

**CONSTITUTION
AND
BY-LAWS
OF
THE HARRIS COUNTY
FIRE FIGHTERS ASSOCIATION**

| **REVISED ~~IN~~ NOVEMBER, 1965**

| **REVISED ~~IN~~ JANUARY, 1976**

| **REVISED ~~IN~~ JULY, 1979**

| **REVISED ~~IN~~ AUGUST, 1982**

| **REVISED ~~IN~~ SEPTEMBER, 1986**

| **REVISED ~~IN~~ OCTOBER 15, 1997**

| **REVISED ~~IN~~ JANUARY 21, 2004**

| **REVISED MARCH 17, 2010**

CONSTITUTION
BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HARRIS COUNTY FIRE FIGHTERS
ASSOCIATION

PREAMBLE

Having felt the need of a County-Wide coordinating organization, the Fire Chiefs of Fire Departments operating in Harris County, Texas organized the Harris County Fire Chiefs Association on September 6, 1952, at a meeting held in Houston, Texas. In 1959 the Association changed the name to the Harris County Fire Fighters Association. The organization having been perfected, the Association does adopt the following By-Laws governing its membership, meetings, and operations, to-wit:

MISSION STATEMENT

The HCFFA mission is to lead and coordinate Emergency Service Organizations and members to provide quality services.

SECTION 1. The membership of this Association shall be open to all Emergency Service Organizations, Businesses, Local and State Elected Officials as ex-officio participants that have an interest in supporting the Association in carrying out its mission.

There shall be four classifications of membership:

- Voting
- Affiliate
- Honorary
- Associate

SECTION 2. VOTING

Voting membership with privileges shall be granted to all Emergency Service Organizations, in good standing, upon application for and acceptance to membership.

SECTION 3. AFFILIATE

Affiliate membership without voting privileges shall be granted to Businesses or individuals interested in supporting the mission of the Association upon application for and acceptance to membership.

SECTION 4. HONORARY

Honorary membership is an individual without voting privileges who shall be elected to membership by a majority of the Active Membership.

SECTION 5. ASSOCIATE

Associate membership includes organizations , individuals and ex-officio's without voting privileges giving substantial cooperation or assistance to the Association or its work.

SECTION 6. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Elected Management team shall be known as the Board of Directors.

SECTION 7. MEETINGS

There shall be eleven (11) regular scheduled meetings of the Association each year.

APPROVED AT PASADENA, TEXAS THIS 15TH DAY OF OCTOBER 1952

PRESIDENT: E. G. BASHFORTH
Chief, Pasadena Fire Department

VICE PRESIDENT: JAMES A. BLAND
Chief, Westfield Road Fire Department

SECRETARY: B. F. CALDWELL
Chief, Bellaire Fire Department

Revised on second reading at Spring Branch Fire Department, Texas, this 17th day of November, 1965.

PRESIDENT: M. N. DENMAN
Chief, Webster Volunteer Fire Department

SECRETARY: BILL GRIFFITH
Webster Volunteer Fire Department

CHAIRMAN BY-LAWS
COMMITTEE: JAMES A. BLAND, JR.
Bellaire Fire Department

**BY-LAWS OF THE
HARRIS COUNTY FIRE FIGHTERS ASSOCIATION**

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of the organization shall be the HARRIS COUNTY FIRE FIGHTERS ASSOCIATION, hereinafter called "Association."

Any reference to gender in this document is referring to the person filling the position at that time.

ARTICLE II. Membership

SECTION 1. Membership

The membership of the Association shall consist of organizations or individuals which qualify under one of the four classifications of membership.

SECTION 2. Classes of Membership

Membership in the Association shall be in four classes, namely: Voting members, Affiliate members, Honorary members, and Associate members. Only Voting members shall have the right to bring motions to the floor or cast votes. All other classes of membership shall have the right to the floor at any time, and shall otherwise participate in all of the activities of the Association except voting, bringing motions, or holding elected offices.

