



OKLAHOMA FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

(as amended in 2015)

ARTICLE I – NAME

This organization shall be known as the Oklahoma Fire Chiefs Association (OFCA), hereafter referred to as the Association.

ARTICLE 2 – MOTTO

The motto of this Association shall be “We serve to provide professional leadership concerning fire and life safety for the citizens of the Great State of Oklahoma.

ARTICLE 3 – PURPOSE

The purpose of this Association is to improve fire department administration, fire prevention, fire suppression and fire services delivery throughout the State of Oklahoma by providing educational, networking, coordination and support opportunities to its members.

In recognition of unity and professionalism, the Association aspires to respect the individual perspectives of the membership in a manner that encourages open and honest communication in a professional and ethical manner.

ARTICLE 4 – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. The membership of this Association shall consist of the following: Active Members, Retired Active Members, Associate Members, Sustaining Members, Active Life Members, and Honorary Life Members.

Section 2. Active Members: Active members shall be entitled to all privileges and benefits provided by the Association and all elected officers shall be selected from this group. Active Members shall include:

Any chief officer/shift commander of all grades, in a paid or volunteer or any organized public or military fire department in the State of Oklahoma.

Section 3. Retired Active Members: All active members of the Association in good standing on the date of their retirement from the fire service may become Retired Active Members of the Association and shall be entitled to all privileges and benefits provided by the Association, except that they shall not be entitled to hold office.

Section 4. Sustaining Members: Sustaining Members shall be entitled to all privileges and benefits provided by the Association except they shall not be entitled to vote or hold office. Sustaining members shall include:

1. All active members of a regularly organized public, private or military fire department or other fire service agency.
2. Any member of a government public safety agency, including law enforcement, emergency medical services, emergency management, or public safety communications.
3. Fire Protection personnel from Oklahoma universities, colleges, or technical/vocational schools.
4. Oklahoma Department of Forestry management personnel assigned fire suppression responsibilities.
5. Fire protection personnel from state facilities, including hospitals, mental institutions, veterans homes or other organizations approved by the Executive Board.

Section 5. Associate Members. Individuals and/or business engaged in the manufacture or sale of public safety apparatus, supplies, or services, and/or individuals or businesses otherwise interested in the field of fire or emergency services shall be eligible for Associate Membership in the Association upon payment of annual dues. Associate Members shall not be entitled to vote or hold office.

Section 6. Active Life Members. Active Life Members shall have all the privileges of active members but shall not be required to pay dues. Active Life Membership may be awarded to any person by resolution duly adopted during the Annual Conference. All Past Presidents of this Association shall automatically become Active Life Members.

Section 7. Honorary Life Members. Honorary Life Membership may be awarded to a person who has rendered conspicuous service to this Association provided that such membership shall be recommended by the Executive Board and receive majority (50% plus 1 vote) approval of the members present and voting at the annual conference. Honorary Life Members shall be entitled to attend the Annual Conference but shall have no vote. Honorary Life Members shall pay no dues.

ARTICLE 5 – MEMBERSHIP DUES

Section 1. Active Members. Active member as defined in Article 4, Section 2 dues shall be \$36.00 per year. -- \$2.00 of said dues shall be dedicated to the Keith Bryan Memorial Scholarship Fund and said dedicated dues shall be placed in a 501 C 3 account as provided by the Internal Revenue Code.

Section 2. Retired Active Members. Retired Active Members as defined in Article 4, Section 3 shall be 26.00 per year.

Section 3. Sustaining Members. Sustaining members as defined in Article 4, Section 4 shall be 50% of the regular membership dues amount.

Section 4. Associate members. Associate Members as defined in Article 4, Section 5 dues will be set by the Executive Board of the Association.

Section 5. Active Life Members. Active Life Members as defined in Article 4, Section 6 shall pay no annual membership dues.

Section 6. Honorary Life Members. Honorary Life Members as defined in article 4, section 7 shall pay no annual membership dues.

ARTICLE 6 –OFFICERS

Section 1. Officers. The officers of this Association shall be the President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, third Vice-President and Past President. These officers shall constitute the Board of Directors of the Association, herein called the Board. Under no circumstance shall any fire department have more than one elected member serving on the Board, but this will not restrict Board appointments according to Article 6, Section 5 of this Constitution.

