

# MORNINGSIDE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

## BY-LAWS



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## **ARTICLE I – NAME**

The name of this organization shall be the Morningside Volunteer Fire Department, Inc.

## **ARTICLE II – MISSION STATEMENT**

### **2.1. Mission Statement**

The purpose of the Department shall be to protect the lives and the property of the citizens of Morningside, Maryland, by preventing fires, and by providing fire suppression services, rescue services, and emergency medical services.

The Department shall also furnish such assistance to other jurisdictions as required by its membership in the Prince George's County Volunteer Fireman's Association, and by any Mutual Aid Agreements.

**2.2. Department Activities** - The Department shall not as a whole, except as provided above, take part in any movement not in keeping with the Mission Statement of the Department.

## **ARTICLE III – DEFINITIONS**

**3.1. ACTIVE MEMBER** – An Active Firefighter, Active Firefighter/EMT, Active EMT, or Active Administrative Member.

**3.2. APPLICANT** – A prospective new member of this Department who has submitted the Morningside Volunteer Fire Department Application to the Department but has not yet completed the Initial Reading.

**3.3. DEPARTMENT** – The Morningside Volunteer Fire Department, Inc.

**3.4. EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE** – A service that provides out-of-hospital acute care and transport to medical facilities, for patients suffering from illness or injury.

**3.5. GENERAL ASSEMBLY** - The General Assembly is the governing body of this Department. It is composed of the members of this Department.

**3.6. GENDER** - All pronouns and variations thereof used in these By-laws shall be deemed to refer to the masculine, feminine or neuter gender, singular or plural, as the identity of the person, persons, entity or entities referred to require.

**3.7. INITIAL READING** – An announcement to the membership of the Department of a person's completion of the Prince George's County application process and intention to become a member of the Department.

**3.8. JUNIOR MEMBER** – A Junior Member includes a Junior Firefighter and Junior Emergency Medical Technician who is at least sixteen (16) years of age and has not reached eighteen (18) years of age. A Junior Member may participate in

training with the permission of their legal guardian but is prohibited from participating in emergency operations.

- 3.9. LIVE-IN MEMBER** – An Active Member who meets the requirements of Art. IV §2.5 and currently resides at the Department.
- 3.10. MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT** – A written agreement between agencies, organizations, or jurisdictions to lend assistance across jurisdictional boundaries.
- 3.11. 50-POINT LOSAP REQUIREMENT** – The number of points required to be earned by each Active Member per year to count toward the twenty-five (25) year requirement for Maryland’s Line of Service Award Program.
- 3.12. PROBATIONARY PERIOD** – The period of time starting upon the Initial Reading of an Active Member and lasting until the one-year interval vote as outlined in Art. IV §3 and 4.
- 3.13. PROBATIONARY MEMBER** – A member of the Department who has not yet completed his or her Probationary Period.
- 3.14. TRANSFER APPLICANT** – An applicant to this Department who is currently an active member of another Prince George’s County Volunteer fire company.

## **ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP**

### **SECTION 1. MEMBERSHIP CLASSIFICATIONS**

Membership classifications are as follows:

- (a) Full Member
- (b) Associate Member
- (c) Administrative Member
- (d) Honorary Member
- (e) Inactive Member
- (f) Junior Firefighter and/or Emergency Medical Technician
- (g) Lifetime Member
- (h) Live-In Member

### **SECTION 2. MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY**

- 4.2.1. Good Moral Character** – All members of the Department must have good moral character.

- 4.2.2. **Age** – Any Firefighter or Emergency Medical Technician, Member must be at least 18 years of age. Any Junior Firefighter, Junior Emergency Medical Technician, or Administrative Member, must be at least 16 years of age
- 4.2.3. **All Members** - Must complete at least 24 hours of service (operational, administrative, or both) a month, and obtain 50 points of LOSAP activity a year. In addition, all operational members must maintain a valid EMT-B certification.
- 4.2.4. **Junior Firefighter/EMT** – Any applicant to the position of Junior Firefighter or Junior EMT must obtain written permission from both the Fire Chief and the applicant’s parent or guardian. The number of Junior Firefighter/EMT positions shall be at the sole discretion of the Fire Chief.
- 4.2.5. **Live-In Member** – Any applicant to the position of Live-In Member must be a member of the Department and have a current and active EMT-B certification. No applicant shall move into the Department unless he or she has a current and active EMT-B certification. The EMT-B certification requirement may only be waived by express written permission of the Fire Chief. Each applicant to the position of Live-In Member must also sign and abide by the Live-In Directive.
- 4.2.6. **Lifetime Member** – Completion of ten (10) active years of membership in this Department, excluding any time served as an Inactive Member.
- 4.2.7. **Transfer Applicant** – Must meet the requirements to be considered a Volunteer Inter-Departmental Transfer as set forth by all applicable Prince George’s County General Orders.
- 4.2.8. **Dual Membership Prohibited** – Any applicant that is a member of any other volunteer fire department, fire company, rescue squad, or emergency service in Prince George’s County must resign from such other company before they can be accepted for membership in this Department.

**SECTION 3. MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

- 4.3.1. **Basic Requirements** – Each applicant for membership in this Department must successfully complete all requirements designated by the applicable **Morningside Volunteer Fire Department Application** and **Prince George’s County General Orders**.
- 4.3.2. **Initial Reading** – Following completion of the Basic Requirements outlined in Art. IV §3.1, each applicant will be introduced to the Department at an Initial Reading.
- 4.3.3. **Oath** – Upon the Initial Reading, each applicant must make the following oath:

*I, (name of applicant), do solemnly swear to abide by and obey the By-Laws, Rules of Procedure, and*

*Operating Policy of the Morningside Volunteer Fire Department. I further solemnly swear to obey the Officers of the Department in regard to all business pertaining to the Department. "So help me God."*

Upon recitation of such oath, the applicant shall become a Probationary Member.

#### **SECTION 4. PROBATIONARY PROGRESSION PROCESS**

- 4.4.1. Probationary Period** – Each Probationary Member must successfully complete the Probationary Period. During the Probationary Period, the members of the Department will monitor the performance of the Probationary Member. The progression of the Probationary Member through the Probationary Period shall be documented, permanently recorded in the personnel file of the Probationary Member, and presented to the General Assembly for consideration by the President’s designee and in accordance with Art. IV §4.2.
- 4.4.2. Probationary Progression Votes** – The progress of the Probationary Member shall be presented by the President or the President’s designee to the General Assembly at one (1) month, three (3) month, six (6) month, and one (1) year intervals. At the one, three, and six-month intervals, the General Assembly shall vote to **continue, table, or reject** the Probationary Member. At the one year interval, the General Assembly shall vote to **accept, table, or reject** the Probationary Member.
- (a) Continue** – If the General Assembly votes to continue the Probationary Member, the Probationary Member shall progress to the next step in the voting progression.
  - (b) Table** – If the General Assembly votes to table the Probationary Member, the Probationary Member shall not progress to the next step in the voting progression, but shall remain on the same step. The General Assembly shall consider the progression of the Probationary Member again at the next meeting.
  - (c) Reject** – If the General Assembly votes to reject the Probationary Member, the Membership of the Probationary Member shall be terminated.
  - (d) Accept** – If the General Assembly votes to accept the Probationary Member, the Probation Period shall be complete and the Probationary Member shall become a full member who may vote and hold office in accordance with these By-Laws and applicable state and local laws.

