

By-Laws of

THE EASTON VOLUNTEER FIRE CO. NO.1, INC.

Easton, Connecticut

Revised January 24, 2019

Changes added:

December 2, 2019

October 1999

March 6, 2006

January 4, 2010

September 11, 1995

ARTICLE I - Title and Purpose

1. This organization shall be known as: The Easton Volunteer Fire Company No. 1 (“the Company”) Inc.: A Non-Profit Corporation.
2. The purpose of this organization shall be the preservation and protection of lives and property in the Town of Easton.
3. Robert’s Rules of Order shall be the rules of parliamentary procedure followed by this organization.
4. The organization is organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future tax code.

ARTICLE II - Meetings

1. The annual meeting of the Company shall be held on the first Monday of January at 8:00 pm, where the annual reports by the President, Chief, and Secretary shall be presented in writing. Regular meetings shall be held at the same hour on the first Monday of each month. In case the first Monday of a given month falls on a holiday, the meeting for that month shall be held on the second Monday. The meeting can be postponed or cancelled at the discretion of the President. In the event a regularly scheduled meeting is postponed, that meeting shall be held the following Monday.

2. Fifteen (15) Voting Members, as defined in Article VI, Section 1, shall constitute a quorum at a regular or special meeting, and unless otherwise described in these By-Laws, all business shall be transacted by a majority vote of the Voting Members present.
3. Special meetings may be called by the President by notifying the membership in writing of such meeting. Such meetings must be for a specific purpose and cannot be for regular Company business.

ARTICLE III - Officers, Nominations and Elections

1. The officers of the Company shall consist of the following:
 - a. Executive Officers
 - i. President
 - ii. Vice President
 - iii. Secretary
 - iv. Treasurer
 - v. Assistant Treasurer
 - vi. Corresponding Secretary
 - b. Line Officers
 - i. Chief
 - ii. First Assistant Chief
 - iii. Second Assistant Chief
2. Requirements for the Chief and Assistant Chief(s):
 - a. The Chief, First Assistant Chief and Second Assistant Chief must be residents of the Town of Easton.
 - b. The Chief, First Assistant Chief and Second Assistant Chief must be a member of the Company for at least two years and hold a minimum of Firefighter I Certification before being considered for the Office.
3. Officers shall be elected at the monthly meeting in December and in accordance with the following procedure:
 - a. A slate of all candidates to be considered for Office shall be submitted to the Secretary and read from the floor by the Nominating Committee at the October meeting. (See Article V. 1(a).).
 - b. In the event that there is no nominating committee for a given year then current Officers must announce at the October meeting, either in -person at the meeting or

beforehand in writing, their intention to seek re-election to their current Office. Their announcement will serve as automatic nomination for re-election.

- c. Other nominations may be made from the floor at the November meeting provided that each such nomination shall be seconded at that meeting, either orally or in writing, by five (5) voting members.
 - d. If there are two or more candidates for an elective office, there shall be a written secret ballot by the attending Voting Members at the December meeting.
 - e. If a Voting Member is unable to attend the December meeting and has accumulated at least 15 units of membership as defined in Article VI.7, they are eligible to vote via an Absentee Ballot, which must be requested from the Secretary either in person or in writing. The Secretary will make such Absentee Ballots available up until noon on the day of the election. The ballots must be returned to the secretary by 4pm on the day of the election either in person or in writing.
 - f. If any Voting Members are on a fire call and are therefore unable to vote in person, the vote shall be delayed until such Voting Members are able to vote.
 - g. The candidate receiving the greatest number of votes by the members in attendance shall be elected to that office.
 - h. In the event of a tie of the highest number of votes received for any elective office, a run-off vote between the tying candidates shall immediately be held by written ballot. This process shall continue until one candidate receives a majority vote.
- 4. The newly elected officers shall take office during the “New Business” portion of the January meeting.
 - 5. All resignations from office shall be submitted in writing to the Chief or the President at a regular meeting. The resignation shall be tabled for a period of one (1) month and acted upon at the next regular meeting, wherein the resignation will be accepted, unless withdrawn. If there is no successor for a position, a nomination shall be made from the floor. The nominee shall assume the position based on a simple majority secret vote of the voting members present.
 - 6. Any voting member of the Company is able to be nominated to any of the above offices, as long as they meet the requirements in Article III, Section 2.
 - 7. No member may hold more than one elective office in the Company at any given time.

ARTICLE IV - Duties of Officers

- 1) Duties of the President and Vice President:
 - a. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Company and shall decide on all questions of order.
 - b. The President shall enforce strict obedience to the By-Laws and shall appoint all committees unless specifically otherwise provided.

- c. The Vice-President shall act in place of the President when the President is either absent from a Company meeting or is incapacitated.
- d. In the event the President resigns or is removed from office, the Vice-President shall assume the position of President as his successor.

