

## **West Branch Volunteer Fire and Rescue Constitution and Bylaws**

Be it resolved, that we solemnly pledge ourselves to sustain the officers in their performances of their duties and hold ourselves bound in honor to conform to and abide by, in every respect, the following constitution and bylaws.

### **ARTICLE I**

#### **Name and purpose**

Section 1. This organization shall be known by West Branch Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department.

Section 2. Its purpose shall be to preserve life and property in the West Branch fir district in cases of fire and/or other emergency and to promote through fire safety education the prevention of fire and/or other emergencies.

### **ARTICLE II**

#### **Membership**

Section 1. The membership of this organization shall be composed of cadets, probationary, active, and honorary members.

Section 2. Any citizen in sound mind and body who has attained the age of 18, and who is in good repute in this organization shall be eligible for membership.

Section 3. The applicants will be referred to the board of directors whose duty it is to investigate the character of said applicant and report at the next regular meeting. After the report, and oral vote will be taken, when if one third or more negative votes appear and have been openly discussed, the applicant shall be declared rejected. If on the first ballot the applicant is rejected, the President may order a second vote. The second vote will be final and conclusive except, if after a period of six months has elapsed and if the candidate so desires he/she may file a new application. The same procedure of balloting shall prevail. All applications for membership shall be in writing, stating candidates full name and age signed by two proposing members who are in good standing. All new members will be accepted on January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. Once approved through the department, the application shall be examined by the department, the applicant shall be examined by a licensed physician, have updated immunizations, and must be in good health at which time the applicant will become a probationary member if there is vacancy.

Section 4. After a period of six months a probationary member shall become an active member, providing all essential training requirements are fulfilled, and has demonstrated competencies to the training committee and may be elected on rolls to an officer position.

Section 5. Any member who has served twenty years of faithful service may become and honorary member, or any member who has rendered distinguished service to this organization may by a three-fourths vote of eligible voter's present become an honorary member.

Section 6. Any member may request a leave of absence of up to three months at which time the leave may be extended after a meeting with the trustees. The member is expected not to attend calls during this period but may resume active duty after written notification is received by the department.

Section 7. The number of active firefighters shall not exceed 35. This includes medical personnel but not cadet members.

Section 8. Any member may be expelled from the department for cause, by a two-thirds vote of active members present at any regular meeting. He/she must have been notified in writing, signed by the President, that charges will be preferred against him/her at this said meeting. This section shall not apply to special reasons for automatic discharge from the department, that are part of the bylaws, except where the reference is made to this section of the constitution.

Section 9. All active members shall live within a 5 mile radius of the city or be employed within the city limits.

Section 10. All new members are subject to approval by the City Council.

Section 11. Firefighter Cadet Program

Purpose:

This program will provide the Operational Guidelines and the skills needed for any high school student to prepare them to become a regular firefighter in any volunteer or career fire department. This program will allow up to 5 applicants at least sixteen (16) years of age to the maximum age of legal majority (in most states 18 years of age).

Requirements:

Each applicant must meet the following criteria:

1. Be between age 16 years of age and the maximum age of legal majority (in most states 18 years of age)
2. Be in good health
3. Must complete the membership application and the Parental Consent Authorization Form
4. Must provide character references from each of two teachers
5. Must be physically able to perform the duties of a Fire Cadet
6. Must be able to follow strict orders
7. Must provide proof the Fire Cadet maintains a "C" average or better while attending school

### Allowable duties of the Fire Cadet:

Each Fire Cadet will be allowed to do the following Fire Department functions:

1. All Fire Cadets will be eligible to attend all regular meetings, in house training sessions and any Fire Department activities.
2. All Fire Cadets will be required to attend Cadet training classes and membership meetings
3. All Fire Cadets will be allowed to respond to emergency incident scenes, except those listed in the Non-Allowable section of this guidelines, under the following conditions:
  - a. When permitted to respond to the incident scene the Fire Cadet responsibility will be of the support nature only.
  - b. The Fire Cadet is prohibited to respond directly to any incident scene. All Fire Cadets shall report (non-emergent) to their assigned station first. Only upon the request of the Incident Commander or Fire Captain shall the Fire Cadet respond to any scene.
  - c. The Fire Cadet's response may be in a department vehicle or apparatus provided the department vehicle or apparatus is not considered to be the first initial attack vehicle or apparatus arriving on the incident scene.
  - d. The Fire Cadet will be allowed to assist the firefighters with regular maintenance of the station facilities, equipment and apparatus.
  - e. The Fire Cadet may operate (i.e. pump apparatus, set up equipment, etc) the Fire Department's apparatus during a supervised (non-incident) alarm training session.
  - f. Fire Cadets will be utilized as support personnel on scenes as long as they operate outside a minimum safety zone area during incidents.
  - g. Complete reading and homework assignments for training activities.

### Non Allowable Duties:

The following Non-Allowable Duties shall be prohibited to all Fire Cadets:

1. No Fire Cadet shall be allowed to respond directly to any incident scene
2. No Fire Cadets shall be allowed to be actively or directly involved in any of the following incidents:
  - a. Participate in any entry team while at the scene of a working structure fire or while conducting a live fire burn training exercise
  - b. Participate on any entry team at a vehicle fire
  - c. Participate in any offensive fire attack at natural ground cover fires
  - d. Participate at any hazardous material or pollution spill accident
  - e. Participate at any emergency rescues or emergency medical incident
  - f. No Fire Cadet will be allowed to operate any emergency vehicle owned or used by the fire department on any public thoroughfare
  - g. No Fire Cadet shall be authorized to have or install any emergency light or siren on their personal vehicle
  - h. No Fire Cadet shall leave school during class time unless they have PART or have no class at such time

### Course Training Subjects:

As a guideline, the following course outline shall be the first step of the training levels as established by this department and as recommended by the National Fire Protection Association

Orientation	Forcible Entry	Fire Hose
Fire Behavior	Ventilation	Fire Streams
Communications	Fire Inspections	Fire Ground Ladders
Ropes and Knots	Automatic Sprinklers	Natural Ground Covering Fires
Rescue Operations	Salvage and Overhaul	Hazardous Materials
First Aid	Breathing Apparatus	Vehicle Rescue

**Disciplinary Clause:**

All Fire Cadets shall be required to operate under the accepted operating guidelines of this department. Failure to accept or adhere to any guidelines as established shall be just cause for disciplinary action in the form of suspension or termination as a member of this Fire Cadet program.

The Fire Cadet may become a candidate for full membership in the department after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday provided an opening exists.

The cadet shall be supervised by the Trustees.

Notification Letter and Parental/Guardian Consent Form

West Branch Fire Cadet Program

To: Parent/Guardian of Fire Cadet Applications  
From: West Branch Fire and Rescue  
Re: Son/Daughter's Application to become a Fire Cadet

Dear Parents/Guardian:

Your son/daughter has requested an application indicating their interest in becoming a Fire Cadet with this Fire Department. Please review the attached Operating Guidelines and the attached Parental Consent Form. If you grant permission for their membership with this Fire Department, please complete the consent form and return it to the Fire Department.

Parental/Guardian Consent Form:

We have reviewed the application and operating guidelines relating to the Fire Cadet Program and understand the requirements of being a Fire Cadet. We also understand my son/daughter's performance responsibilities and duties as a Fire Cadet with the West Branch Fire & Rescue.

We hereby give \_\_\_\_\_ our consent to become a Fire Cadet with West Branch Fire & Rescue.

Parents or Guardians: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parents: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

ARTICLE VIII:  
Officers

Section 1. The officers of this organization shall consist of a President, Secretary, Treasurer, Chief, First and Second Assistant Chiefs, Truck Captains, Fire Captains, Medical Officer, Assistant Medical Officer, and three Trustees.

Section 2. This organization shall have a Board of Directors consisting of the President, Secretary, Treasurer, Chief, First and Second Assistant Chiefs, Fire Captains, Medical Officer, Assistant Medical Officer, and three Trustees.

ARTICLE IV:  
Election of Officers

Section 1. The election of officers of this organization shall be annually. They shall assume their office on the first meeting night of December. The election shall be by ballot. It shall be held at the first meeting in November. Fire Captains are and exception to this as they are appointed, please refer to ARTICLE XI, Section 8.

Section 2. All active members in good standing shall be eligible voters except for the Chief. The Chief will only vote in the instance of a tie vote.

Section 3. All officers shall be elected by the majority cote of the members present.

ARTICLE V:  
Responsibility

Section 1. Any member bringing any person into the fire station shall be held responsible for any act that person may commit.

ARTICLE VI:  
Copies of the Bylaws

Section 1. Every member of the department shall be provided with a copy of the constitution and bylaws, every member shall also receive a copy and sign a certificate stating he/she has read and will adhere to these bylaws.

## ARTICLE VII:

### Rules and regulations

In order that this department may function efficiently, the following rules and regulations shall be observed, and it shall be the duty of all active members to know them.