**4.4.3. Transfer Applicant** – A Transfer Applicant must successfully complete all requirements of Art. IV §§3 and 4, with the following exception:

- (a) The progress of the Transfer Applicant Probationary Member shall be presented by the President or the President’s designee to the General Assembly at one (1) month, three (3) month, and six (6) month intervals. At the six (6) month interval, the General Assembly shall vote to **accept**, **table**, or **reject**, the Transfer Probationary Member, as those terms are defined in Art. IV §4.2. Following the General Assembly’s accepted vote of the Transfer Probationary Member’s six (6) month interval, the Transfer Member’s Probationary Period will end as outlined in Art. IV §4.2(d).

## **SECTION 5: RE-APPLICATION**

- 4.5.1. After Membership Revoked by General Assembly** – Any member whose membership was revoked by the General Assembly cannot be granted permission to reapply to membership except by unanimous consent of the members present and voting.
- 4.5.2. After Resignation Upon Trial Board Charges** – Re-application by any member who resigns after a trial board charge has been placed against him/her, but prior to the time of the trial (thereby making trial unnecessary), shall be handled in accordance with Art. IV §10.9(j).
- 4.5.3. Waiting Period** - Any member whose membership has been terminated must wait one (1) year prior to reapplying to the Department as a re-entry to the county and the Department.

## **SECTION 6: LIFE MEMBERSHIP**

- 4.6.1. Application** – Each applicant for Life Membership must submit a written request for Life Membership to the President or the President’s designee.
- 4.6.2. Approval** – Any request for Life Membership must be approved by the Board of Directors and two-thirds’ (2/3) majority of the General Assembly.

## **SECTION 7. MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS**

- 4.7.1. Meeting Attendance** – All members must attend, either in-person or virtually, two (2) regular meetings of the General Assembly per calendar quarter or be at least 30<sup>th</sup> or better on the riding list at the end of October, unless excused at the discretion of the President. Any member who fails to meet this requirement will be automatically disqualified from voting on any matter during the succeeding calendar quarter, pursuant to Art. IV §10.1.
- 4.7.2. Requirement to Abide By Rules** – All members shall abide by the rules outlined in these By-Laws, any other rules or regulations set forth by this Department, or the Prince George’s County Fire Department.

- 4.7.2. **Administrative Associate Member** – An administrative member who is unable to consistently meet the hour requirement of a full member; therefore, must (a) complete no less than 24 duty hours per month; (b) serve as an active member of an approved Department committee and/or hold an appointed administrative company position.
- 4.7.3. **Administrative Full Member** - Must (a) complete a minimum of 32 hours per month; (b) serve as an active member of an approved Department committee or serve as an elected or appointed administrative company officer.
- 4.7.4. **Firefight/EMT or EMS-only Associate Member** – An operational member who is unable to consistently meet the hour requirement of a full member; therefore, must (a) complete no less than 24 hours a month of any combination of administrative or operational hours; (b) is ineligible to vote at the meetings of the General Assembly; and (c) unable to hold an elected office position.
- 4.7.5. **Firefighter/EMT or EMS-only Full Member** – Any member who is an Active Firefighter and/or Active Emergency Medical Technician must (a) complete a minimum of 32 hours per month.
- 4.7.6. **Honorary Member** – A member appointed by the Board of Directors from the Department or the community-at-large in accordance with Art. VII §3.6 in order to contribute to the effectiveness and efficiency of the Department.
- 4.7.7. **Inactive Member** – An inactive member is exempt from the hourly requirements of an active member outlined in Art. IV §§ 7.4 through 7.6 for a specific period of time, having been granted such status pursuant to the procedures required by Art. IV §9.1.
- 4.7.8. **Junior Member** – All Junior Firefighters and Junior EMTs currently enrolled in secondary school shall maintain a grade point average of at least 2.5 and may not have any grade lower than a “C” in any subject.
- 4.7.9. **Life Member** – There are no additional requirements associated with Lifetime Membership.
- 4.7.10. **Live-in Member** – A Live-in Member must (a) provide staffing in accordance with the **Live-In Directive**; (b) possess a valid Maryland Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) certification unless such requirement is waived by the Fire Chief or the Fire Chief’s designee in accordance with Art. IV §2.5; (c) abide by all other requirements set forth in the **Live-In Directive**.

## **SECTION 8. PREROGATIVES OF MEMBERS**

- 4.8.1. **Active Member** – An Active Member may vote in accordance with company by-laws and state law. An Active Member shall be eligible for appointment or election to any office, in accordance with the eligibility and procedural requirements outlined in Art. VI, VII, and VIII of these By-Laws.



- 4.8.2. Administrative Member** – An Administrative Member may vote in accordance with the Department By-Laws. An Administrative Member shall be eligible for appointment or election to any Administrative office, but shall not be eligible to hold any Line Officer position.
- 4.8.3. Associate Member** – An Associate Member does not have voting privileges and cannot hold office. Time spent as an Associate member does not count toward Lifetime Membership credit.
- 4.8.4. Honorary Member** – Honorary Members may be appointed voting rights at the discretion of the Board of Directors.
- 4.8.5. Inactive Member** – An Inactive Member is ineligible to vote. Time spent as an Inactive Member does not count toward Lifetime Membership credit or toward seniority within the Department. An Inactive Member is not eligible to be a Line Officer.
- 4.8.6. Junior Member** – A Junior Member is not eligible to hold any Line Officer, or Administrative Officer position. A Junior Member may not vote.
- 4.8.7. Lifetime Member** – A Lifetime Member is entitled to all the privileges of this Department, including voting. At the annual banquet following the achievement of Lifetime membership, each new Lifetime member shall be presented a metallic gold membership plaque inscribed as follows:

LIFE MEMBER (YEAR)  
 (Member's Name)  
 MORNINGSIDE  
 VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

- 4.8.8. Live-In Member** – A Live-in Member shall enjoy all the privileges of an Active Member including free rooming in the fire house and free utilities.
- 4.8.9. Probationary Member** – The probationary member shall enjoy all privileges except voting and holding office during their probationary period.

