

# Seymour Volunteer Fire Department

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## BYLAWS



## Preamble

Whereas, proper rules are essential and necessary for the preservation and good conduct of any well-regulated organization, therefore we, the members of Seymour Volunteer Fire Department of the City of Seymour, Wisconsin, resolve that, in order to define duty, establish discipline, and maintain perfect harmony among ourselves, do ordain and adopt the following by-laws for our mutual regulation and governance.

## Article 1: Name

This fire department shall be known and designated as the Seymour Volunteer Fire Department.

## Article 2: Purpose

The purpose of the department is to protect the lives and property of the citizens of our community. The department will assist, when called for by the proper authorities, in a prompt and professional manner in all matters in which we are trained for and have the proper equipment. This includes, fire suppression, fire prevention education, rescue and extrication and initial hazardous materials response.

## Article 3: Definitions

## Article 4: Officers

### *Section 1: Fire Chief;*

In accordance with the City of Seymour Municipal Code sec.30-4a, the Fire Chief shall be appointed by the mayor with confirmation of the city council. The active membership of the department may make recommendation to the Fire Chief position thru the Annual Election of Officers.

### *Section 2: Subordinate Officers;*

In accordance with the City of Seymour Municipal Code sec.30-4b, subordinate officers are appointed by the Fire Chief, thru the Annual Election of Officers. Subordinate officers shall consist of the following positions; Assistant Fire Chief, Second Assistant Fire Chief, Training Officer.

### *Section 3: Administration;*

The Fire Chief is responsible for the operation of the fire department, as instructed in the contractual agreements, ordinances and laws of the City of Seymour, Outagamie County, the State of Wisconsin and the United States of America.

## Article 5: Membership

### *Section 1: Membership of the department shall consist of the following classifications;*

- I. Active Firefighter: The active firefighter membership (active member) of the Department shall consist of volunteers at least eighteen (18) years of age, who understand and appreciate the responsibility vested in them and who are willing to serve when called. They must be able to devote the necessary time to training, meetings, and any other time required for the welfare of the Department. Must meet the obligations of the position.
- II. Probationary Firefighter: A member, who desires to obtain Active Firefighter membership, agrees to the conditions to be accepted as an active member but has not met the obligations of the position of active firefighter.
- III. Lifetime: Any member who has served at least 22 years as an active firefighter and retires from active membership may be considered lifetime.
- IV. Administrative: any individual who the Chief of the Department deems vital to the operations of the department. Administrative members serve at the will of the Fire Chief.

### *Section 2: Application for membership:*

- I. Submit a completed application to an active member, or to the business counter at City Hall.
- II. Applications are reviewed and interviewed by the Membership Committee.
- III. The application may then be presented to the full membership at a regularly scheduled or special meeting.
- IV. An affirmative majority vote by the full membership is needed to accept any member
- V. All accepted new members will be considered probationary for a minimum of 2 consecutive quarters and may move to active firefighter only after the obligations of the active firefighter position are met.
- VI. Any applicant that is rejected by the membership committee or the full membership shall wait sixty (60) days before re-applying.
- VII. No persons may be denied membership by reason of race, color, creed, sex or any reason that would violate the laws of the City of Seymour, Outagamie County, the State of Wisconsin or the United States of America.

### *Section 3: Membership obligations by classification*

- I. Active
  - a. To maintain active membership;
    - i. a member is required to attend at least 6 hours of fire department approved training per quarter year. This can be completed thru any combination of department approved training, formal fire training thru an accredited program or training submitted for approval to the Training Officer.
    - ii. a member is required to attend 2 of the 3 regularly scheduled Department approved training sessions per quarter
    - iii. a member is required to attend 2 of the 3 business meetings per quarter
    - iv. a member is required to be certified by the State of Wisconsin to the Firefighter 1 level.
    - v. a member is required to maintain certification in CPR thru the American Heart Association
    - vi. a member is required to maintain annual blood born pathogen training as provided by the department or thru an approved provider.
- II. Probationary
  - a. To maintain Probationary membership;
    - i. a member is required to attend 2 of the 3 regularly scheduled Department approved training sessions per quarter calendar year
    - ii. a member is required to attend 2 of the 3 business meetings per quarter
    - iii. a member must be working towards completing a state of Wisconsin Certified fire fighter course with the intention of achieving fire fighter 1 certifications status
- III. Lifetime
  - a. To maintain lifetime membership;
    - i. Serve 22 years as an active fire fighter
    - ii. Submit a request in writing to be considered a lifetime member and be considered retired.
    - iii. Lifetime members have no obligations to the department but are invited to participate in all meetings and special events.

