Executive Committee can recommend dismissal from the department if a
349 member has less than 10% of calls by June 30 or December 31.

350 Any member guilty of disorderly conduct or in the discharge of his/her duties as a
351 firefighter, upon good satisfactory evidence of the Executive Committee and a three
352 quarters (3/4) vote of the ballots cast by the members present of the department, shall be
353 dishonorably discharged from the department. Any member not attending six meetings of
354 the previous year (excluding regular employment, illness or Fire/EMS schooling) shall not
355 vote at the Annual Meeting. Any member on probation shall not be allowed to vote on any
356 department issue. Any member not attending a meeting must be excused by the president
357 or their designee, of the department. Each member with a change in the status of their
358 driver's license must notify the chief and district office. To drive the TWFD equipment, a
359 member must have a valid driver's license.

360 **SECTION TWO - INACTIVE MEMBERS**

361 a. Inactive Members

362 Any member shall be eligible to become an inactive member with
363 at least five years of active service. He/she has no rights or
364 privileges of any kind, by reason of fighting fires, driving vehicles,
365 or any other duties. He/she shall have the right upon invitation of
366 the Department, to attend all department functions and to be
367 extended the courtesy to attend general membership meetings with
368 no voting privileges. A request to move to Inactive Membership
369 requires a letter to be written to the Executive Board requesting the
370 change. The Executive Board will pass the request to the General
371 Membership with a simple majority vote needed to approve the
372 change.

373 b. Inactive Medical

374 TWFD recognizes that at times due to long term illness or non-fire
375 department related injury an active member may not be able to
376 complete all the necessary requirements to remain in an active
377 status. A member may request, in writing, to be moved to the
378 "Inactive Medical" category. The member can still participate in all
379 social events and can attend meetings, however they will not be able
380 to vote on department issues. At the time when they feel able, they
381 may request, in writing, with doctor's approval, to be moved to
382 "Active" member status.
383

384 **SECTION THREE - ACTIVE RESERVE MEMBERS**

385 Active Reserve- Members who have served 20 years of active service are eligible
386 for Active Reserve status. Active Reserve members are exempt from the annual response
387 percentage of 10%.

388 An active member may request Active Reserve Status by meeting the following criteria:

- 389 1. Twenty (20) years as an active member of the Town of Watertown Volunteer
390 Fire Department.
- 391 2. Must attend 50 percent of the regular meetings.
- 392 3. Must be recommended by the Executive Committee.
- 393 4. Active Reserve Status must be approved by a majority vote of the membership
394 present.
- 395 5. Must make written application requesting active reserve status.

396 **Annual Requirements:**

- 397 • PPE Fit Test as determined by the Chief Officers
- 398 • Attendance or approved absence from at least 75% of General
399 Membership Meetings
- 400 • Participation at 25% of all scheduled work details.
401

402 **SECTION FOUR - LIFE MEMBERS**

403 Any member 65 or older, meeting inactive membership requirements, may make
404 application to become a life member in writing to the Executive Board and approval by 2/3
405 vote of General Membership. A life member shall have the same social benefits as active

406 members, but may not perform emergency duty, nor vote. This section also applies to
407 members who have become permanently disabled, and who are members in good standing,
408 regardless of age.

409

410 **SECTION FIVE - HONORARY MEMBERS**

411 Honorary membership may be bestowed upon any outstanding individual deemed worthy
412 of this honor by a 2/3 majority vote of the members present. This honorary member has
413 no rights nor privileges under this membership except upon invitation of the Department.
414 A recommendation for Honorary Membership may be brought to any regularly scheduled
415 General Membership meeting and would require a 2/3 vote for approval.

416

417 **SECTION SIX - PROBATIONARY MEMBERS**

418 A new member with the Department shall be on probationary period for one year. They
419 must attend at least Basic Exterior Firefighting Operations within this time, if the class is
420 available. A new member shall not be eligible to drive district owned equipment until
421 authorized by the Chief, Foreman of the vehicle and the Board of Fire Commissioners,
422 except for training purposes when accompanied by an approved training officer.

423

424 **SECTION SEVEN - LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

425 A member after one year of service in the department, may request a leave of absence in
426 writing to the Executive Board for a period up to and not exceeding one year. He/she shall
427 upon request, be admitted to the department with a majority vote of the members present.

428

429 **SECTION EIGHT - THE SERVICE AWARD PROGRAM**

430 A year of service shall be credited for one calendar year after establishment of the Award
431 Program in which an active volunteer member accumulates at least 50 points. Points shall
432 be granted in accordance with the Service Award Program Point System.

433

434

435 **ARTICLE 6: FIRE POLICE**

436 The Chief shall appoint New York State Trained Fire Police. They shall be sworn in before
437 the Town Clerk to act with general police authorities during the time of fire or incident;
438 keep unauthorized persons from interfering with the fighting of a fire, or the property
439 involved, or entering the buildings where the fire is located; prevent all vehicles or
440 conveyances from blocking the highways or interfering with the movements of the
441 firefighters, fire apparatus, or equipment; and perform any act or duty naturally developing
442 on police at the time of a fire or incident.

443

444

445 **ARTICLE 7: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

446 SOGs shall be developed and administered by the SOG Committee and shall be approved
447 by majority vote of members present of the general membership.

448

449

450 **ARTICLE 8: AMENDMENTS**

451 This Constitution and Bylaws may be amended only by the amendment to be acted upon
452 having been approved at one regular meeting and voted upon favorably at the next regular
453 meeting by a two-thirds vote of the members present. This Constitution must be updated
454 regularly.

455
456 **BY-LAWS**

457 **TOWN OF WATERTOWN FIRE DEPARTMENT**

- 458 1. The meetings of this department shall be held monthly. The Annual
459 Meeting shall be held at the regular January meeting. The fiscal year will be the
460 calendar year.
- 461 2. The Chief, Assistant Chiefs, Station Captains, Truck Foremen, Secretary,
462 and Treasurer, shall be elected at the Annual Meeting by separate ballots for a term
463 of one year, or until a successor is elected. The Chief, Assistant Chiefs and Station
464 Captains shall be elected by TWFD members who have responded to 10% or more
465 of the fire calls through the end of November. The determination as to who has the
466 privilege of voting will be announced at the December meeting preceding the
467 January election. A majority of the votes cast constitutes election.
- 468 3. Three tellers shall be appointed by the Chief at each election and shall
469 receive, count, and report on all votes in an open meeting. The first appointed, shall
470 be the Chair and conduct the election.
- 471 4. Twenty (20) members shall constitute a quorum at any regular or special
472 meeting for the transaction of any business of the department.

473
474
475 Revised and adopted
476 **October 2, 2019**

477
478 **ACCEPTANCE**

479
480 The Bylaws shall be a part of this Constitution and new bylaws made as necessary
481 by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any regular meeting. The Bylaws must be
482 updated regularly.

483 I hereby agree to and find myself to abide by this Constitution and Bylaws and
484 amendment or additions that may hereafter lawfully be made hereto.

485
486
487 Name-Printed _____

488
489 Signed _____

490
491 Date _____