**SECTION 9. CHANGE OF MEMBERSHIP STATUS**

- 4.9.1. Procedure for Changing from Active to Inactive Status** - Any Active member who anticipates being unable to meet the requirements of an Active Firefighter and/or Active EMT as outlined in Art. IV §§ 7.4 through 7.6 , must submit a written request to change his/her status from Active to Inactive.
  - (a) Required Recipients** - Such request must be sent to the Chief, the President, and the Chair of the Membership Committee, via electronic mail at such members' official Department-issued electronic mail addresses.

- (b) **Contents of Request** - Such request must contain a thorough explanation of the reason the Active member is requesting Inactive status, and must designate a date that the member will return to Active status.
- (c) **Consideration** - The request shall be presented and considered at the first meeting of the General Assembly following submission of the request. In accordance with the procedures outlined in Art. V the General Assembly shall approve or deny the request.

**4.9.2. Military Leave** – Any member of this Department who is a member of the Armed Forces of the United States, and stationed outside a radius of fifty (50) miles from this Department shall be considered on military leave.

- (a) **Notification** – A notification must be sent to the Chief, the President, and the Chair of the Membership Committee, via electronic mail at such members’ official Department-issued electronic mail addresses.
- (b) **Record** - Any change of status, whether it be going on military leave or coming off military leave, shall be recorded in the minutes of the General Assembly at the meeting following the change of status.

## **SECTION 10. DISCIPLINE, RESIGNATION, TERMINATION**

**4.10.1. Disqualification from Voting Due to Meeting Attendance** – Any member who fails to attend two (2) regular meetings of the General Assembly per calendar quarter, and is not at least 30<sup>th</sup> or better on the riding list at the end of October, will be automatically disqualified from voting on any matter during the succeeding calendar quarter unless excused at the discretion of the President.

**4.10.2. Suspension for Violation of Rules** – Any member who violates a rule set forth in these By-Laws, or any rule or regulation established by the Prince George’s County Fire Department, may be suspended by the highest-ranking operational officer or the President, elected or appointed, present at the time of the infraction, for no longer than three (3) days. All other administrative officers, elected or appointed, aside from the President, shall not have the authority to suspend.

- (a) **Notification to Chief** – The officer who imposes a suspension under this section shall notify the Chief and the President within twenty-four (24) hours of the suspension. If the Chief cannot be contacted, the officer shall contact the Deputy Chief.

### **4.10.3. Discipline by Chief**

- (a) **Extra Duties** – The Chief may require any member to perform extra duties as a punitive measure.

- (b) **Suspension of Privileges and/or Prerogatives** – The Chief or the President may suspend any privilege or prerogative of any member of this Department, except the privileges of attending meetings, drills, and voting, for a period of not more than six (6) weeks. If the Chief or the President desires to suspend a privilege and/or prerogative of a member for more than six (6) weeks, he/she must charge the member and a trial board shall be initiated in accordance with Art. IV §10.9.
  - (c) **Suspension of Membership** – The Chief or the President may suspend the membership of any member for any cause. If suspension of membership is for a period of six (6) weeks or less, the Chief need not place charges pursuant to Art. IV §10.9. If suspension of a membership is desired by the Chief or the President for a period of more than six (6) weeks, the Chief or the President must charge the member and a trial board shall be initiated in accordance with Art. IV §10.9.
- 4.10.4. Demotion of Officer for Failure to Maintain Active Status** - Any Line Officer who does not maintain the status of Active Firefighter and/or Active EMT automatically and immediately forfeits his rights to office and reverts to the rank of Firefighter and/or EMT.
- 4.10.5. Suspension from Meeting of General Assembly** - The President may suspend any member from any meeting of the General Assembly in accordance with the provisions of Art. V § 17. Any member so suspended shall not receive credit for attending such meeting.
- 4.10.6. Resignation** – Any member of this Department who wishes to resign must submit a written notification of resignation in accordance with the following requirements.
- (a) **Required Recipients** - Such notification must be sent to the Chief, the President, and the Chair of the Membership Committee, via electronic mail at such members’ official Department-issued electronic mail addresses.
  - (b) **Effective Date** - Such notification must designate a date that the member’s resignation will be effective. If the notification does not designate a resignation date, such resignation shall become effective immediately.
  - (c) **Return of Gear** - Any member of this Department who resigns must return gear issued by this Department or Prince George’s County, within ten (10) days.
- 4.10.7. Failure to Pay Indebtedness** – The secretary or treasurer shall submit to the Board of Directors the name of any member who refuses or neglects to pay any indebtedness due the Department within thirty (30) days after written demand

has been made by the secretary or treasurer. The Board of Directors shall decide within thirty (30) days thereafter whether the member should be recommended to the General Assembly for expulsion.

**4.10.8. Expulsion by General Assembly Membership** – Any member, except Lifetime and Honorary Members, may be expelled from the Department, for cause, by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the members of the General Assembly present and voting. A written complaint must be submitted at a regular meeting of the General Assembly. At the following regular meeting, the Department may, by a three-fourths (3/4) majority of the members present and voting, terminate the membership.

#### **4.10.9. Trial Board**

- (a) Charges** – Any member of the Department may bring charges against another member to the President within two (2) weeks after an incident or knowledge of an incident. The member bringing the charges shall be known as the Plaintiff and the member charged shall be known as the Defendant. The Plaintiff will supply in a written format the time, date, and place of the incident, and the people involved in the incident. Statements of each witness must accompany the charges.
- (b) Review** – The President shall review the charge(s) for violation of the House, Running Rules, By-Laws, and/or Supplemental Orders prescribed by their proper authority within the scope of his/her office, and determine proper action. If the President is charged, the Chief shall conduct such review.
- (c) Establishment of Trial Board** – A Trial Board shall be created for the purpose of trying a member.
  - (i) Timing** - The Trial Board must be established within two (2) weeks from the time that charges are placed against the Defendant.
  - (ii) Members** – The Trial Board shall consist of the two (2) highest-ranking Line Officers who are not a Defendant or Plaintiff, and the President. If the President is a Defendant or Plaintiff, the Board of Directors shall elect any other member of the Board of Directors who is not a Line Officer. A member of the Board of Directors who is a Defendant or Plaintiff may not serve on the Trial Board.
    - (1) Chairman** – The Trial Board shall elect its own Chairman.
    - (2) Secretary** – In addition to the three (3) members of the Trial Board set forth in Art. IV §10.9(c)(ii), the Trial Board shall appoint its own secretary. The Secretary shall not be considered a member of the Trial Board, but shall be present only for the purpose of recording the trial in writing or electronic recording.