2) Duties of the Chief and Assistant Chief(s)

- a. The Chief or, in his absence, the designated senior officer shall have control of the members while on duty at fires, drills, parades and other firefighting related functions.
- b. The names of all members attending a fire, drill or other firefighting related function shall be entered in an official record by the senior line officer present at said function.
- c. It shall be the duties of the Assistant Chiefs to assist the Chief in the discharge of duties and, in the Chief's absence, to act in the Chief's capacity.
- d. In the event the Chief resigns or is removed from office, the First Assistant Chief shall assume the position of Chief as his successor, and the Second Assistant Chief shall assume the position of First Assistant Chief.

3) The Secretary of the Company shall:

- a. Keep a record of the proceedings of all meetings, attendance roster and retention of those records as part of the minutes of each meeting
 - i) If the Secretary is not able to attend a meeting, another officer of the company will be appointed by the President to record the minutes of the meeting.
- b. Collect all dues
- c. Be custodian of all documents and records of the Company
- d. Pass to the Treasurer all moneys received.

4) The Corresponding Secretary shall conduct the correspondence of the Company.

5) Duties of the Treasurer

- a. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to receive all moneys from the secretary or other sources, to pay all bills, and to perform such other duties which pertain to the office of the Treasurer.
- b. The Treasurer shall report at regular meetings on:
 - i) Balance on hand from the previous month;
 - ii) Moneys received during the month;
 - iii) An itemized accounting of monthly expenditures;
 - iv) Monthly closing balance;
 - v) Any transfer of funds from one account to another.

- c. Reports shall be given from time to time as the Executive Officers may direct pertaining to the amount of moneys invested.
 - d. The Assistant Treasurer shall support the Treasurer's responsibilities by assisting him and, if necessary, acting in the Treasurer's absence.
 - e. In the event the Treasurer resigns or is removed from office, the Assistant Treasurer shall assume the position of Treasurer as his successor.
- 6) It is required that all elected officers in the Company adjust their outside activities so that no persistent conflict of interest exists with their Company responsibilities. If there is a specific conflict of interest, they shall recuse themselves from direct involvement with the issue at conflict. If there is a question as to whether a conflict of interest exists, the Grievance Committee shall decide.
- 7) If an elected officer has been recommended for disciplinary action by the Grievance Committee and removal from office is called for by the membership, a majority vote of the Voting Members present is required to accept that recommendation. If removal is called for by the membership, Article III, Section 2 shall apply as to replacement.
- 8) At the expiration of the term of any office, the outgoing officer shall deliver to his successor, all books, documents and records belonging to the Company that are in his possession.

ARTICLE V - Committees

- 1) There shall be the following standing committees, the members of which shall be appointed by the President at the annual January meeting. Each committee shall internally select a Chairman of that committee. Any new additions to a committee must be requested by the Chairman of the committee and approved by the President. Any member may leave any committee at any time by informing the Chairman of that committee and the President. If a committee does not have enough members as per the requirements for the committee, it should seek to fill any open positions as soon as possible.
- a. A Nominating Committee, consisting of three voting members, who shall submit nominations for office in accordance with the procedures described in Article III. The Nominating Committee shall notify the membership in writing that nominations are open for the next calendar year prior to the October meeting.
 - b. An Audit Committee, consisting of three voting members, whose responsibilities shall be to arrange for the compilation of the Treasurer's records by a qualified accountant (herein defined to be a CPA).
 - c. A Sick Committee, consisting of two members, who shall contact and provide comfort to members and/or their families who may be sick.
 - d. A Finance Committee, consisting of five voting members and the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer. They shall provide financial oversight for the Company, including budgeting and financial planning. They shall develop, implement and monitor an investment plan

policy statement for the Company. They shall also recommend purchases and review bids, quotations or major expenditures proposed by a consensus of the Executive Officers or by a vote of the membership.

