

**Constitution and Bylaws
of the
North Eastern Ohio Fire Prevention Association
(N.E.O.F.P.A)
Revised December 2005**

Article I Name

- 1.1 The name of the association shall be: North Eastern Ohio Fire Prevention Association (N.E.O.F.P.A).

Article II Purpose

Section 1: Purpose

To promote education of its members, associates, contractors, and the general public in fire prevention activities fire protection practices, and fire investigation.

- 1.1 To create interest and involvement within the association among fire departments and fire safety organizations located in Northeastern Ohio.
- 1.2 To exchange ideas and information within the association as regards to fire prevention practices, fire protection vendors, standards and codes, and any other items deemed of interest to the association.
- 1.3 To encourage interest in fire protection, fire investigation, and prevention activities and practices.
- 1.4 To create a discussion of problems and generate solutions at regular meetings of the Association.

Article III Membership

Section 1: Active Membership

- 1.1 Active membership shall consist of any member of any fire department actively engaged in fire protection. Active members must remain current with their annual dues.

Section 2: Associate Membership

- 2.1 Associate membership shall consist of any person actively engaged in fire prevention activities, but not a member of a fire department. Associate members must remain current with their annual dues.

Section 3: Life Member

- 3.1 Any member of the North Eastern Ohio Fire Prevention Association in good standing who retires from the fire service, moves from the area, and for circumstances beyond his control, ceases to be a regular member, is eligible for a Life Membership. Life Membership shall be determined by the executive board.
- 3.2 Life Member status shall be granted by a majority vote of the Executive Committee, and may similarly be revoked by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.
- 3.3 Life Member status shall allow those members to attend all meetings and functions of the association with benefits accorded active members.
- 3.4 Life Members shall be eligible to hold office or serve on the Executive Committee.

Section 4: Honorary Member

- 4.1 Honorary Membership shall be bestowed upon any individual as deemed worthy by the Executive Board.
- 4.2 An Honorary Member can be any person or persons out of the fire service who may be friendly to or an asset to the Association may become an honorary member.
- 4.2 This membership is good for a period of one year and may be revoked at any time by action of the body at any regular meeting for reasons of discredit to the Association or its membership.

Section 5: Membership requirements

- 5.1 Any person wishing to become a member of the North Eastern Ohio Fire Prevention Association shall submit an application to the Association's treasurer with the appropriate fee. The Executive Committee shall decide upon acceptance or rejection of the application. The Executive Committee may consult the body if they are unable to determine whether an applicant meets the criteria for acceptance. In the event that an applicant is not accepted, his/her fee shall be returned.

Section 6: Nondiscrimination

- 6.1 The North Eastern Ohio Fire Prevention Association supports and advocates nondiscrimination in the acceptance of its members. No person shall be denied membership for reasons of race, creed, sex, national origin, age, or other reason as is prohibited by law.

Section 7: Revocation of Membership

- 7.1 Any Member of the Association, who participates in illegal or highly unethical practices whether within the area of fire prevention or outside of it, may be removed from the membership by a vote of the membership, prompted by a motion from an Executive Committee member. A majority vote of members present at a regular meeting shall remove said member from the association. Any dues paid shall be forfeited.

Article IV Dues and Distribution Thereof

Section 1: Dues

- 1.1 Dues shall be Thirty-five (\$35) dollars per annum per person, payable in advance to the treasurer. Life members are exempt from dues payment.
- 1.2 Members joining the Association after the start of the fiscal year shall pay the annual amount.
- 1.3 All monies received for dues or any other monies received shall remain in the treasury subject to such disbursements and reimbursements to the treasurer as hereinafter provided.
- 1.4 Any member not paying his membership fee by April 1st in any year shall stand suspended until such payment is paid.

Article V Officers and Their Duties

Section 1: There shall be a President, Vice-President, Secretary and a Treasurer.

Section 2: President presides

- 2.1 The President shall preside at all meetings of the Association and of the executive board if a board is so designated. He shall appoint any committee or committees necessary for the good of the association.

Section 3: Vice President presides

- 3.1 The Vice-President shall assist the President and promote the best interests of the Association and in the absence of the President shall serve in his stead. The Vice President will be charged with obtaining meeting locations and speakers as so needed for the benefit of the organization. The Vice President shall be an ad hoc member of any committees formed.