- (d) **Counsel** – Both the Plaintiff and the Defendant shall be allowed to select and be represented by counsel, if so desired. Any counsel selected shall be a member of this Department.
- (e) **Witnesses** – No person, except Department members and witnesses called by either party, shall be allowed to be present during a Trial Board proceeding.
- (f) **Sequestration of Witnesses** – After a witness testifies, he or she must leave the trial room.
- (g) **Procedure** – Both the Plaintiff and the Defendant shall be allowed to present witnesses and evidence. Plaintiff first, then Defendant, then as allowed by the Trial Board. The Trial Board shall decide any question of procedure in conducting a trial.
- (h) **Presentation of the Verdict**
  - (i) **Form of Presentation** - The Trial Board shall present to the General Assembly a (a) complete transcript of the trial, (b) verdict (guilty or not guilty), and (c) appropriate action.
  - (ii) **Special Meeting Required** - Such presentation shall take place at a special meeting of the General Assembly, called for the purpose of presenting the verdict of the Trial Board.
  - (iii) **Timing** - The Trial Board shall make such presentation no later than ten (10) days after completion of the trial.
  - (iv) **Chairman of the Trial Board To Make Presentation** - The Chairman of the Trial Board shall announce the verdict and action of the Trial Board at the special meeting.
- (i) **Trial Board Decisions are Final** – The decisions of the Trial Board shall be final.
- (j) **Resignation After Trial Board Charge** – Any member who resigns after a charge has been placed against him/her, but prior to the time of the trial (thereby making trial unnecessary), cannot be readmitted to membership except at a meeting of the General Assembly, by unanimous consent of the members of the General Assembly present and voting.

**4.10.10.Lifetime Member** – Lifetime Membership can only be terminated by Trial Board action, the unanimous vote of the membership of the Department, or if the Lifetime Member applies for membership of any other volunteer company in Prince George’s County without prior approval of the Board of Directors.

- 4.10.11. Waiting Period After Membership Termination** - Any member whose membership has been terminated must apply and be admitted to the Department as a new member after one (1) year, in accordance with Art. IV §§3, 4, and 5.

## **ARTICLE V – MEETINGS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

- 5.1. Schedule** - The General Assembly shall meet on the first Thursday of each month at 19:30 hours. If the meeting has not started by 21:00 hours, the meeting shall be cancelled.
- 5.2. Place**- Meetings of the General Assembly shall be held at the firehouse, unless the President and Board of Directors, in their sole discretion, determine that the meeting will instead be held partially or solely by means of remote communication. Participation in a meeting held by remote communication shall constitute presence in person at the meeting for all purposes, including quorum and voting. Members shall receive at least seven (7) days advance notice of a remote meeting and shall be provided instructions for participation and voting for such remote meetings.
- 5.3. Recess** - Any alarm before or during the meeting, except an ambulance alarm, shall automatically recess the meeting until the return of the apparatus. If the apparatus has not returned by 23:00 hours, the presiding officer shall reschedule the remainder of the meeting in accordance with the procedures outlined in Art. V §4.
- 5.4. Rescheduling a Meeting of the General Assembly** – If the presiding officer must reschedule a meeting of the General Assembly, in whole or in part, for any of the reasons outlined in Art. V §1 or 2, the presiding officer shall notify all members of the Department by electronic mail at each member’s current electronic mail address, of the date and time of the rescheduled meeting. Such notification shall be sent no less than 72 hours in advance of the rescheduled meeting time.
- 5.5. Quorum** - An attendance of ten (10) voting members, whether in-person or virtually, shall constitute a Quorum for the transaction of any business at a regular or special meeting of the general Assembly.
- 5.6. Presiding Officer** - The President shall oversee all meetings of the General Assembly. If for any reason the President is absent from a meeting of the General Assembly, the Vice President shall conduct the meeting of the General Assembly. If both the President and the Vice-President are absent from a meeting of the General Assembly, the Chief shall conduct the meeting of the General Assembly. In the event that all of the above officers are absent from the meeting of the General Assembly, the meeting shall be rescheduled.
- 5.7. Meeting Rules** – All regular and special meetings of the General Assembly shall be conducted in accordance with **Roberts Rules of Order**, except where

Roberts Rules of Order conflicts with any rule outlined in these By-Laws. In such case, the rule outlined in these By-Laws takes precedence.

**5.8. Order of Business** – The order of business shall be as follows:

- (a) Invocation
- (b) Roll Call
- (c) Minutes of Previous and Special Meetings Presented
- (d) Report of the Treasurer
- (e) Communications
- (f) Bills
- (g) Introduction of Guests
- (h) Standing and Special Committee Reports
- (i) Unfinished Business
- (j) New Business
- (k) Election of Officers
- (l) Applications for Membership
- (m) Election of New Members
- (n) Good of the Department
- (o) Closing of Roll Call
- (p) Adjournment

**5.9. Voting** – Members of the General Assembly shall vote by voice casting a yea or nay, unless a secret ballot is requested by a member.

**5.10. Proposal for Non-Regular Expenditure(s)** – Any proposal made at any meeting of the General Assembly calling for the expenditure of funds for other than regular obligations of the Department, shall be referred to the Board of Directors for study and recommendation to the General Assembly at the next regular meeting.

**5.11. Emergency Actions** – Actions of an emergency nature shall be authorized by two-thirds' (2/3) majority vote of the General Assembly, present and voting.

**5.12. Power to Override Action of Board of Directors** – Any action of the Board of Directors may be overridden by a two-thirds' (2/3) majority of the General Assembly, present and voting.

- 5.13. General Assembly Must Approve Expenditure Greater than \$10,000** – The General Assembly must approve any expenditure greater than one-thousand dollars (\$10,000), prior to the Board of Directors’ authorization of such an expenditure.
- 5.14. Nomination and Election Meetings** – Nomination and election meetings shall be held in accordance with the provisions of Art. VIII.
- 5.15. Amendment to By-Laws** – These By-Laws may be amended at any meeting of the General Assembly, in accordance with the provisions of Art. IX.
- 5.16. Special Meetings** – A special meeting of the General Assembly shall be called in the event that the membership needs to be addressed on an issue of importance that requires a membership vote to resolve.
- (a) Procedure to Call Special Meeting** – The President shall call a special meeting of the General Assembly if requested by five or more members who have advised the President of the reason(s) for the call.
  - (b) Timing** – A special meeting shall be called within 48 hours after receipt of the fifth request for the special meeting, unless the President determines that the topic of the meeting is an extreme emergency.
  - (c) Extreme Emergency** – If the President, in his or her discretion, deems the topic of the meeting to be an extreme emergency, the President may call the meeting within less than 48 hours after receipt of the fifth request for the special meeting.
  - (d) Notification** – The President must notify as many members of the Department as possible of the special meeting. Such notification shall be made by electronic mail at each member’s current electronic mail address, and shall include the date, time, location, and topic of the special meeting.
  - (e) Limitation on Business Conducted** – The President shall not permit any other business except that which was stated in the call to be transacted at a special meeting.
- 5.17. Suspension from Meeting of General Assembly** – The President may suspend any member from any meeting of the General Assembly for cause. Any member so suspended shall not receive credit for attendance at such meeting.
- 5.18. Suspension of Rule of Procedure** – Any rule of procedure may be suspended at any meeting of the General Assembly by a unanimous vote of the members present and voting.