Section 2. Ex Officio Members. The Director of Fire Service Training, the Director of Fire Protection Publications, the Executive Director of the Oklahoma Firefighters Pension and Retirement System, the State Fire Marshal and the director of the Oklahoma Council on Firefighter Training or their designees shall serve as Ex Officio members of the Board.

Section 3. Executive Director. The Board shall appoint an Executive Director at the Board meeting after the Annual Conference.

In the event of resignation, removal or death of the Executive Director, the Board shall appoint a temporary or permanent Executive Director at a regular or special Board meeting.

Section 4. Elections. Officers of the Association, except the Past President, shall be elected by the delegates on the last day of each annual conference. A majority (50% plus 1 vote) of the members present and voting shall constitute an election. In the event a candidate for elected office does not receive a majority of the votes cast, a run-off election shall then be held between the two (2) candidates receiving the highest number of votes cast. In the event of a tie, an immediate re-count of all ballots shall be required.

If a tie is verified, candidates will address the convention body and a second vote conducted.

Section 5. Vacancy. In the event of a retirement, resignation, death, disability or any other vacancy of an elected Board Officer, the remaining members of the Board may at their discretion, within the requirements of Article 6 of this constitution, appoint a person or persons to serve until the next Annual Conference.

Section 6. Removal of a Board Officer. In the event a Board Officer is charged as having been guilty of conduct unbecoming that is detrimental to the reputation of the Association, and after a fair and impartial hearing, the Board shall have the power to suspend such officer, if the facts so warrant. No such hearing shall occur, however, until written charges have been submitted to the Board and a correct copy thereof transmitted to the Board Officer being charged by registered mail. Charges may be brought forward by any voting member of the Association.

In the event charges are brought forward by one Board Officer against another Board Officer, the Board Officer so charging and the Board Officer being charged shall not occupy their respective seats on the Board during the hearing. The hearing board shall be comprised of the remainder of the Board Officers. The hearing shall be presided by the ranking Board Officer present at the hearing. All parties shall be notified in writing of the date, time, and location of the hearing. The order of procedure for the hearing shall be as follows:

- a. The presiding officer shall present a recitation of the charges before the hearing board.
- b. Presentation of evidence by the charging person followed by questioning by any member of the hearing board.
- c. Presentation of the evidence by the Board Officer being charged followed by questioning by any member of the hearing board.
- d. Opportunity for rebuttal testimony or additional evidence and questioning by interested parties may be allowed at the discretion of the presiding officer.
- e. Closing statements by the charging person and Board Officer so charged.

Following the hearing, the hearing board shall make a decision concerning the charges and will notify all parties concerned in writing of its decision. If the Board Officer charged is found to be guilty of the charges, the Board Officer shall immediately stand suspended from their office and the Board shall immediately take possession of all properties belonging to the Association. The Board Officer so suspended shall have the right of appeal to the delegates present and voting at the next Annual Conference.

ARTICLE 7 – DUTIES OF ELECTED OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Section 1. Duties of the President. It shall be the duty of the President to preside at all meetings of the Association and its Board. The President shall be the ex officio Chairperson of all committees and shall appoint all committees subject to the approval of the Board and perform such other duties as may be incident to the office or which shall be required by the Annual Conference or the Board.

Section 2. Duties of the First Vice-President. The First Vice-President shall assist the President in conducting the business and carrying out the policies of the Association. The First Vice-President shall, in the absence or disability of the President, assume the responsibility of the President. The First Vice-President shall assist the Executive Director in publishing the Newsletter of the Association. The First Vice-President shall perform other such work as directed by the Board.

Section 3. Duties of the Second Vice-President. The Second Vice-President shall assist the President and First Vice-President in conducting the business and carrying out the policies of the Association. The Second Vice-President shall, in the absence or disability of the President and First Vice-President, assume the responsibility of the President. The Second Vice-President shall be the chairperson of the Legislative Committee. The Second Vice-President shall perform other such work as directed by the Board.

Section 4. Duties of the Third Vice-President. The Third Vice-President shall assist the President, First Vice-President, and Second Vice-President in conducting the business and carrying out the policies of the Association. The Third Vice-President shall serve as the chairperson of the Membership Committee. The Third Vice-President shall perform other such work as directed by the Board.