Section 4: Secretary

- 4.1 The Secretary shall keep a complete record of the proceedings and attendance of the Association meetings in a book provided by the association, which book shall be the property of the Association and shall be turned over to the Executive Committee immediately upon completion of his term of office. He shall perform all duties of the Secretary.

Section 5: Treasurer

- 5.1 The treasurer shall receive all monies and record in a ledger provided for that purpose. The treasurer shall pay all bills on receipt of a statement of same. He shall receive and record all applications for membership in a file provided for that purpose. He shall record in the ledger all receipts and disbursements in detail. He shall present the books for audit at the closing of the fiscal year.
- 5.2 The treasurer shall keep a separate accounting of all monies received or disbursed through the Education Fund (educational fund monies can only be used for educational purposes). All physical assets shall become the permanent property of the Association.
- 5.3 Signing of checks shall be performed by the Treasurer. When a check is made out to the Treasurer, it shall be signed by the President, and in his absence, the Vice President.

Section 6: Associate ,Honorary, and Life Members

- 6.1 Associate, Honorary and Life Members shall be entitled to hold the office of Vice President, Secretary, or Executive Committee only. Only one associate and Honorary or Life Member shall be eligible to hold a position at any given time. Association.

Section 7: Officer Service

- 7.1 All officers shall serve until the expiration date (first meeting of the fiscal year) or duly replaced or newly elected officers shall have taken office.

Section 8: Stipends for officers

- 8.1 The Treasurer and Secretary are eligible for an annual stipend of \$125.00 for each year completed.
- 8.2 The stipend is to be paid at the December meeting of the Fiscal year.

Section 9: Filling of Vacant office

- 9.1 If for any reason, any of the elected positions are vacated during their normal tenure, they may be filled in the following manner:
- 9.2 The next senior elected position may move up into the vacated position. For the purposes of this provision only seniority shall be determined as follows;
 1. President
 2. Vice President
 3. Treasurer
 4. Secretary
 5. Executive Committee Member Serving the longest
- 9.3 If a position is unfilled after the above method, then a special election shall be held to determine who is to fill the open position.

Article VI Nominations & Elections

Section 1: Procedure

- 1.1. Nominations shall be held at the November meeting of the fiscal year.
- 1.2. Additional nominations can be made, and elections shall be held, at the December meeting of the fiscal year.
- 1.3. Officers shall take office the first meeting the following January.
- 1.4 Each shall serve a term of two years.
- 1.5 The President and Treasurer terms shall begin in odd numbered years and the Vice President and Secretary terms shall begin in even numbered years.
- 1.6 No two members of any one fire department shall be allowed to hold an office in this Association during the same term.

Article VII Executive Committee

Section 1: Executive Committee Members

- 1.1 The Executive Committee shall consist of the four (4) named officers in Article V, Section 1, together with three (3) members in good standing appointed at the first meeting of the fiscal year.

- 1.2 They shall have full authority to conduct the business of the Association between meetings and shall carry out any directives of the members assembled in all meetings. They shall set the amount of bond for the secretary and /or treasurer if the occasion may arise.
- 1.3 There can be no more than one member of any fire department serving on the Executive Committee at the same time.

Article VIII Meetings, Quorum & Voting

Section 1: Regular meetings

- 1.1 Meetings shall be held on the first Monday of each month, at a time and place so prescribed by the President with the consent of the Executive Board or members in assembly.
- 1.2 If the above-prescribed date falls on a holiday or other conflicting date, said meeting shall be moved to the Monday following.

Section 2: Quorums

- 2.1 Fifteen (15) active members shall constitute a quorum at any of the regular meetings. Four (4) members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum in Executive Session.
- 2.2 Unless otherwise specified, a quorum being present, a majority vote of the assembled membership shall decide any question.

Section 3: Voting

- 3.1 Voting shall be any “aye” or “nay”, raising of the right or left hand or by closed ballot if the membership desires. The majority vote is considered affirmative.
- 3.2 The voting privilege shall be accorded active, associate, and honorary members that satisfy the requirements set forth herein.

Section 4: Rules of order

- 4.1 All meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Roberts Rules of Order.