### Section 4, Exemptions from Obligations

- I. Exemptions from Obligations for active and probationary members
  - a. In order to meet the needs of the communities that the department serves it may be necessary, from time to time, to exempt members from certain

obligations if they are an asset to the department and meeting the obligations is burdensome.

- i. Any member seeking an exemption shall submit a written request to fire chief. The Fire chief will present the request at the next regular scheduled meeting.
  - ii. Request must include obligation to be exempted from and the duration of the exemption.
  - iii. An affirmative vote by paper ballot by a majority of the membership shall affirm the exemption.
  - iv. Exemptions may be modified or terminated, if the needs of the department should change, by an affirmative vote by the majority of the active members at a regular or special meeting.
  - v. The fire Chief shall make available to all members a list of all exemptions granted. List must include, name, obligation exempted from and the duration.
- II. Failure to meet obligations
  - a. Any member who fails to meet the obligations of the position for one quarter will face disciplinary action.
    - i. The Fire Chief or Subordinate officer will meet with the member and explain the obligations that were not met. The member may seek an exemption from the unmet obligations.
  - b. Any member who fails to meet the obligations of the position for two consecutive quarters will be dismissed from the department.
- III. Department Officers
  - a. As the Officers of the department are elected from the active membership, it is expected that they maintain the obligations of the positions. However the unique demands placed on officers, they may, at the Fire Chiefs discretion, be exempt from obligations without the formal process noted in Section 4.I.a.

#### *Section 4: Membership Responsibilities and Operational Roles*

- I. Membership responsibilities
  - a. Standard Operation Guidelines (SOG's) will be established to assist in safe operation of the fire department. Every member must be familiar with the SOG's and make every attempt to follow the essence of the guidelines, to the best of their abilities using safe and sound judgment.
- II. Operational Roles
  - a. The customary operational roles of the fire department will be outlined in Standard Operating Guidelines. Each role will be defined with the formal qualifications and specific skill set that is needed to perform in the operational role. Each member, when acting in an operational role, must act in accordance with their qualifications and skill set, only in the direst of situations, where

immediate action is needed, may members act outside of their qualifications and skills. A member who acts outside of their role may face disciplinary actions.

## Article 6: Department Meetings

### *Section 1: Department Meetings*

- I. The Regular Business meeting of the Department shall be held on the second Wednesday of every month at 19:00 hours.
- II. A special meeting may be called by the Chief of the Department with 72 hours' notice. Notice must be provided by, posting date and time of meeting at the station and communication of the date and time of the meeting to members in an electronic format.
- III. A quorum of at least 1/2 of the active membership, those exempted from attendance not included, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.
- IV. The Fire Chief, or designated subordinate officer shall preside over the meeting.
- V. Roberts Rules of Order shall be utilized for the conduct of meetings.
  - a. The fire Chief will serve as the chair of all Department meetings, In the event of their absence, the senior officer shall serve as Chair. The Chair may vote only in the event of tie.
  - b. The order of business shall be as follows;
    - i. Roll Call-training
    - ii. Training activity
    - iii. Roll Call-business meeting
    - iv. Minutes of Last meeting
    - v. Treasures Report
    - vi. Chiefs business

## Article 7: Appointments and Election of Officers

### *Section 1: Annual Election of Officers*

- I. Annually, at the January meeting, as the last agenda item, the annual election of officers shall occur.
  - a. Officers shall be elected individually by ballot vote in the following order, Chief, First assistant Chief, Second assistant chief and training officer.

