

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS  
LORAIN COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF  
FIRE INVESTIGATORS, INC.

ARTICLE I  
NAME AND PURPOSE

Section I. This organization shall be known as the Lorain County Association of Fire Investigators, Inc., and is herein after referred to as the "Association". The name of the Association shall not be used publicly by any member, without the express permission of the Board of Directors.

Section II. The purpose and objectives of this Association shall be to:

- a. Professionally and accurately investigate the origin and cause of fires occurring within member communities.
- b. Provide for exchange of technical information and professional development of fire investigators.
- c. Cooperate with other law enforcement agencies and associations to further fire prevention and the suppression of crime.
- d. Encourage high professional standards of conduct among arson and fire investigators.

ARTICLE II  
FISCAL YEAR, MEETINGS, QUORUM

Section I. The fiscal year of the Association shall be September 1<sup>st</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup>.

Section II. Regular meetings of the Association shall be held on the first Thursday of each month.

Section III. At regular and special meetings, a quorum of ten members shall be present to vote on matter of regular business. A majority vote shall be required for passage.

Section IV. The annual meeting of the Association shall be held on the first Thursday of September.

Section V. The President may call special meetings and each member shall be notified at least five days before the date of such meeting, preferably by postal or electronic mail.

Section VI. The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern this Association in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws, including a meeting agenda as follows:

- Call to order
- Reading and approval of minutes
- Reports of officers, boards and committees
- Reports of special committees
- Special orders
- Unfinished business and general orders
- New business
- Adjournment

### ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP

Section I. Active Membership: Any representative of a fire or law enforcement agency within Lorain County shall be eligible for Active membership if the applicant:

- a. Is actively employed in some phase of fire or law enforcement work for at least five (5) years.
- b. Has completed training at a minimum level of Fire Investigation 1 (Ohio Fire Academy) or Basic Police Certification (OPOTC) or an approved equivalent.
- c. Is at least eighteen years of age at the time of application.
- d. Possesses the other qualifications for membership at the discretion of the Membership Committee

All applicants for membership, if accepted, will serve a one (1) year probationary term. During this probationary period, a person's membership may be rejected by the Board of Directors.

Section II. Apprentice Membership: Persons not qualified for Active membership may become Apprentice members, after determination of their qualifications by the Membership Committee. Apprentice members shall have the privileges of an Active member, except holding office, and shall be limited in scope of active investigation work performed.

Section III. Associate Membership: Persons not qualified for Active membership but holding special expertise or agency affiliations (county prosecutor's office, SFM FIEB, ATF, retired Association members, etc., may become Associate members, after determination of their qualifications by the Membership Committee. Associate members shall have the privileges of an Active member, except voting and holding office. The Association may, by majority vote of active members present, exclude Associate members from a particular business meeting.

Section IV. Honorary Life Membership: The Association may, by a majority vote of members present at the monthly meeting, confer honorary life membership upon any person qualified for membership who has rendered distinctive service to the Association or to its purposes. An honorary life member shall have all rights and privileges of an active member without payment of dues. Nominations for honorary life membership shall be made to the Board at least sixty days prior to voting thereon.

Section V. Election: Applications for membership shall be made to the Chairperson of the Membership Committee, upon the recommendation of an active member of the Association, and acceptance by vote of such Committee as provided in this article.

Section VI. Personal Qualification. Prior to voting upon each application, the Membership Committee shall give due consideration to the following, among other qualifications it deems applicable, to wit:

- a. Personal character and reputation of the applicant,
- b. Nature, character, and reputation of the applicant's business,
- c. General nature, character, and reputation of the applicant's employer and associates.

No person shall be eligible for any class of membership if he/she has been a member, or is presently a member, or becomes a member of a subversive organization or of any organization whose objectives and operations are inconsistent with the purposes of the Association.

#### Section VII. Termination and Expulsion

- a. Termination: Membership in the Association shall be terminated by
  - (1) Voluntary withdrawal, or
  - (2) The Board of Directors upon due notification by the Treasurer & notification to

- the member that their dues are in arrears or any other obligation to the Association, or
- (3) By the consent of a majority vote of the Board of Directors, if the applicant is still within the aforementioned probationary period.

b. Expulsion: The Board of Directors shall have the authority to censure or expel from the Association any member guilty of any violation of the principles of the Association as expressed in this Constitution. Grounds for expulsion include, but are not limited to:

- (1) Misrepresentation of qualifications for membership.
- (2) Bringing discredit to the Association.
- (3) Exhibiting traits of character or conduct inconsistent with the Association.
- (4) Conviction of a felony.

When there is reasonable basis for the belief that a member is guilty of a violation, the Board of Directors shall summon such member for an appearance before them. At this time, the member so summoned shall be given the opportunity to show cause why he/she should not be expelled. After the member has presented a defense, the Board of Directors shall vote on whether the member should be expelled from the Association. A majority of the Board of Directors present must vote for expulsion before the member may be expelled. The vote shall be conducted by secret ballot. An expelled member forfeits all the privileges of the Association.

Section VIII. Return of property. Any member who terminates their affiliation with the Association must return all LCAFI identification cards and Association property.