## **ARTICLE VI – OFFICERS**

### **Section 1. Elected Administrative Officers**

**6.1.1. Positions** - The Elected Administrative Officers of this Department shall be the President, Vice President, and the three (3) elected members of the Board of Directors referenced in Art. VII §2.

#### **6.1.2. Qualifications**

- (a) President** - The President shall be no less than twenty-one (21) years of age and must have served three (3) active years as a member of this Department.
- (b) Vice President** – The Vice President shall be no less than twenty-one (21) years of age and must have served three (3) active years as a member of this Department.
- (c) Elected Members of the Board of Directors** – An elected member of the Board of Directors shall be no less than twenty-one (21) years of age and must have served three (3) active years as a member of this Department.

#### **6.1.3. Duties & Prerogatives**

- (a) President** - The President is the Chief Administrative Officer of the Department and serves as the Chairman of the Board of Directors. The President shall:
  - Preside at all meetings;
  - Issue the call for meetings of the General Assembly and the Board of Directors;
  - Appoint officers in accordance with Art. VI § 2 and 3;
  - Appoint all committees to conduct the business affairs of the Department, appoint the chairman of each such committee, see that such committees function, and call for regular committee reports;
  - Ensure that elections are held in accordance with these By-Laws;
  - Call special meetings as required by Art. V §16; and
  - Shall have the authority to:
    - Suspend any member from any meeting of the General Assembly for cause;
    - Excuse any member from the meeting attendance/riding requirements of Art. IV §7.1;
    - Delegate any of his or her authority to any Appointed Administrative Officer;
    - Invite members of the Department to meetings of the Board of Directors where they may have a voice, but no vote.

**(b) Vice President** – The Vice President shall assist the President by carrying out all of the duties assigned by the President. Additionally, the Vice President shall:

- Preside at meetings of the General Assembly when the President is absent, in accordance with Art. V §6;
- Occupy the position of the President when the President is absent or unable to perform his duties, in accordance with Art. VI §1.4;
- Serve on the Board of Directors in accordance with Art. VII.

**(c) Elected Members of the Board of Directors** – See Art. VII.

**6.1.4. Presidential Succession** - If for any reason the President is absent or unable to perform his duties, the Vice President shall occupy his position and perform his duties. The Vice-President shall have the same authority as the President until the President returns or an election is held to fill the vacancy.

**6.1.5. Terms of Service.** All Elected Administrative Officers serve for one (1) year or until their successor has been elected.

## **Section 2. Appointed Administrative Officers**

**6.2.1. Positions** - The Appointed Administrative Officers of this Department shall be the Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, and four (4) members of the Board of Directors.

**6.2.2. Appointment** - The President shall appoint the Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, and four (4) appointed members of the Board of Directors.

**(a) Additional Administrative Officers** – In accordance with Art. VI §1.3(a), the President may, at his discretion, appoint committees as necessary to conduct the business affairs of the Department.

**6.2.3. Terms of Service** - The Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, and Additional Administrative Officers report to the President and serve at the discretion of the President. The tenure of office for all Appointed Administrative Officers runs concurrent with the term of the officer who made such appointment, or until such appointment is rescinded.

### **6.2.4. Duties**

**(a) Secretary** - The Secretary shall:

- Keep the records of the Department, including:
  - Minutes of the General Assembly meetings and the Board of Directors meetings;
  - Committee appointments;

- Officer list;
- Attendance records;
- List of Department members including a current address, telephone number, and electronic mail address for each member;
- Disseminate to each member of the Department the Minutes of the General Assembly meetings by electronic mail within one (1) week following the General Assembly meeting
- Post a hardcopy of the Minutes of the General Assembly meetings in a public location in the firehouse, and circulate the Minutes electronically to the membership, as determined by the President within one (1) week following the General Assembly meeting
- Pursuant to Art. VII §5.3, the Secretary of the Department shall act as Secretary of the Board of Directors.

**(b) Treasurer** - The Treasurer shall:

- Keep a financial account of the Department and a detailed account of the receipts and disbursements of the Department;
- Issue regular statements to the Department members of any obligations
- Collect all moneys due to the Department;
- Record all financial transactions in the minutes of the Department;
- Deposit all moneys collected in the bank account of the Department selected by the Board of Directors;
- Give bond for the faithful discharge of the duties, in such sum and sureties as may be required by the Board of Directors and/or County Government. The Department shall pay fees for such bond.
- Submit the Annual Budget for the Board of Directors and General Assembly approval per Article VIII §1.2.

**(c) Assistant Treasurer** – The Assistant Treasurer shall assist the Treasurer by carrying out all of the duties assigned by the Treasurer.

**Section 3. Other Administrative Officers**

**6.3.1. Chaplain** – The President shall appoint a Department Chaplain. The qualifications for the Chaplain shall be at the discretion of the President. The Chaplain shall serve at the discretion of the President.

**6.3.2. Sergeant-at-Arms** – The President may appoint a Sergeant-at-Arms at any or all meetings of the General Assembly for the purpose of maintaining order. The qualifications for the Sergeant-at-Arms shall be at the discretion of the President. The Sergeant-at-Arms shall serve at the discretion of the President.

**Section 4. Elected Executive Line Officers**

**6.4.1. Positions.** The elected Executive Operational Officers shall be the Chief, Deputy Chief, and Assistant Chief.

**6.4.2. Qualifications.** Each Elected Executive Operational Officer must meet the following requirements:

**(a) Chief**

- No less than twenty-five (25) years of age;
- Four (4) years of experience as a member of this Department;
- One (1) year of experience as the Deputy Chief and/or Assistant Chief of this Department;
- Meet the requirements as established by County Law;
- Qualified driver-operator of all Department apparatus;
- Hold at least a current EMT-B certification.

**(b) Deputy Chief**

- No less than twenty-four (24) years of age;
- Three (3) years of experience as a member of this Department;
- Meet the requirements as established by County Law;
- Qualified driver-operator of all Department apparatus;
- Hold at least a current EMT-B certification.

**(c) Assistant Chief**

- No less than twenty-three (23) years of age;
- Two (2) years of experience as a member of this Department;
- One (1) year of experience as a Captain as outlined by County Law and verified by the Prince George's County Fire Commission;
- Meet the requirements as established by County Law;
- Qualified driver-operator of all Department apparatus;
- Hold at least a current EMT-B certification.