1. It shall be the first duty of all members to give strict obedience to the lawful orders of the elected and appointed officers.
2. Any member being disorderly toward another member while on duty at an emergency scene, shall be disciplined or expelled. The Board of Directors may direct the department in accordance with Article II Section 8 of the constitution.
3. All work at the fires or drills shall be done in a quick, orderly, and quiet manner.
4. In order to assure that there will always be an officer in command at fires the following shall be the chain of command: Chief, First Assistant Chief, Second Assistant Chief, Fire Captains, or most senior members with the understanding of Incident Management System.
5. The officer in charge at the fire shall assist complete a computerized report of the call immediately after returning to the station. If the officer in charge does not hold one of the following positions, Fire Chief, First or Second Assistant Fire Chiefs, Fire Captains, they will assist you in completing this task.
6. Primary care giver during the rescue call is responsible for filling out computerized medical report immediately after returning to the station.
7. The Fire Department shall report to the township trustees once per year.
8. The officer in charge shall remain in command until he/she is relieved by a higher ranking officer.
9. Command will be run under Incident Management System.

## ARTICLE VIII:

### Meeting Times

This Fire Department shall meet regularly on the first Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. for training.

This Fire Department shall meet regularly on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

ARTICLE VIII:  
Attendance

Section 1. All members shall be required to attend all meetings unless they have a reasonable excuse and have contacted an officer prior to meeting start time. Reasonable excuses are defined by the department as: sickness of the member, sickness of his/her immediate family, working, or out of town.

Section 2. Under the order of business, "hearing of excuses or delinquents", each member as his/her name is called, shall give an excuse or be subject to penalty. Any member having been absent from regular meetings, or training two times unexcused in succession will be contacted by a member of the trustees. After a third time unexcused, or without notifying the officer in charge either personally or by letter as to cause of said absence, the member shall be automatically dropped and in no case shall be considered a member of said company.

Section 3. Any member off work or on light duty due to workman's compensation shall not participate in any training, or report to any calls in anyway. This notice should be given to the officers for approval of a leave of absence. A doctor's release will also be needed to return to active duty.

Section 4. Any member appearing at a call or training under the influence of alcohol or drugs shall be disciplined or expelled. 1<sup>st</sup> offense will result in a 30-day suspension, 2<sup>nd</sup> offense will result in expulsion from the department. The Board of Directors shall direct the department in accordance with ARTICLE II Section 8 of this constitution.

ARTICLE X  
Training

Section 1. All current firefighters will be required to be trained to Firefighter I level and/or Driver Operator level. This will be shown with documentation of either a certificate of the Firefighter I class, Driver Operator class, or a copy of the completion certificate of training.

Section 2. All firefighters will have to fulfill mandatory 24 hours of continuing education training per year. At least 18 of those 24 hours must be completed in house with West Branch Fire Department. The remaining 6 hours can be outside training verified with completion certificate or sign in sheet for said class. All outside training must be approved with a member of Training Committee to apply towards continuing education hours.

Section 3. All new firefighters of the department will be required to be trained Firefighter I level and/or Driver Operator level within 12 months of becoming a member of the department.

Section 4. All new members of the department will be required to be trained Hazmat Operations level within 6 months of becoming a member of the department.

## ARTICLE XI:

### Duties of the Officers

Section 1. The President shall preside at all regular and special meetings of this department. He/she shall preserve order and shall conduct all meetings in conformity with this constitution and bylaws. He/she shall order all disbursements of funds held in the hands of the Treasurer by countersigning all checks. He/she shall oversee all social activities and appointed committees and perform all other duties commonly belonging to the President. The President is also responsible for setting up all meals for regular training meetings. It is the President's responsibility to page for any meetings. The President will attend all safety committee meetings required and report findings back to the Department at next regularly scheduled fire meeting.

Section 2. The Secretary shall keep a true and accurate account of proceeding of every meeting in a book provided for that purpose. This shall be open to inspection by every member. He/she shall assist in the examination and auditing of all books and accounts belonging to the department. When the Secretary cannot attend a meeting he/she shall send the book of minutes in time for said meeting and deliver to said successor. He/she shall call roll call at meetings and training. He/she shall attend to the department correspondence and perform all other duties commonly belonging to office of Secretary. He/she will be responsible for the annual trustee reporting each year.

Section 3. The Treasurer shall keep a book containing a correct amount of all money received and expended, subject to inspection at any time, and give an account of all money on hand at each meeting. Under bylaws he/she shall pay no bill that has not been approved by the department and countersigned by the President.

Section 4. The Chief shall have full charge of all apparatus and equipment and the building in which such apparatus is housed. He/she, or the highest ranking officer, shall be in sole charge of this department at fires or rescue calls. The Chief shall appoint people as he/she may deem advisable, for the efficient operation of the department at fires or training sessions. The Chief position will serve on the Training Committee. The Chief shall have the authority to take a part of his/her apparatus and department and respond to a call from another town or community. It shall be the duty of the Chief to make arrangements or provisions for suitable temporary protection and investigation. He/she will prepare monthly reports for meetings and shall establish committees as necessary for equipment purchases. The Chief shall work with the Assistant Chief's to prepare the Fire Department budget and to attend all county meetings. He/she shall have the authority, subject to the approval by resolution of the communities and assist the Township Trustees. Additionally, the Fire Chief will work with the Mayor, City Council and City Administrator on the capital improvements plan, comprehensive plan and provide technical assistance regarding fire safety and sign all burn permits. The Fire Chief answers directly to the City Administrator. This is a 4-year term.