Section 5. Duties of the Immediate Past President. The Immediate Past President shall assist the President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, and Third Vice-President in conducting the business and carrying out the policies of the Association. The Immediate Past President of the Association shall serve as a member of the Board for one full year and shall act as parliamentarian to this Association. The Immediate Past President shall perform other such work as directed by the Board.

Section 6. Duties of the Executive Director. The Executive Director shall collect all monies due to the Association from all sources and shall retain custody of the funds of the Association. All monies belonging to the Association shall be deposited in a chartered bank with the deposits being made in the name of the Association. The Executive Director shall keep a true and accurate record of all monies received and disbursed and ensure that all payments of accounts shall be by an Association check. The Executive Director shall, at each Annual Conference present a written statement of the activities of his or her office for the preceding term with a general condition of the finances of the Association. The Executive Director shall ensure that no officer or member shall incur any expenses in the name of the Association without the authority of the Board. The Board shall instruct the Executive Director to annually negotiate an administrative fee for services rendered to this Association.

Section 7. Duties of the Board. The Board of this Association shall exercise general supervision over the affairs of this Association in the interim between Annual Conferences, and shall have full and complete jurisdiction over all business conducted by the Association in the interim period between the Annual Conferences. Board decisions shall represent the final judgment of the Association unless appealed to and reversed by the membership at the Annual Conference. The Board of this Association shall cause a financial audit by outside qualified parties of the receipts and disbursements of the Association at the end of each fiscal year. A report of the audit will be published to the membership.

ARTICLE 8 – ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The annual conference of this Association shall occur at such place as designated by the membership in attendance at the previous Conference, and upon such date as is mutually agreeable to the Board and the host City. In the event no invitation is tendered, the Board shall select the meeting site. The city hosting the Annual Conference shall be required to furnish adequate space for conducting the meeting and cooperate fully with the Board, the Executive Director and staff in preparing the program and entertainment during the Conference.

ARTICLE 9 – EXPENSES

The Board shall establish the amounts and items to be reimbursed for expenses incurred by any member of the Board, Committees or other members serving in an official capacity of the Association.

ARTICLE 10 – AMENDMENTS

Proposed amendments to the constitution shall be submitted by registered mail or hand delivered by an active member over his or her signature to the Association offices or the Board, with date affixed and a receipt given, not less than thirty (30) days preceding the opening day of the annual convention of the Association. The Executive Director shall publish any proposed resolutions via appropriate means. At the next annual convention of the Association, each resolution shall be called to a vote and if two-thirds (2/3) of the members present and casting votes for the adoption of the amendment, it shall be declared adopted and become a part of this constitution.

ARTICLE 11 – STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 1. Legislative Committee. The Legislative Committee is to meet prior to the Conference and formulate legislative resolutions to be submitted to the Executive Director 30 days prior to the Conference for review by the Executive Board.

The Legislative Committee shall consist of five (5) members, with the Second Vice-President serving as Chairman. Four members are to be appointed by the executive Board to serve on a rotating basis with a new member to be appointed each year.

Section 2. Other committees to be formed as directed by the Board of this Association.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE 1 – ANNUAL MEETING

Order of Business. The order of business of each conference shall be set by the Board prior to each conference.

ARTICLE 2 – RULES OF ORDER

Section 1. The current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall be the authority on all parliamentary questions unless otherwise modified by the Constitution and By-Laws. The President, with the approval of the Board, shall appoint a parliamentarian.

Section 2. Every member speaking on any question shall address the chair giving their name and affiliation. No member shall speak more than twice on any question before the convention except by approval of the majority (50% plus one vote) of the members present and casting votes. This section shall not apply to members of committees.

Section 3. All balloting on Legislative and Constitutional Resolutions, Elections of Officers, Selection of Host City and By-Law amendments shall be by a printed ballot with the exception that Election of Officers may be done by acclamation if there is only one person seeking a Board office. Said ballots shall be distributed to all registered members on the final day of convention. The members will mark their ballot and surrender it to a specially appointed committee of counters when that order of business is called by the President. Ballots which are deemed mutilated will be voided and no lost ballots will be replaced.