Section IX. Reinstatement: Any former member may be reinstated in the Association at the discretion of and by the consent of a majority of the Board, provided, however, that if such a former member shall have been in arrears in the payment of dues or other financial obligations to the Association at the time of his separation, he/she shall be required to pay to the Association all such arrears as a condition to his reinstatement, unless the Board, by majority vote and for good cause, shall waive the payment thereof.

#### ARTICLE IV BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section I. There shall be a Board of Directors consisting of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and three (3) trustees. The past president shall be an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors.

#### ARTICLE V DUTIES OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND APPOINTED OFFICERS

Section I - President. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Association, preserve order and decorum, decide all questions of order, appoint committees, and the President shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.

All meetings shall be conducted in an orderly manner. Whenever a question of procedure arises, "Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised" shall be used as a guide.

Section II - Vice President. The Vice President shall assist the President in every possible way. In the absence of the President, the Vice President shall perform all duties of the office.

Section III - Secretary. The Secretary shall keep the records and minutes of the organization and shall maintain the current roll of members, the constitution and other documents of value. It shall be the Secretary's duty to receive and acknowledge all communications of the Association and perform such duties as assigned by the President.

Section IV - Treasurer: The Treasurer shall collect all monies due to the Association and shall have custody of the funds of the Association. The Treasurer shall keep a true and correct record of all monies received and disbursed, and shall render a complete written detailed report of all income, disbursements and balances whenever requested by the Board and the members of each regular meeting. The Treasurer shall execute a surety bond determined by the Board of Directors, the cost thereof to be paid by the Association.

Except for the necessary expenses of this office, the Treasurer shall incur no expenses in the name of the Association without authority of the Board of Directors.

Section V. Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall transact all business of the Association.

Section VI. Vacancies. In the event of a vacancy occurring on the Board of Directors, the Board of Directors shall have the right to fill from the association membership or leave vacant all vacancies provided for herein, occurring in their body or in any of the offices of the Association for the unexpired term.

Section VII. Committees.

The Membership Committee shall contact eligible applicants who are not members of the Association in an attempt to increase the membership of the Association.

The Nominations and Elections Committee shall consist of at least three (3) members of which a majority shall not hold elective office. The Committee shall accept nominations for the necessary elective offices and present those names to the membership at the annual meeting prior to the election. Nominations will be accepted from the floor at this time.

Each candidate so nominated shall be present at the meeting and may present personal qualifications and plans for the improvement of the service and the Association to the membership immediately following the report of the Nominations and Elections Committee. The Nominations and Elections Committee shall furnish ballots for the election, shall collect and tally the ballots, and report the results to the membership.

Temporary or Special Committees may be appointed by the President as the need arises. The duties of these Committees shall not interfere with the Standing Committees.

## ARTICLE (NEW) ELECTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section I. Election: Officers and other members of the Board shall be elected at the annual election meeting of the organization unless otherwise ordered by resolution or motion duly approved by the membership.

a. No member can be nominated or elected for more than one position per election. Section II.

Terms of Office: The officers and trustees shall hold office from the time of their election and qualification for terms of one (1) year or until the election and qualifications of their respective successors.

## ARTICLE VI BOARD OF DIRECTOR MEETINGS

Section I. Board of Directors: The Board of Directors shall meet at any time or place upon call of the President or of any three (3) members of the Board.

## ARTICLE VII FINANCE

Section I. Fees and Dues: Dues for active and associate membership in this Association shall be fixed by

the majority vote of members at the first meeting of the fiscal year, and shall be payable in advance from September 1<sup>st</sup> in the manner prescribed by the Treasurer. Prospective members shall submit dues with application for membership which, upon admission, will pay his/her dues until August 31<sup>st</sup> following approval of his/her application.

Section II. Failure to Pay Dues: Failure to pay membership dues within ninety (90) days of the due date shall forfeit membership in the Association. Reinstatements are conditioned on approval by the Board and payment of all arrears. There shall be no other fees or assessment except as provided by amendment to these articles.

Section III. Audit: The Trustees of the Board of Directors shall make an audit of the accounts of the Treasurer at each annual meeting and shall verify all assets and liabilities of this Association.

## ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENT

Section 1. The Constitution of the Association may be amended by the membership of the Association assembled at the annual meeting. A two-thirds vote of the active members and honorary life members present and voting shall be necessary for the adoption of any proposed amendment to the said Constitution. All amendments of the Constitution shall become effective immediately following their adoption unless otherwise provided.

Section 2 – The Secretary shall notify all active members of the Association thirty (30) days in advance of the date when such amendment will be brought up for adoption by the Association.

Section 3 – Nothing contained in the preceding sections shall prevent the Association in meeting regularly assembled from altering or revising any part of the Constitution. If a revision or amendment is proposed at the annual meeting without meeting the 30-day advance publication notice, a four-fifths majority vote of the members entitled to vote, who are present and voting, shall be required for adoption. A proposed alteration, revision or amendment shall be given in writing to the President of the Association and printed copies made available to all active and honorary life members present at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the time when such proposed alteration, amendment, or revision shall be read in open meeting when first presented. Amendments with less than twenty-four (24) hours notice shall be referred to the Board of Directors for its consideration and recommendation to the next annual meeting for action.

Adopted and approved this 4th day of OCTOBER, 2012.

---

President, LCAFI