- A. The Voting members shall be the Emergency Service Organizations which have paid annual dues in the Association. Emergency Service Organizations shall include, but not be limited to, Fire Departments, Fire Marshal's Office's, Emergency Service Districts, Texas Forest Service, Military Fire and Rescue Services, Plant Protection, and Emergency Medical Services. Organizations wishing to become voting members shall apply for membership and be voted upon and approved by a majority of the voting members present at the meeting in which the applicant is brought forth.
- B. Affiliate members shall consist of Businesses such as Suppliers, Dealers, manufacturers (or their representatives or agents) of fire equipment, and Suppliers which have paid current dues and who wish to be supporters of this Association. Businesses wishing to become Affiliate members shall apply for membership and be voted upon and approved by a majority of the voting members present at the meeting in which the applicant is brought forth.
- C. Honorary members shall include but not be limited to; Former Officers of the Association, Lifetime Achievement Award recipients, and individuals who have supported the mission of the association. Persons eligible for Honorary membership shall be nominated by a letter of recommendation and be voted upon and approved by a majority of the voting members present at the meeting in which the letter of recommendation is brought forth.
- D. The Associate members shall include, but not be limited to State and Local Elected Officials, Mutual Aid Organizations, Disaster Relief Organizations, Peace Officers in Harris County and such organizations or individuals giving substantial cooperation or assistance to the Association or its work. Associate members shall apply for membership and be voted upon and approved by a majority of the voting members present at the meeting in which the applicant is brought forth.

SECTION 3. The Annual Dues for Membership

- A. The Board shall establish the annual dues in September of each year for the next year. All Voting and Affiliate Members will be invoiced in October and dues shall be remitted by December 31 of each year.
- B. Honorary and Associate members shall pay no dues.
- C. Any member agency not current in dues by the following February meeting shall be terminated by the Board. A \$25 administrative fee shall be assessed to any tardy dues payment, and at that time the member may be reinstated by the Board.

SECTION 4. Termination of Membership

- A. Membership of an "Active" agency, or the representative from any agency, may be suspended or terminated at any regular meeting by a majority vote of the Board , under the following conditions:
 - 1. The termination of operations of the agency.
 - 2. The consolidation of the member agency into another agency.
 - 3. Failure to pay dues.
- B. A member of any classification of membership may be suspended or terminated at the discretion of the Board for any incident deemed unlawful or conduct detrimental to the Association.

ARTICLE II. MEETINGS

SECTION 1. Regular Meetings

The regular meeting of the Association may be on the third Wednesday night of the month at a place and time to be designated at a prior meeting of the Association. The meeting date may be changed due to conflicting events, including, but not limited to emergencies, holidays, SFFMA Convention and other events

SECTION 2. Special Meetings

A Special meeting may be called at anytime by the Board. The business of this special meeting shall be limited to the reason of the special meeting, and to any business affected by the outcome of said business.

SECTION 3. Quorum

A quorum of the members of the Assn shall be a simple majority of the ACTIVE members present, as shown by records of secretary . There may be a meeting of the association when fewer than that number of members are present, but no business shall be transacted without the presence of a quorum in the meeting room at the time of the proposed action.

ARTICLE III. OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES

SECTION 1. Officers

- A. The Association shall be led by a five member Board of Directors.
- B. All members of the Board must be active members of agencies which are voting members of the *Harris County Fire Fighters Association* at the time of their election.
- C. The members of the Board shall be elected by the voting members to serve alternating two year terms.

NOTE- Beginning with the election of 2009, three positions will be extended one year from the current term and two positions will be elected to a 2 year term. This note will be deleted upon acceptance of these bylaws.