**6.4.3. Duties**

**(a) Chief** - The Chief shall have full charge of the Department at all times, except at formal meetings, and shall be responsible for the operating efficiency of the Department at all times. Additionally, the Chief shall:

- Maintain all records of all alarms and runs made by the Department;
- Furnish data required by the President, County Fireman's Association, State Fireman's Association, or County Government;
- Appoint Line Officer positions, pursuant to the limitations imposed by County Law, and subject to the approval of the Board of Directors;
- Conduct meetings of the General Assembly in the absence of the President and Vice President, pursuant to Art. V §6; and
- Have the authority to:
  - Suspend any member of the Department for any cause, in accordance with the limitations and requirements set forth in Art. IV §10.3;

- Suspend any privilege or prerogative of any member of this Department, in accordance with the limitations and requirements set forth in Art. IV §10.3;
  - Impose punitive measures, in accordance with Art. IV §10.3.
- (b) **Deputy Chief** – The Deputy Chief shall assist the Chief by carrying out all of the duties assigned by the Chief.
- (c) **Assistant Chief** - The Assistant Chief shall assist the Chief and Deputy Chief by carrying out all of the duties assigned by either the Chief or Deputy Chief.
- 6.4.4. Succession** - If for any reason the Chief is absent or unable to perform his duties, the Deputy Chief shall assume command. The Deputy Chief shall have the same authority as the Chief until the Chief returns or an election is held to fill the vacancy. The Deputy Chief shall advise the Chief of actions taken in his absence.

In the absence of the Chief and Deputy Chief, the Assistant Chief shall assume command. The Assistant Chief shall have the same authority as the Chief until the Chief returns or an election is held to fill the vacancy. The Assistant Chief shall advise the Chief and Deputy Chief of actions taken in their absence.

- 6.4.5. Terms of Service.** All Elected Executive Line Officers serve for one (1) year or until their successor has been elected.

## **Section 5. Appointed Operational Line Officers**

- 6.5.1. Positions.** The Chief, with the approval of the Board of Directors, shall appoint the following Operational Line Officer positions in compliance with County Law: Station Captain, Squad Captain, Engine Captain, EMS Captain, Station Lieutenant, Squad Lieutenant, Engine Lieutenant, EMS Lieutenant, Station Sergeant, Squad Sergeant, Engine Sergeant, and EMS Sergeant.

- 6.5.2. Qualifications.** Each Appointed Operational Line Officer must meet the following requirements:

**(a) Station Captain**

- No less than twenty-two (22) years of age;
- Two (2) years of experience as a line officer of this Department;
- One (1) year of experience as a Captain of this Department;
- Meet the requirements as established by County Law;
- Qualified as a driver-operator of all Department apparatus;
- Hold at least a current EMT-B certification.

**(b) Squad Captain**

- No less than twenty-one (21) years of age;

- One (1) year of experience as a line officer of this Department;
- One (1) year of experience as a Lieutenant of this Department;
- Meet the requirements as established by County Law;
- Qualified as a driver-operator of all Department apparatus;
- Hold at least a current EMT-B certification.

**(c) Engine Captain**

- No less than twenty-one (21) years of age;
- One (1) year of experience as a line officer of this Department;
- One (1) year of experience as a Lieutenant of this Department;
- Meet the requirements as established by County Law;
- Qualified as a driver-operator of all Department apparatus;
- Hold at least a current EMT-B certification.

**(d) EMS Captain**

- No less than twenty-one (21) years of age;
- One (1) year of experience as a line officer of this Department;
- One (1) year of experience as a Lieutenant of this Department;
- Meet the requirements as established by County Law;
- Qualified as a driver-operator of EMS and support apparatus;
- Hold at least a current EMT-B certification.

**(e) Station Lieutenant**

- No less than twenty-one (21) years of age;
- Meet the requirements as established by County Law;
- One (1) year of experience as a Lieutenant of this Department;
- Hold at least a current EMT-B certification and can be an Active EMT member;

**(f) Squad Lieutenant**

- No less than twenty (20) years of age;
- Meet the requirements as established by County Law;
- Hold at least a current EMT-B certification;
- Completed one-year probation period with this Department.

**(g) Engine Lieutenant**

- No less than twenty (20) years of age;
- Meet the requirements as established by County Law;
- Hold at least a current EMT-B certification;
- Completed one-year probation period with this Department;

**(h) EMS Lieutenant**

- No less than twenty (20) years of age;
- Meet the requirements as established by County Law;
- Hold at least a current EMT-B certification;
- Completed one-year probation period with this Department;

**(i) Station Sergeant**

- No less than twenty (20) years of age;
- Meet the requirements as established by County Law;
- Hold at least a current EMT-B certification;
- Completed one-year probation period with this Department;

**(j) Squad Sergeant**

- No less than nineteen (19) years of age;
- Meet the requirements as established by County Law;
- Hold at least a current EMT-B certification;
- Completed one-year probation period with this Department;

**(k) Engine Sergeant**

- No less than nineteen (19) years of age;
- Meet the requirements as established by County Law;
- Hold at least a current EMT-B certification;
- Completed one-year probation period with this Department;

**(l) EMS Sergeant**

- No less than nineteen (19) years of age;
- Meet the requirements as established by County Law;
- Hold at least a current EMT-B certification;
- Completed one-year probation period with this Department;

**6.5.3. Authority to Appoint Additional Operational Line Officers.** The Chief may, at his discretion, appoint additional operational line officers as necessary to conduct the operations of the Department. All such officers shall have full authority as Line Officers. All Appointed Operational Line Officers report to the Chief and serve at the discretion of the Chief.

**6.5.4. Delegation of Authority.** The Chief may delegate any of his or her authority to any Appointed Operational Officer.

**Section 6. Operational Chain of Command**

**Chain of Command** - The following shall be the operational chain of command: Chief, Deputy Chief, Assistant Chief, Captains, Lieutenants, Sergeants.

**Section 7. Compensation of Officers**

No officer shall receive any compensation for any service rendered to the Department in connection with any duties of the office except upon recommendation by the Board of Directors and approval by the General Assembly.

## **ARTICLE VII – BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

### **Section 1. Purpose**

The Board of Directors is the executive body of the Department.

### **Section 2. Positions**

- 7.2.1. Positions** - There shall be eleven (11) positions which constitute the Board of Directors. These positions shall be the President, Vice-President, Chief, and Treasurer, along with three (3) elected Department members and four (4) appointed/honorary members.
- 7.2.2. Elected Directors** - The Elected Directors are the President, Vice-President, Chief, and three (3) Department members.
- 7.2.3. Appointed Directors** - The Appointed Directors are the Treasurer and four (4) appointed/honorary members.

