

**By-Laws of the WINSTED FIRE DEPARTMENT**  
*Organized 1862*

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## **1. ORGANIZATION NAME**

- A. The name of the organization shall be: The Winsted Fire Department
- B. The Department shall consist of the Chief's Association, individual Companies as designated by the Chief's Association, Support Services, and an Explorer Post
- C. The duties of the Chief's Association shall be set forth in the Town Ordinances and these By-Laws covering the Fire Department.
- D. The Chief's Association shall consist of:
  - 1. A Chief.
  - 2. Assistant Chief.
  - 3. Deputy Chief.

## **2. DEPARTMENT OFFICERS**

- A. Line officers shall be defined as, Assistant Fire Chief, Deputy Fire Chief, Captain and Lieutenant
  - 1. Support Services Supervisor shall be appointed by the Fire Chief annually July first.
- B. Terms of office for
  - 1. Assistant Fire Chief shall be for a period of three (3) years.
  - 2. Deputy Fire Chief shall be for a period of three (3) years.
  - 3. Captain shall be for a period of two (2) years.
  - 4. Lieutenant shall be for a period of one (1) year.
- C. Prior to appointment Officers shall be required to meet the standards as set forth in the Standard Operating Procedures of the Department.
- D. Appointment of new officers shall take effect on July 1 for each term.
- E. Those wishing to run for said officer position shall submit a letter of intent for the 1. position requested to the committee by April 1 of each year.
- F. Members interested in running for a Line Officer Position shall be reviewed by a nominating committee.
  - 1. Committee shall consist of four (4) active members and the Fire Chief.
  - 2. Active Members interested in becoming a member of the committee shall submit a letter of intent to the office of the Fire Chief prior to March 1 of each year.
  - 3. Such committee shall conduct impartial interviews and such committee with the agreement of the Chief shall appoint the successful candidates for the open and applied for positions.

## **3. MEETINGS**

- A. Will be held monthly on the First (1st) Wednesday of each month at a time agreed upon by the membership.
- B. A quorum will be one-third (1/3) of the Department's active membership. All votes taken will be a majority vote of the members present.
- C. The Fire Chief or their designee shall preside over all meetings of the Department.
- D. The Fire Chief or their designee shall preserve order and conduct all meetings in conformance with these By-Laws and Robert's Rules of Order.
- E. The annual meeting of the Department shall be held during the month of June.
- F. Special Department Meetings:

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1. May be called by the Fire Chief or by a petition of fifty one percent (51%) Department active members.
2. Notification of a special department meeting will be made to each member of the Department by the Fire Chief.
3. The quorum will be the same as for a Regular Department Meeting.

### **4. MEMBERSHIP**

- A. Each member must be at least eighteen (18) years of age. Applicants must apply for membership on a standard application form provided by the Department.
- B. Applicants must, pass a criminal background investigation and a physical examination by a physician approved by the department before acceptance by the department. All members of the Department must have and pass an annual physical as prescribed by OSHA Regulations. All physicals must be reported on the standard physical form provided by the Department.
- C. Active members shall be defined as a member who may perform all the normal duties of a firefighter, Fire police or Support Services.
- D. Non-responding shall be defined as an active member who shall not respond to fires, nor attend practices or drills due to personal illness or injury or has failed to pass an annual physical. A non-responder may attend meetings and exercise their right to vote.
- E. Each new member shall be required to:
  1. Interior Fire Fighters obtain a State certified Fire Fighter I course or its equivalent within two (2) years of the date of acceptance into the Department.
  2. Exterior Fire Fighters shall be required to meet the minimum standards set forth by the Department Training Division and Chief's Association.
  3. Failure to meet the aforementioned requirements will result in an evaluation of membership status by the Training Division and Chief's Association.
- F. Each member must meet annual training requirements as set forth by the Chief's Association.
- G. Associate Member – An Associate Member is a non-voting membership status granted to a non-Active Member of the Department. An Associate Member must have been an Active Member of the Department for not less than 3 years.
- H. When an individual has been accepted for membership in the Winsted Fire Department they shall be placed on probationary status for the period of, but not limited to (6) months after successful completion of required training.
- I. During the probationary period, the members shall be evaluated on attendance of training, drills, meetings and general compliance of the department's rules and regulations. If any new member receives an unsatisfactory review by the Department during their probationary period, the member may be dismissed from the Department. The member shall have the right to appeal the dismissal in accordance with the Appeals and Grievances section of the Department Bylaws.
- J. Honorary Member – An Honorary Member is a membership status, granted upon separation of service, to an Active Member [as herein defined] with 10 or more years of service for which their annual service requirements have been met.
  1. Honorary Members have no further service requirements; however, their continued service and support is encouraged, and they are not considered a voting member. Honorary Membership is earned and cannot be applied for and is