- e. The Grievance Committee, consisting of Past Chiefs and Past Presidents of the Company, who are still voting members, as well as the current Chief and President, whose purpose shall be to investigate all grievances as may be brought forward by a member in writing and signed by the complaining member. Any member of the Grievance Committee who is involved in any manner in said grievance is automatically disqualified from sitting on the committee for that grievance. Any member in question or parties involved shall be invited to a hearing pertaining to the grievance. By majority vote of the committee, specific disciplinary action may be recommended to the membership. If so recommended, the member shall be brought up on charges at the next regular meeting. Majority vote of the membership present at this meeting shall determine whether the disciplinary action is taken. The investigation and any results of the Grievance Committee must remain confidential and are not to be publicized outside the Company.
 - f. A Membership Investigation Committee, consisting of an Executive Officer, a line officer and a voting member, shall be appointed by the President to interview all applicants for membership referred to the committee at the meeting where the application is presented. They shall obtain such information necessary to determine if the candidate would make a potentially productive member of the Company and shall report the results of their investigation at the next regular meeting. All applicants shall be advised during this interview of the By-Laws pertaining to new members.
 - g. A Social Committee shall be responsible for operation of the Company's social facilities and for the planning and running of the Company's regular social events. It shall consist of seven (7) or more voting members, no more than four (4) of which may be replaced each year. The committee shall provide a calendar of the expected social events for the year at the January meeting. An estimated budget and plan for each event will be presented to the membership at least two months in advance of the event and a report on each event presented no more than two months after the event.
 - h. A Building & Grounds Committee shall consist of five voting members. They shall be responsible for the maintenance of the real estate and physical plant of the Company. Under emergency conditions, this committee, while working in conjunction with the President, Chief, Carnival Chair and Finance Committee, may authorize major repairs necessary to preserve Company facilities.
- 2) Special committees may be appointed at any meeting by the presiding officer and shall consist of as many voting members as said officer may deem necessary.

ARTICLE VI - Membership

- 1) A member in good standing ("Voting Member") is defined as an individual who has fulfilled the requirements of membership as laid out below and has paid their dues in full.

- 2) Any person of good standing as a resident in the town of Easton who is at least 18 years of age is eligible for membership. It is also required that the applicant be recommended for membership by one (1) member.
- 3) Any person desiring membership in the Company shall make a written application and personally submit that application at a regularly scheduled meeting. The application shall be turned over to the Membership Investigating Committee for its report. Action on such application shall be taken at the next regular meeting, and if approved by the Membership Investigating Committee and the Executive Officers, the applicant shall be notified and shall be on probation under supervision of the Chief for the next six (6) calendar months. Applicants on probation shall be referred to as Probationary Members and are not entitled to the benefits of membership or the ability to vote on Company business. At the end of this period, the Chief(s) shall make ONE of the following recommendations for the probationary member:
 - a. Member is accepted and full membership is dated retroactive to the start of probation or the last six (6) months of same if over six (6) months.
 - b. Probation period be extended by the number of months deemed necessary by the Chief(s).
 - c. Probationary member be dropped for just cause.
- 4) Exceptions to probation requirements:
 - a. Any candidate who has been an active member of the Company Explorer Post, and who has been recommended for Company membership by the Explorer Post Advisor(s), shall serve a probationary period of no less than three (3), and no more than six (6) months. The probation period shall be left to discretion of the Chief(s).
 - b. Applicants who have served previously in another Fire Company, and who were a member in good standing of that Company, must serve a minimum of three (3) months' probation period and then are reviewed by the line officers to be recommended for membership.
- 5) When a candidate for membership has been rejected, it shall be the duty of President to notify the person of such rejection. Any member who shall disclose the fact of such rejection to any other person not a member shall be subject to discipline by the Grievance Committee. This By-Law shall be read in open meeting immediately after the rejection of any candidate.
- 6) The membership rolls shall be categorized into the classifications below by the Secretary and Chief.
 - a. Firefighter Member: A member who by performance continues to demonstrate his ability and willingness to fight fires, and who shall be provided with the necessary firefighting equipment. This classification shall be reviewed and evaluated by a majority of the line officers of the Company on an annual basis. Annual dues are required as per Article 6

- b. Active Member: Members who choose not to meet or can no longer meet the requirements of the Firefighter category. They enjoy all privileges of Membership with exception of the issuance of firefighting related equipment. They are also subject to all requirements of Membership. Annual dues are required as per Article 6
- c. Honorary Member: Honorary Member status shall be the highest honor that can be bestowed upon a firefighter. This membership status shall be given to a person who by his actions has served above and beyond the call of duty. He shall have received an affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the voting members present at a regular monthly meeting to attain this status. The membership shall have been notified prior to this meeting. An Honorary Member shall be given all the privileges of a Life Member. Honorary Members are not required to pay annual dues.
- d. Life Member: Life Member status may be granted to a member who has served twenty (20) qualifying years or more as a voting member and is current in his payment of dues. A majority vote of the voting members present at a regular monthly meeting shall be required for approval of each individual Life Member candidate. Life Members are not required to pay annual dues.
- e. Inactive Member. A member who has failed to meet the requirements of voting membership status. Inactive members do not have voting privileges or any other privileges of membership. Annual dues are required as per Article 6

7) Members' Requirements:

- a. Membership status must be maintained during each calendar year to retain membership privileges.
Firefighter and Active Members must complete the requirements of active membership each calendar year. Any member that does not meet these requirements will become an Inactive Member for the following calendar year. Life and Honorary Members do not have any requirements to maintain their membership status.
- b. Participating in any of these categories will count as one unit of membership requirement:
 - i) Firefighting - one unit per call attended
 - ii) Drill participation - one unit per drill attended
 - iii) Participation in annual carnival and other fund-raising activities - one unit per day
 - iv) Participation in committee meetings and duties- one unit per committee
 - v) Monthly meeting attendance- one unit per meeting
 - vi) Company work party participation - one unit per day