Article IX Discipline – Impeachment

Section 1: Procedure

- 1.1 Any officer found delinquent in his duties or dishonest in the conduct of the Association's business may be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Committee members present and by voting at any meeting, provided the officer so charged shall have been notified of said charges in writing, at least ten (10) days before said matter shall come before the Executive Committee.
- 1.2 The officer so accused shall be automatically suspended until adjudged innocent.
- 1.3 The same will apply to any member who has been found dishonest in his dealings with the Association or while representing the Association.

Article X Amendments

Section 1: Amendment Procedure

- 1.1 Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws may be made by a two-thirds vote of those voting at any meeting, providing that same shall have been presented to the Executive Committee at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting and that notice has been given to the membership prior to the meeting.

Article XI Annual Meeting

Section 1: Time Period

- 1.1 The annual meeting shall be the first meeting of the fiscal year.
- 1.2 The fiscal year shall begin with January 1st each year.

Section 2: Official business

- 2.1 Official Business shall be acted upon at this meeting including the induction of officers and members elected to the Executive Committee.
- 2.2 An audit committee shall be appointed and who shall report their findings at the next regular meeting.
- 2.3 An outside financial auditing company shall be retained on a yearly basis and shall conduct a yearly review to confirm and maintain the organization's non-profit status with the state and IRS requirements. The company shall be determined by the executive board.

Article XII Travel Cost Reimbursement Policy

Section 1: Travel Policy Statement

- 1.1 All members authorized to travel on NEOFPA business are entitled to a fair reimbursement for their travel costs incurred. This policy defines the ground rules for that reimbursement.

Section 2: General Guidelines

- 2.1 Travel costs are reimbursed based on actual cost incurred except for the mileage allowance. This item is further described in the following paragraphs.
- 2.2 Travel advances may be requested and approved generally sixty (60) days in advance of scheduled trips. Advances are to be cleared within thirty (90) days after trips are complete.
- 2.3 The determination of whether to travel by air or ground transportation shall be determined by the executive board.
- 2.4 Authorized travel by automobile is reimbursable at \$.485 a mile rate or current posted allowances as defined by the government (GSA travel reimbursement rates). This mileage allowance covers the cost of gas, oil and maintenance. Road tolls paid and out-of-town parking costs are reimbursed with proper receipts.
- 2.5 Out-of-town travel by airplane shall be arranged at the lowest fare.
- 2.6 The actual cost of lodging will be reimbursed on the actual cost incurred. Discount rates available at most hotels to government employees should always be requested.
- 2.7 Supporting documentation must be presented for all travel costs incurred. Reimbursable cost not properly documented with proper receipts may not be reimbursed.
- 2.8 At the completion of each trip, a travel expense report itemizing travel cost by day and reconciling the total cost of the trip to the travel advance received, must be made. All original travel expense reports and documentation should be forwarded to the treasurer for processing.
- 2.9 When traveling on Association business, the cost of meals will be a per-diem of fifty dollars per day or based on the government GSA per-diem for geographical locations in the country, but no less than fifty dollars per day. Less than full day meals shall be reimbursed at actual cost.

**NEOFPA
By-Laws**

1. All officers shall make a full report at the annual meeting.
2. Unless otherwise specified, a quorum being present, a majority vote of those voting shall decide any question.
3. The Annual Association event will be held in the month of August in lieu of the August monthly meeting.
4. The association shall maintain a website (www.NEOFPA.org) as long as so deemed by the executive board and the membership.
5. The association is to maintain a scholarship fund in the amount of \$4,000. The scholarship fund shall be disbursed in accordance to the scholarship policy, and at the discretion of the Executive Board. All monies not dispersed for the given calendar year from the scholarship fund, will be returned to the general fund.
6. If in the opinion of the Executive Board, that finances fall below the ability of the association to maintain the scholarship fund and conduct the regular business of the organization, the fund shall be suspended, and the monies returned to the general fund, until such time that the scholarship fund can be restored.

The constitution and bylaws are hereby adopted and approved in accordance with the requirements herein, and were voted on by the membership at the December 5, 2005 meeting. As witnessed by the below signed officers.

Thomas Klecan, President

John Coleman, Vice President

John Desmarteau, Secretary

Michael Dunton, Treasurer