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granted by nomination during a regular Departmental meeting with a majority vote.

K. Lifetime Member – A Lifetime Member is a membership status, granted to an Active Member [as herein defined] upon 25 or more years of service for which their annual service requirements have been met. Lifetime Members have no further service requirements, however, their continued service and support is encouraged, and they are not considered a voting member. Should a Lifetime Member choose to remain an Active Member they need to meet the service requirements of Active Membership. Lifetime Membership is earned and cannot be applied for. A Lifetime Member with Active Membership status retains the right to vote.

### **5. CONDUCT**

- A. All members shall conduct themselves in an orderly fashion in accordance with Department By-Laws and Policy.
- B. Authority to reprimand, suspend or dismiss is vested in the Chief's Association throughout the Department.
- C. On duty status shall apply when one is performing "fire duties" which include duties performed while at incidents, while answering alarms of fire, while returning from incidents, while at fire drills or parades, while going to or returning directly from fire drills, parades, Department meetings, while at tests or trials of any apparatus or equipment normally used by the Fire Department, while going to or returning directly from such tests or trials, while instructing or being instructed in fire duties, while answering or returning from Fire Department emergency calls, Department meetings and any other duty ordered to be performed by a superior or commanding officer in the Department. Conduct of Department members while in attendance at social functions of the Department shall subject such members to the disciplinary actions herein stated.
- D. Procedures for disciplinary action shall be as follows:
  1. If no previous action is on file, a Counseling Session, oral or written reprimand may be given.
  2. If an oral or written reprimand is on file, the next step may be a suspension.
  3. If a suspension is on file, the next step may be dismissal.
  4. All action taken on any member shall be kept on file for a period of one year from the date of occurrence.
  5. Regardless of any prior history, any member may be placed on probation as a form of disciplinary action and any member may be suspended or dismissed due to gross misconduct.

### **6. GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS**

- A. Any member who receives a written reprimand may, within seven (7) days of their notification of same, appeal such action in writing to the Chief's Association. The Chief's Association shall meet within seven (7) days of their receipt of the appeal for the purpose of a hearing on such action. Notice of the decision of the Chief's Association shall be given in writing to the appellant within five (5) days of such hearing.
- B. Within five (5) days of the issuance of a suspension, the Chief's Association shall meet for the purpose of determining the duration of such suspension. Within seven (7) days of the receipt of written notification of the term of one's suspension, such member may

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appeal such action in writing to the Chief's Association, who shall meet within seven (7) days of the receipt of such appeal for the purpose of a hearing on such action. Notice of the decision of the Chief's Association shall be given in writing to the appellant within five (5) days of such hearing.

- C. Any member dismissed from the Department may, within seven (7) days of their written notification of such dismissal, appeal such action in writing to the Chief's Association. The Chief's Association shall meet within seven (7) days of their receipt of such appeal for the purpose of a hearing on such action. Notice of the decision of the Chief's Association shall be given in writing to the appellant within five (5) days of such hearing.
- D. Decision of the Chief's Association on appeals from written reprimands, suspensions and dismissals shall be reviewed by an Advisory Review Board comprised of seven(7) members, chosen (as needed) by lottery, when requested in writing by the member, subject to the disciplinary action within fifteen (15) days after their receipt of notice of the decision of the Chief's Association.
- E. The Advisory Review Board shall convene and forward its non-binding decisions and recommendations to the Chief and Chief's Association within fifteen (15) days after its receipt of written notice of request for review from the member subject to discipline. The Chief's Association shall thereafter take such further action as they may deem appropriate.