- b. The officer presiding over the meeting, shall ask for nominations for a position from the floor a minimum of three (3) times prior to closing nominations.
- II. Elected officers shall be presented to the mayor and city council for formal approval.
- III. If an officer should resign or be removed from their position, the fire chief shall, at their discretion appoint an active member of the department to serve the remainder of the term.

## Article 8: Conduct of Membership and Disciplinary actions

### *Section 1: Conduct of Membership*

- I. All members of the Fire Department are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the trust and dignity that is imparted into them by being a member of the department and serving the residents of the City of Seymour and anyone who may need the assistance of the department.
  - a. As a volunteer department, we may be asked to serve at any time. All members who respond to an incident or are serving the needs of the department in any fashion shall;
    - i. be drug and alcohol free. This includes, while driving any fire department apparatus, while performing maintenance or repair on fire department equipment or while representing the fire department in an official manner and any activity where a member is wearing their assigned dress uniform.
    - ii. operate in a safe and reasonable manner for the public safety duties that members of the department are expected to perform. It is imperative that safety triumphs over risk and we shall only risk life, when life itself is in danger.
  - b. As a member of the community and the general public all members shall conduct themselves in accordance with the Law and generally accepted good behavior.

### *Section 2: Disciplinary Actions*

- I. It is expected that all members of the Department act in accordance with the stated actions and implied intentions of the duly adopted by-laws and the Standard Operating Guidelines. Any action in conflict with the either of the guiding documents of the department will subject to disciplinary action.
- II. Disciplinary actions are the purview of the Fire Chief. The Fire Chief, being the duly elected and approved leader of the Department, has the faith and trust of the membership to provide discipline in a fair, equitable and honest manner.
  - a. Any action can be brought forth by any member the department or any credible source and shall be investigated by the fire chief.

- b. The Fire Chief then may investigate the matter further, interview individuals with knowledge of the allegation and discipline the member in a reasonable manner.
  - c. All members are expected to provide honest and fair testimony.
  - d. Communication of disciplinary actions to the membership may be warranted, however the Fire chief must abide by the best practices and laws concerning confidentiality.
- III. Termination actions are the most severe form of discipline and may be warranted for egregious behavior. To remove a member of the department, the fire chief must;
  - a. Investigate the matter as noted in Article 8 Section 2
  - b. Convene a meeting of the officers and inform them of the matter
  - c. Membership shall be terminated by majority vote of the 4 officers of the department.
- IV. In all matters regarding personnel which may have legal and ethical ramifications, the strictest of confidentiality must be observed and guidance may be sought from the resources of the City.

## *Article 9: Bylaws and Committees*

### *Section 1; Bylaws*

- I. The bylaws will be considered in effect from the time of their ratification by a 2/3 majority vote by the active membership at two consecutive regularly scheduled meetings
- II. The by-laws may be amended from time to time as needed.
  - a. The amended changes must be brought forth to the membership and agreed to by a 2/3 majority vote at two consecutive regularly scheduled meetings.

### *Section 2: Committees*

- III. The need for committees will be determined by the chief, the power resides in the chief to call for, regulate and terminate active committees as the needs of the fire department dictate.
  - a. Committee members shall be chosen from active membership
  - b. A list of all committees, their assigned task and their members shall be maintained and made available to all members.
    - i. Committees must follow the bylaws and generally accepted rules, standards and laws that are applicable to their task. Specific rules for the committee shall be established by the fire chief.
    - ii. Members may be added, removed and replaced as needed during the year.



IV. Standing Committees;

- a. The Membership Committee shall be active at all times, to respond quickly and efficiently to membership requests.
  - i. At the annual election of officers, the fire chief shall ask for committee members and establish a membership committee for the year.
- b. Occupational Health and Safety Committee shall be active at all times as directed in SPS 330.05.
  - i. At the annual election of officers, the fire chief shall ask for committee members and establish a membership committee for the year. The Health and Safety Officer is the given chair of the Committee.

END

Revision History

Re-established, August, 2020