- c. Committee membership and participation earns one unit per calendar year per committee. A maximum of four (4) units can be earned from committee duties in any one year.
- d. A maximum of five (5) units can be earned per calendar year from attending monthly business meetings.
- e. For the first ten (10) years as an Active or Firefighter member, members are required to earn a minimum of ten (10) units per calendar year.
- f. After ten (10) years as an Active or Firefighter member, members are required to earn a minimum of five (5) units per calendar year.
- g. In any given year, units earned in excess of the requirements shall not accrue for use in any future year.

8) Membership Review Board:

- a. The Membership Review Board shall consist of at least five elected officers of the Company, and shall include the President and Chief. This responsibility cannot be delegated. No other persons are eligible to serve on this board.
- b. The Membership Requirements shall be reviewed on an annual basis by the Membership Review Board.
- c. Failure to meet the requirements in any given year shall result in the Membership Review Board recommending the following actions:
 - i) Loss of voting privileges for the next calendar year. This privilege to be reinstated after next qualifying year.
 - ii) Loss of a year toward total needed for Life Member status.
 - iii) Member to be classified for the following year as an Inactive Member
- d. Failure to meet the requirements for two consecutive years shall allow the Membership Review Board to additionally recommend that the member be struck from the rolls.
- e. If an Inactive Member permanently moves out of Easton the Membership Review Board may recommend that the member be struck from the rolls.
- f. The recommendations of the Membership Review Board shall be presented to those members present at the February regular meeting. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the voting members present is required to override the Board's recommendation on each case presented.

- 9) Every member of the Company is expected to conduct his affairs in a manner which shall not bring discredit upon the Company. Failure to do so may result in action by the Grievance Committee.

ARTICLE VII - Fees and Dues

1. The initial application fee shall be \$5.00. Each application for membership shall be accompanied by the fee. The fee will be refunded if the candidate is rejected.
2. Dues for each member in the Company shall be assessed at \$10 yearly, payable in advance of the calendar year. A notice that such dues are payable shall be sent by the Secretary to each member. Members must pay their annual dues. Members must advise the Secretary of a change of address.
3. A member two (2) full years in arrears shall be notified in writing of his delinquency and shall be given 30 days to pay in full. If such payment is not made, he shall be terminated from the membership. The Secretary shall keep a copy of aforesaid notice.
4. At the discretion of the President, any member may be excused from payment of dues due to financial inability or as a result of meritorious service.

ARTICLE VIII - Action Requiring Specific Authorization

1. Lands, buildings or other real property of the Company may be sold, mortgaged or otherwise encumbered, and Company funds in excess of \$10,000 for any single project may be committed or expended only upon the affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the voting members responding to the request for vote, cast either personally at one of two regularly scheduled meetings or by return mail. Ballots must be received prior to or at the second regularly scheduled meeting. Ballots must remain confidential and only be opened by the Secretary.
2. The foregoing limitations shall not apply to temporary expenditures collectively approved by the Officers of the Company for fund-raising activities or emergency funds for immediate repairs to the present facilities. Notice of this expenditure must be immediately made in writing to the Membership and presented at the next Company meeting.
3. At least two (2) weeks prior to the first meeting, notification must be mailed to all voting members stating in general terms, the proposal to be acted upon, and a ballot to cast their vote.
4. If the amount of money to be expended exceeds \$5,000 but is less than \$10,000, notice shall be sent to all voting members regarding the project and the amount shall be approved by a simple majority vote of the members present at the next business meeting.
5. The foregoing limitations shall not apply to temporary expenditure collectively approved by the Officers of the Company for the good of the Company.

ARTICLE IX - Dissolution

1. Upon dissolution of this organization, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal, state or local government for a public purpose.

ARTICLE X - Changes in By-Laws

1. The By-Laws of the Company may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present at any regular meeting, provided written notice has been given of the proposed amendment(s).

ARTICLE XI - Effective Date

1. These By-Laws shall be effective from the date of their acceptance by the membership and shall supersede all prior By-Laws, rules and regulations of the Company.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

GENDER:

Whenever herein reference is made to "he", "his" or "him" or any other reference to the masculine gender, it is understood and meant that said reference shall refer to both male and female members and that said usage is only meant for convenience and brevity and is not meant as any disrespect to any member.

PLURAL

Whenever herein reference is made in the singular or in the plural, it is understood and meant that said usage is meant for convenience and that such terms shall be plural or singular as may be in contest with the particular provision in which said term is used.