### **Section 3. Qualifications**

- 7.3.1. President** – The President must meet the qualifications set forth in Art. VI §1.2(a).
- 7.3.2. Vice President** – The Vice President must meet the qualifications set forth in Art. VI §1.2(b).
- 7.3.3. Chief** – The Chief must meet the qualifications set forth in Art. VI §4.2(a).
- 7.3.4. Treasurer** – The qualifications of the Treasurer are at the discretion of the President, in accordance with Art. VI §2.2.
- 7.3.5. Three (3) Elected Department Member Directors** – Each Elected Director must be no less than twenty-one (21) years of age and must have served three (3) active years as a member of this Department.
- 7.3.6. Four (4) Appointed/Honorary Members** – The Board of Directors shall appoint four (4) appointed/honorary members. Such members may be selected from within this Department or within the community at-large. Each appointed/honorary member shall have the ability to contribute to the effectiveness and efficiency of the Department.

### **Section 4. Terms of Service**

- 7.4.1. President** – The President shall serve the term specified by Art. VI §1.5.



- 7.4.2. Vice-President** – The Vice President shall serve the term specified by Art. VI §1.5.
- 7.4.3. Chief** – The Chief shall serve the term specified by Art. VI §4.5.
- 7.4.4. Treasurer** – The Treasurer shall serve the term specified by Art. VI §2.3.
- 7.4.5. Three (3) Elected Department Member Directors** – The Department Member Directors shall serve staggered terms, with two (2) being elected by the General Assembly at each annual meeting to serve two (2) year terms, unless only one vacancy exists.
- 7.4.6. Four (4) Appointed/Honorary Members** – Appointed/Honorary Members will serve one (1) year terms, at the discretion of the Board of Directors. Appointed Board members may be re-appointed.

## **Section 5. Duties**

- 7.5.1. General Duties.** The Board of Directors shall:
- Execute all decisions of the General Assembly;
  - Supervise all social functions and activities, including the use of the firehouse, grounds, and facilities of this Department;
  - Have the power, by majority vote, to overrule or modify the action of any officer of the Department, except actions taken on fire grounds;
  - Ensure that the books and accounts of the Department are audited no less than one time per year, and may have the books and accounts of the Department audited more often at its discretion;
  - Recommend to the Department any matters which, in its opinion shall be considered by the General Assembly;
  - Hold monthly meetings and special meetings when called by the President, subject to the rules set forth in Art. VII §6;
  - Meet prior to any nomination and/or election meeting of the General Assembly, as required by Art. VIII §1, to determine which offices shall be filled.
  - Review the Fire Chief's Line Officer appointments.
- 7.5.2. Chairman** – The President is the Chairman of the Board of Directors. The President shall issue the call for regular meetings of the Board of Directors and special meetings of the Board of Directors.
- 7.5.3. Duties of the Secretary** – The Secretary of the Department shall act as Secretary of the Board of Directors and shall keep all records required by Art. VI §2.4(a).

## **Section 6. Meetings**

- 7.6.1. Schedule** – The Board of Directors shall hold one meeting per month.

- 7.6.2. Special Meetings** – The Board of Directors shall hold special meetings when called by the President.
- 7.6.3. Place-** Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held at the firehouse, unless the Board of Directors, in their sole discretion, determine that the meeting will instead be held partially or solely by means of remote communication. Participation in a meeting held by remote communication shall constitute presence in person at the meeting for all purposes, including quorum and voting. Members of the Board of Directors shall receive at least seven (7) days advance notice of a remote meeting and shall be provided instructions for participation and voting for such remote meetings.
- 7.6.4. Quorum** – A majority of the Board of Directors shall constitute a Quorum.
- 7.6.5. Majority Vote** – A majority vote of the Board of Directors shall govern. All decisions of the majority of the Board of Directors, formally assembled, shall be binding upon each individual member and all members jointly, unless overruled by the General Assembly pursuant to Art. V §11.
- 7.6.6. Invitees** – The President may invite any member or members of the Department to meetings of the Board of Directors. Such invitees may have a voice, but may not cast a vote.
- 7.6.7. Meeting Rules** – Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be conducted in accordance with ***Roberts Rules of Order***, except where Roberts Rules of Order conflicts with any rule outlined in these By-Laws. In such case, the rule outlined in these By-Laws takes precedence.

## **Section 7. Compensation**

No member of the Board of Directors shall receive any compensation for any service rendered to the Department in connection with any duties of the office except upon recommendation by the Board of Directors and approval by the General Assembly.

## **Section 8. Decisions are Binding**

All decisions of the majority of the Board of Directors shall be binding upon each individual member of the Board of Directors, and all members of the Board of Directors jointly.

# **ARTICLE VIII – ELECTIONS**

## **Section 1. Determination of Vacancies to be Filled**

The Board of Directors shall meet prior to the nomination and/or election meeting of the General Assembly to determine which offices shall be filled in accordance with the needs of the Department.

## **Section 2. Nomination**

**8.2.1. Meeting Schedule** – A nomination meeting shall be held at the first regular meeting of the General Assembly in November of each year.

**8.2.2. Procedure** – A nominee must be nominated by one voting member, and then seconded by another voting member to become an official nominee for that office.

### **8.2.3. Limitations**

- (a) No member may nominate a person for any office unless such person is eligible to hold such office.
- (b) No member may nominate himself or herself for any office.
- (c) Nominations may not be accepted in December, unless that office has no official nominees.

## **Section 3. Election**

**8.3.1. Meeting Schedule** – An election meeting shall be held at the first regular meeting of the General Assembly in December of each year.

**8.3.2. Procedure** – Election for each office shall be voted on in consecutive, descending order as follows: Chief, Deputy Chief, Assistant Chief, President, Vice President, elected members of the Board of Directors.

**8.3.3. Uncontested Election** – Where there is no contest for an office, a written ballot shall be taken. The nominee must receive an approval vote from the majority of the voting General Assembly.

### **8.3.4. Contested Election**

- (a) **Majority Vote Wins** – Where there are two (2) or more nominees for an office, a written ballot shall be taken and the candidate receiving the majority of votes shall be declared elected.
- (b) **No Majority Vote** – If a majority is not obtained on the first ballot, the two (2) nominees receiving the highest number of votes cast will be considered as the candidates and the voting will proceed on these names only. The nominee receiving the majority of votes on the second ballot shall be declared elected.
- (c) **Tie** – In the event of a tie vote, an additional ballot will be taken. If the tie vote remains, the election for that office shall be held over until the next regular meeting of the General Assembly.