- D. If for any reason, (including death, resignation, or disqualification), a Board member should leave before their term is finished, the Board shall appoint a successor for the unexpired term.
- E. The Board shall appoint a nominating committee at the regular September meeting to solicit qualified candidates to run for the Board.
- F. The election of Board shall be held at the regular November meeting of the Association, and the newly elected Board shall take office in January.
- G. At the first Board of Directors meeting in January of each year, the Board shall elect from its members a President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary, and one assistant secretary-treasurer
- H. The Board of the Association shall not be paid for their services. With Board approval, any member may be reimbursed for any expenses involved in handling the duties of their office, such as travel, office expenses, and similar items. The president and the vice president shall be on alternating terms.
- I. The Board has the authority, by a majority vote, to amend the budget at any time, the authority to enact any legal administrative policy, and act as the sole administrator of any administrative policy.

SECTION 2. Duties of the President

The President shall be the Chief Administrative Officer of the Association. It shall be the duty of the President to preside over the meetings of the Association, to call special meetings as herein provided, and to perform such other special duties as shall be committed to him by the Association. He will be active in the formulation and implementation of the yearly budget, ensure all financial documents are forwarded to the appropriate agency as required by law. The President may be a signatory on all monetary accounts. The President and the Secretary are the only authorized agents of the association to sign any binding contract; both signatures are required to be valid. He shall conduct the business of the meetings in accordance with a prepared agenda including reports of activities as decided by the Board at their meeting prior to the regular meeting of the membership or unless modified by standing or special rules of the Association. He shall sign all official papers requiring execution on the part of the association thereof. He will be responsible for any public comments / statements that are released by the association.

SECTION 3. Duties of the Vice-President

The Vice President shall assume all duties of the President in his absence. The Vice President will be active in the formulation and implementation of the yearly budget and may be a signatory of all monetary accounts. The Vice President will assist the President in any delegated duties or projects.

SECTION 4. Duties of the Treasurer

The Treasurer will ensure the payment of all association bills in a timely manner, ensure accurate records are kept and reconciled monthly, and provide reports to the Board and membership at all regular meetings. The Treasurer will be active in the formulation and implementation of the yearly budget and will be a signatory on all monetary accounts. The Treasurer will assist the Board in any delegated duties or projects.

SECTION 5. Duties of the Secretary

The Secretary shall take, maintain, and post the minutes of all Board and membership meetings and distribute within 10 days of the past meeting; obtain a correct roll call at each meeting or association function; and notify the President of those members who are not fulfilling the dues requirements of the association. The Secretary will be active in the formulation and implementation of the yearly budget and may be a signatory on all monetary accounts. The Secretary will assist the Board in any delegated duties or projects.

ARTICLE IV. COMMITTEES

SECTION 1. Committees

The Standing Committees of the Association shall be appointed each year as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Fire Fighter of the Year | Mutual Aid |
| Annual Field Day Training | Area School Training |
| | Audit |

SECTION 2. Committee Membership

The membership of committees shall be appointed by the Board. Vacancies of these committees shall be immediately filled in like manner.

SECTION 3. Authority of Committees

The Committees of the Association shall consider such matters as referred to them by the Association, by its Board, and such other matters as each committee itself may deem appropriate to the functions of that committee. Until approved by the Board, no action taken by a committee shall have the specific power to bind the Association until approved by the Board.

SECTION 4. Ad-hoc Committees

Ad hoc committees as defined and appointed by the Board may be established as necessary.

ARTICLE V. HANDLING OF BUSINESS

SECTION 1. General Order of Business

- A. Call to order-
- B. Invocation
- C. Pledge of Allegiance-
- D. Introduction Host Chief-
- E. Introduce Key People
- F. Roll Call-
- G. Reading and correction of minutes-
- H. Business Items-
 - Treasurer report
 - Board report
 - Other reports
 - New Business
- I. Good of the Order-
- J. Adjourn.

SECTION 2. Motions

Any item that requires a motion shall be made, recognized by the presiding officer -and seconded from the floor prior to any vote from the membership.