Section 5. The First Assistant Chief shall report to the Chief at fires or training and shall provide assistance to him/her in his/her duties. In the absence of the Chief he/she shall be in charge at

fires and training exercises, and if the office of Chief has been declared vacant he/she shall be the Chief for the remainder of the current term or until the successor of the Chief is elected and qualified. The First Assistant Chief will serve on and oversee all training exercises held within the Fire Department. Included in this position will be completing all required paperwork of training exercises as well as assuring the proper training of all probationary members and check competency prior to active status. With the assistance of the Fire Chief and 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant, he/she shall prepare and propose the Fire Department budget. He/she must attend all county meetings.

Section 6. The Second Assistant Chief shall report to the Chief or First Assistant Chief at fires and training and shall assist them in their duties. In the absence of both the Chief and First Assistant Chief he/she shall assume the duties of the Chief. With the assistance of the Fire Chief and the First Assistant Chief he/she shall prepare and propose the Fire Department budget. He/she shall oversee all aspects of the on call program as it relates to medical coverage. He/she will prepare schedules and enter information into I am Responding program. He/she will serve on the training committee. He/she will provide quality assurance over the completion of all computerized fire reports. He/she will submit all State Fire Reports and Grass Fire Reports to the State of Iowa. He/she must attend all county meetings.

Section 7. Truck Captains shall be responsible for keeping trucks clean, completing monthly logs on all equipment and make sure proper order is maintained. They shall notify the Chief and Second Assistant Chief of any work being done on a truck. Truck Captains shall be able to operate pump and train others on the operations of the truck. They shall make sure the proper repairs are made to maintain proper operation of the truck and log all repairs into log book. They shall check trucks weekly for the following: fuel, oil, batteries, tires, funning lights, emergency lights, siren and radio. Truck Captains will need to have log books ready for inspection at regular scheduled meetings.

Section 8. Fire Captains shall direct and coordinate emergency scene activity in the absence of Fire Chief, and Assistant Fire Chiefs. The Fire Captain supervises volunteer firefighter/EMT's in their assigned duties as directed by the Fire Chief and or Assistant Chiefs. In the event the Fire Chief or Assistant Chiefs are not on scene, Fire Captain's duties will be assigned as follows: The Fire Captain commands single and multi-company responses to emergency fire, medical aid, traffic accidents, hazardous material, rescue and other situations and functions as the incident commander. He/she is responsible for scene assessment, tactic and strategy deployment and implementation, and the deployment of personnel and equipment. He/she makes and determinations regarding requests for additional personnel, equipment and resources, performs a wide variety of fire suppression and medical treatment tasks in emergency situations. In the event a Chief is present, enroute or on scene, Fire Captain's duties will be assigned according to the Chief. The Fire Captain will be responsible for completing all fire reports when returning to the station from any fire scene. The Fire Captain will play a key role in training for the department and will serve on the training committee. Each Fire Captain will be assigned two months of training that they are responsible for. Training may be taught by

WBFD staff or outside parties if cleared by Fire Chiefs. The Fire Captain may be assigned other duties as seen fit by the Fire Chief.

Section 9. The Medical Officer shall oversee maintain medical inventory, and working condition of all medial and rescue equipment. The medical log book will need to be ready for inspection at regularly scheduled meetings. He/she shall provide a place in the station for every member to maintain a place and means for their own training.

Section 10. Assistant Medical Officer shall assist the Medical Officer with maintaining medical inventory and working condition of all medical and rescue equipment. The medical log book will need to be ready for inspection at regularly scheduled meetings. He/she shall provide a place in the station for every member to maintain a place and means for their own training.

Section 11. The Trustees shall have three members each serving a three-year term with no two trustees being voted on in any single year. The shall be responsible for handling personnel problems and conflicts; the shall screen new applicants, audit books of the firefighter's accounts.

Section 12. Training Committee shall be responsible for providing or setting up all in house training. The committee will be comprised of the Chief, First and Second Assistant Chiefs, and four Fire Captains as well as other members if they so choose. The committee will report to the First Assistant Chief with all record keeping requirements for the department.

West Branch Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department Constitution and Bylaws

Updated and reinstated on 11-13-19

Fire Chief: Kevin Stoolman