ARTICLE 3 - AMENDMENTS

Section 1. Proposed amendments to the By-Laws shall be submitted by registered mail or hand delivered by an active member over his or her signature to the Association offices or the Board, with date affixed and a receipt given, not less than thirty (30) days preceding the opening day of the annual convention of the Association. The Executive Director shall publish any proposed resolutions via appropriate means. At the next annual convention of the Association, each proposed amendment shall be called to a vote if a quorum (51% of the members eligible to vote and who have registered as attending) is declared by the chair and if a majority (50% plus one) of members present and voting shall vote for the adoption of the amendment, it shall be declared adopted and become a part of these By-Laws.

Section 2. Constitutional Resolutions, Legislative Resolutions and By-Laws Resolutions may be amended under suspended rules. The rules may be suspended upon proper motion, if approved by seventy-five (75%) percent of the members present and casting votes.

ARTICLE 4 – AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Section 1. J. Ray Pence Leadership Award.

The J. Ray Pence Leadership award is established to recognize the actions and activities of active chief fire officers in Oklahoma that produce progressive improvements in safety, efficiency, and effectiveness in the areas of fire prevention, fire suppression and fire administration that are outstanding in nature or impact.

Nominations must be submitted to the Office of the Director of the Oklahoma Fire Chiefs Association.

Nominations can be submitted throughout the year, but any nomination received after January 31st of each year shall be considered by the Awards Committee for the following year.

The Awards Committee shall consist of the 1st Vice President of the Oklahoma Fire Chiefs Association, who shall serve as Chairman of the committee, and two previous recipients of the J. Ray Pence Leadership Award.

The Awards Committee shall meet in February to review nominations received on or before January 31st. The Awards Committee shall verify information submitted in the nominations, including on-site visits and evaluations, if necessary.

The Awards Committee can reject any or all the nominations if it so chooses. Only one Leadership Award shall be selected in any one respective year.

Nominations and actions of the Awards Committee shall be kept confidential. The recipient's identity shall not be announced until the presentation of the award at the annual OFCA Conference.

Decisions of the Awards Committee are binding and final.

The 1st Vice President of the OFCA shall announce the recipient at the OFCA Annual Conference and make the initial presentation. A member and/or members of the OFCA Executive Board shall make a presentation, in the recipient's jurisdiction, at a meeting of the appropriate elected body.

Section 2. Keith Bryan Memorial Scholarship Fund.

The purpose of the Keith Bryan Memorial Scholarship Fund is to provide scholarship opportunities for aspiring and/or current Oklahoma Fire Officers in leadership and management training and education.

The scholarship shall be available only to the members of the Oklahoma Fire Chiefs Association. Career and volunteer member are equally eligible.

The Selection Committee for the Keith Bryan Memorial Scholarship Fund shall consist of the President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, 3rd Vice President, and Immediate Past President of the Oklahoma Fire Chiefs Association.

The Selection Committee shall review the applications and verify the applicants' eligibility, and shall determine if the application request meets the intended purpose of the scholarship, which is to provide management training and education to aspiring and/or current Oklahoma Fire Officers.

The Selection Committee can reject any or all of the applications if it so chooses.

Decisions of the Selection Committee are binding and final.

Section 3. Lifetime Service Award.

The purpose of the OFCA Lifetime Service Award is to recognize retired chief officers from an Oklahoma Fire Department for his/her contributions to the fire service profession.

Any retired chief officer from any Oklahoma Fire Department is eligible to be nominated. Nominations must be endorsed by two current active OFCA members and a member of the nominee's community.

Nomination is not an automatic award. The award will only be presented when a worthy recipient is identified. Only one award will be selected in any one respective year.

The nominee must have demonstrated contributions to the Oklahoma Fire Service while serving as a chief officer in the state. This includes being active in one or more fire service organizations, serving on various committees, initiating changes that improved the fire service, etc.

The nominee must have had a positive impact on the quality of life in his/her community. Examples would be volunteering at church or other organization, working on a community project, serving as a local elected official, etc.

The nominee must have demonstrated integrity as a person and as a leader.

The Selection Committee for the OFCA Lifetime Service Award shall be determined by the current OFCA Executive Board.