SECTION 3. Methods of Voting

- A. For the purpose of assuring equal representation for all agencies, each voting member shall have only one vote, to be cast by the delegate of the agency.
- B. Voting on motions shall be by voice vote unless specified in this section.
 - 1. Voting on formal resolutions or amendments to the By-Laws shall be by prepared ballot. At the request of the Secretary, any voter shall identify himself by name and agency.
 - 2. Voting on the election of officers may be by prepared ballot. A clear majority of all votes cast shall be required for election to any office. In cases where there are three or more candidates for the same office and the leading candidate does not have a majority, the candidate with the lowest number of votes shall be dropped and balloting continued until a majority is secured by a remaining candidate.
 - 3. A secret ballot vote may be requested upon majority agreement by those voting members present.

ARTICLE VI. AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS

SECTION 1. Manner of Making Amendments

Any proposed additions, deletions, or amendments to the By-Laws must be submitted in writing at a regular meeting; then it shall be read at the next regular meeting for discussion; and, then read, discussed and voted upon at the next regular meeting. There will be no changes between the first and second reading.

The proposed amendment(s) shall be made available in the minutes for consideration for the first reading.

These By-Laws of this Association shall be added to, deleted, or amended, only by affirmative vote of at least three-fourths of the voting members of the Association present at the time of the called vote.

APPROVED AT LITTLE YORK, TEXAS, THIS 18TH DAY OF DECEMBER, 1952

COMMITTEE ON BY-LAWS

J.A. METCALF Chief - West University Place Fire Department
F.A. FEHRLE Chief - Tomball Fire Department
B.F. CALDWELL Chief - Bellaire Fire Department

MAJOR REVISIONS APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE AT WEBSTER, TEXAS, IN NOVEMBER, 1965.

M.N. DENMAN President - H.C.F.F.A. - Webster
J.A. BLAND, JR. Chairman, Committee on By-Laws - Bellaire

REVISED FOR FIRST READING BY THE CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS COMMITTEE ON JANUARY 21, 1976.

M.N. DENMAN Chairman, Chief - Webster Volunteer Fire Dept.
JOHN B. WALGER, JR. Secretary Asst. F.M. - Cloverleaf V.F.D.
J.A. BLAND, JR. Houston Fire Department
GENE COLLEY Deer Park Volunteer Fire Department
PLEDDIE BAKER Chief - Forest Bend Volunteer Fire Department
DOUG HARRIS Chief - Nassau Bay Volunteer Fire Department
WILLIE WISKO Chief - Kingwood Volunteer Fire Department

REVISED FOR FIRST READING BY THE CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS ON MAY 16, 1979.

S.G. COLLEY Chairman, Deputy Chief - Deer Park V.F.D.
L.E. ALLEN Chief - Galena Park Volunteer Fire Department
ELLIS REEL Chief - Seabrook Volunteer Fire Department
E.C. SUMMERS Pasadena Volunteer Fire Department

REVISED FOR FIRST READING BY THE CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS COMMITTEE ON JUNE 23, 1982.

ED BAKER Chairman - Southeast Volunteer Fire Department
DOUGLAS CLOUGH Cloverleaf Volunteer Fire Department
C. WILSON, JR. Houston Fire Department
E.C. SUMMERS Fire Marshal, Pasadena Volunteer Fire Department
JAY GOYER Chief - Pasadena Volunteer Fire Department

REVISED FOR FIRST READING BY THE CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS COMMITTEE ON AUGUST 20, 1986.

DOUGLAS CLOUGH Chairman, Deputy Chief - Cloverleaf V.F.D.
BILL ANDERS Harris County Fire Marshal Office
BO CLARK Chief - Humble Volunteer Fire Department
RANDALL NORDIN Chief - Galena Park Volunteer Fire Department
JOHN WAGNER, JR. Humble Fire Marshal
C. WILSON, JR. Houston Fire Department

REVISED AND PASSED BY THE MEMBRSHIP ON OCTOBER 15, 1997.

DOUGLAS CLOUGH Chairman, Deputy Chief, Cloverleaf V.F.D.
BILL ANDERS Harris County Fire Marshal Office
JERRY ICKES Highlands V.F.D.