## **Section 4. Installation**

- 8.4.1. Assumption of Office** – All elected Officers and Directors shall assume office on the first of January of the year following the election.
- 8.4.2. Formal Installation** – The Officers and Directors of this Department shall be formally installed in office at an annual banquet on a date determined by the General Assembly, or installed during the next meeting following the banquet.
- 8.4.3. Oath** – Upon the election of a member to an office, the member shall take the following oath:

*I, (name), having been duly (elected/appointed) to the office of (name of office) hereby solemnly promise that I will uphold the duties of my office, and will not knowingly do anything to bring discredit or dishonor to the Morningside Volunteer Fire Department or to my office. If for any reason I cannot fulfill my obligations to the office or the Department, I will voluntarily resign from my office, so help me God.*

## **ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENTS**

### **9.1. By-Laws**

- (a) Notification** - Any proposed amendment(s) to these By-Laws must be submitted in writing at a previous meeting of the General Assembly, and read and recorded in the minutes of the previous meeting.
- (b) Three-Fourths' Vote Required** - The Department By-Laws may be amended at any meeting of the General Assembly at which there is a quorum, by three-fourths' vote of the members present and voting, provided that any proposed amendment has been previously submitted as required by Art. IX §1(a), and subject to the limitations outlined in Art. IX §1(c).
- (c) Limitations**
  - (i) Amendment to Change Mission Statement** – No amendment to change the Mission Statement of the Department may be adopted except by unanimous consent of all members.
  - (ii) Amendment to Dissolve Department** - No amendment to dissolve the Department may be adopted except by unanimous consent of all members.

- 9.2. Operating Rules** – The Operating Rules may be modified or amended at any regular meeting of the General Assembly by three-fourths' (3/4) of the members present and voting.

- 9.3. Rules of Procedure** – The Rules of Procedure may be modified or amended at any regular meeting of the General Assembly by three-fourths' (3/4) of the members present and voting.

## **ARTICLE X – DISCRIMINATION PROHIBITED**

**This Department prohibits discrimination in membership or other activities on the basis of race, religion, sex, sexual preference, age, national origin, or physical or mental challenge.**

## **ARTICLE XI – MISCELLANEOUS**

- 11.1. Endorsement of Political Candidate(s) Prohibited** – This Department shall at no time endorse or recommend a candidate for political office.
- 11.2. Use of Department for Personal Gain** – No officer or member of this Department shall use it as a means for furthering any personal, political, or other aspirations, except for offices in the State or County Volunteer Fireman's Associations.
- 11.3. Solicitation of Funds by Non-Members at Department Meetings Prohibited** – Solicitation of funds by non-members during Department meetings is prohibited.
- 11.4. Operating Rules and Regulations of the Department** – A "Manual of Operations" shall be created under separate cover and shall contain all Operating Rules and Regulations of this Department. A "Board of Officers" consisting of the Line Officers of this Department shall establish, modify or abolish all rules of operations. The Chief shall serve as Chairman of the Board of Officers, and shall preside at all meetings. All questions shall be decided by a majority vote. Any decision of the Board of Officers (concerning rule of operations) not at variance with a two-thirds' (2/3) majority of the General Assembly, shall be binding on all members of this Department, individually and collectively. Five officers shall constitute a quorum. The Manual of Operations shall be reproduced and distributed to all members and shall be posted in the Fire House. It shall be revised as necessary and such revisions distributed to all members.

## **ARTICLE XII – REGIONAL MEMBERS AND PARTNER MEMBERS**

- 12.1. Designation** – The Fire Chief may designate any volunteer fire department, fire company, rescue squad, or emergency service organization organized or operating in Prince George's County as a "Partner Department."
- 12.2. Membership in Partner Departments** – Any member of the Department may become a member of a Partner Department, and any member of a Partner Department may apply for membership in the Department pursuant to these By-laws. Any person who is a member of both the Department and a Partner Department shall be referred to as a "Regional Member."

**12.3. Rules Applicable to Regional Members and Other Members of Partner Departments**

- (a) Any member of the Department who is a Regional Member shall continue to possess and be subject to the rights of, and obligations imposed upon, members under these By-laws.
- (b) A Regional Member shall, while participating in any activity involving a Partner Department, remain subject to the rules and regulations of the Department, including these By-Laws.
- (c) The Fire Chief shall determine the extent to which the participation of a Regional Member in any activity involving a Partner Department satisfies or is deemed to satisfy the obligations of, or the requirements imposed upon, such Regional Member under these By-Laws, including obligations with respect to attendance at Department meetings and the location of such person on the riding list.
- (d) Any member of a Partner Department who is not also a Regional Member may attend any meeting of the General Assembly as an observer.

**12.4. Participation in Partner Departments** – The Fire Chief shall determine which Department members are eligible to serve as line officers of a Partner Department. The Fire Chief, after consultation with the Board, shall determine which Department members are eligible to serve as administrative officers or directors of a Partner Department. Any Department member who purports to serve as a line officer, administrative officer, or director of a Partner Department in violation of these By-Laws shall no longer be considered as a Regional Member under these by-laws as of the date specified by the Fire Chief.

**12.5. Ambiguity** – Any ambiguity in this Article XII shall be resolved by the Fire Chief. Any such decision shall be final and binding.

**ARTICLE XIII – FINANCIAL OPERATIONS**

**Section 1. Annual Budget**

**13.1.1.** The treasurer shall submit an annual budget for the next Calendar Year no later than the November General Assembly Meeting for discussion. The Annual Budget shall be approved by the Board of Directors and the General Assembly during the December General Assembly Meeting.

**13.1.2.** Changes to the annual budget require approval from the Board of Directors and the General Assembly.

**13.1.3.** Unused funds do not roll over to the next Calendar Year.

## **Section 2. Financial Transactions**

**13.2.1.** Financial transactions shall be categorized by the Treasurer according to the approved Annual Budget. All transactions shall be reviewed monthly by the Board of Directors for categorization of accounts as defined by the annual budget or in the MVFD's accounting software. Changes to categorization of transactions require a majority approval of the Board of Directors.

**13.2.2.** Transactions above the annual budgeted amounts require either a change to the Annual Budget per Section 13.1.2.

**13.2.3.** Transactions above \$10,000 require Board of Directors and General Assembly approval regardless of prior approval.

**13.2.4.** The Treasurer retains the sole authority to decline transactions that are not within the scope or approved budget of the Department.

**13.2.5.** The President, at his/her discretion, may designate in writing a Department member responsible for his/her budget category.

## **Section 3. Credit Card Use**

**13.3.1.** The Treasurer, at his/her discretion, may authorize use of a Credit Card or similar electronic method of payment on behalf of the Department. Members shall be responsible for use of such means of electronic payments. The Treasurer may decline use or seek financial collections for unauthorized use. Unauthorized use may result in disciplinary actions per Article IV.

These by-laws were approved by majority vote of the General Assembly of Morningside Volunteer Fire Department, Inc. on December 2, 2021.



Eric Lubben, President



Amanda Bell, Corporate Secretary