### **7. CHIEF**

- A. The members of the Winsted Fire Department shall make a recommendation to the Board of Selectman for a Chief. The position will be a full-time paid position.
  - 1. A committee will be formed to review applications and interview prospective candidates and to make a final recommendation to the Board of Selectman.
  - 2. The committee will be comprised of two (2) current Chiefs of the Winsted Fire Department, the Chief of the Winchester Center Volunteer Fire Department, one (1) member at large of the Winsted Fire Department (chosen by the committee) and a Chief, past Chief or other member of the fire service the committee deems appropriate.
- B. To seek employment to the office of Chief of the Winsted Fire Department, a person must:
  - 1. Meet the qualifications in the job description approved by the Chiefs and the Board of Selectman.
- C. It shall be the duty of the Chief to have charge of all members, engines, hose, vehicles, and other tools and implements used for fire purposes, belonging to the City. Also, the Chief shall have care of the buildings used for storing the same and to see that they are always in good order and ready for immediate use.
- D. By a majority vote of those present at any Department meeting called for that purpose, the membership may call for a vote on the issue of removal of the Chief, for just cause identified in Section Five (5) ("Conduct"). By two thirds (2/3) vote of the membership, by written ballot, the Winsted Fire Department may request that the Board of Selectmen remove the Chief.
- E. The Chief shall have the ability to add, subtract or appoint Staff or Line officer positions.

### **8. AMENDMENTS**

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- A. All proposed amendments to these By-Laws must be made by the Winsted Fire Department By-Laws Committee.
- B. The By-Laws Committee shall consist of six(6) members of the and one (1) member of the Chief's Association.
- C. The By-Laws Committee shall meet at least once a year. The regular meeting shall be scheduled on the third Monday of September. The Department By-laws committee shall meet on a quarterly basis to review bylaws and proposed changes.
- D. The By-Laws will be voted on a single Saturday, time to be at the discretion of the By-Laws Committee, with absentee ballots available fifteen (15) days prior to the vote. Absentee ballots must be returned by 9:00 a.m. on the day of the vote. The absentee ballots will be available from the Department Captains or their designee and returned to the same. The vote will carry with fifty one percent (51%) of the members voting.
- E. All proposed changes to the Department By-Laws shall be submitted to the By-Law Committee prior to the third Monday in September. Said proposed changes shall be made in the form of written communication addressed to the committee chairman and such submissions shall be discussed and voted upon by the committee. If such proposal requires additional information the proposal may be tabled for future discussion. Notification shall be made during the July Department meeting of the opening of the Department By-Laws in September.
- F. The By-Laws committee shall follow the procedures as set forth in the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order. The committee chairman shall be appointed by the committee. The committee chairman shall appoint a secretary to record all applicable changes, submit minutes of each meeting to each member of the committee, and prepare the final draft of the final proposals. Said secretary shall also submit all proposals for department vote and change the By-Laws to reflect any changes voted upon by the Department within 30 days of the vote. The committee chairman shall govern the committee and any decisions made by the chairman may be appealed in writing to the Chief of the Department within 30 days.

### **9. BOARD OF FINANCE**

- A. There shall be a Board of Finance who shall be responsible for any funds donated to, or funds generated by fundraising, the Winsted Fire Department. The board shall consist of the Treasurer as chairman of this board, Carnival Chairman, Assistant Chief, Deputy Chief, and two members at large who shall be appointed by the Department at the annual meeting.
- B. The board will, by majority vote of its members,
  - 1. The Board will propose an annual budget for expenditures from the above mentioned funds at the department annual meeting. This budget will align with the Board and Department's stated long and short term financial plan for these funds. This financial plan shall be updated and distributed at the annual department meeting.
  - 2. Recommend long range financial plans and goals
  - 3. Recommend financial policies for the department
- C. Reports
  - 1. The board shall submit a report to the department at quarterly meetings.
- D. Meetings

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1. The board shall hold regular meetings each quarter during the year.
2. The presence of the majority of the board members will constitute a quorum.

E. Board meetings shall be open for attendance for all current department members.

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Dated this \_\_\_\_th day of \_\_\_\_ in the year \_\_\_\_

Chief of Department: James Lagassie

Chairperson of By-Laws Committee: Benjamin Ludwig

## By-Laws Committee: