

# *Pewee Valley Fire Department Civilian Corps*

## **CONSTITUTION**

### **Article I.**

#### **Name and Definitions**

Section 1. -- This organization shall be formally known as the Pewee Valley Fire Department Civilian Corps.

Section 2. -- The following nomenclature shall be used throughout this document:

--Civilian Corps is an abbreviation of Pewee Valley Fire Department Civilian Corps. The abbreviations *PVFD CC or Corps* are recognized for the same purpose, and for daily usage.

--Board is an abbreviation for the Pewee Valley Fire Protection District Board of Trustees.

--He or Him is used to refer to either gender nonspecifically, unless a proper name is being referenced.

--PVFD is an abbreviation for Pewee Valley Fire Department, which refers to the whole of the organization of firefighters, administrators, Board of Trustees, and Civilian Corps, as appropriate in the context where used.

--Year -- The Civilian Corps' official year shall coincide with the fiscal year of the Pewee Valley Fire Protection District Board of Trustees. All time references shall be in accordance with this unless specifically referring to calendar year related events.

### **Article II.**

#### **Mission and Objectives**

Section 1. -- The mission of the PVFD Civilian Corps is to provide aid and assistance to the firefighters of the Pewee Valley Fire Protection District through non-fire suppression activities that promote the interests of the Fire District, enhance civil emergency preparedness, and show appreciation of the efforts of the Fire Department.

Section 2. -- The objectives of the Civilian Corps are as follows:

- To plan and perform activities that promote emergency or disaster preparedness for the community
- To plan and perform activities that promote appreciation of the efforts of PVFD members
- To provide refreshment, rehabilitation, and support services as needed to firefighters while working at PVFD fires or other PVFD events
- To assist the PVFD firefighters and administration with the annual Crusade for Children fund raiser
- To assist the PVFD administration in executing an annual awards/appreciation banquet for the membership of the PVFD
- To assist the PVFD with any other non-firefighting projects as requested by the PVFD administration

### **Article III.**

#### **Officer Selection**

Section 1. -- The officers of this organization shall consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Section 2. -- All officers shall hold their offices two (2) years, or until their successors are chosen. Officers shall be elected by ballot at the annual election meeting, which will be the first meeting held in the month of September. The elections shall take place as follows:

1. Nominations will be accepted three weeks prior to the election. Nominations will be accepted for two weeks. At the end of the nomination period, each candidate shall write a brief statement detailing their qualifications and desire to hold the office. These statements shall then be posted conspicuously in the fire station for all members to review. The third week will be a dead week and no nominations will be taken, to allow ballots to be printed. Write-in votes will be accepted.

2. A formal ballot will be taken of the whole membership of the Civilian Corps that are present at the annual election meeting, and the candidate receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected.

Section 3. -- No person shall be eligible to hold office unless he has been a member of the organization for at least one year. The term of membership is not required to be immediately prior to the election.

Section 4. -- No member shall hold two offices in the organization at the same time. No member shall hold the same office for more than 2 consecutive terms. There is no limit on the total number of terms a member may serve in any position.

Section 5. -- Any vacancy among the officers of this organization shall be filled for the unexpired term at the first regular meeting after the vacancy occurs, or at a special meeting called for that purpose. Nominations for the position will be accepted from the membership present at that meeting. The members present will then cast ballots, and the person with the most votes shall be declared elected. The ballots will be counted by the vice-president, and witnessed by the secretary and treasurer.

Section 6. -- Officer elections shall be staggered, so that there are always 2 incumbents in office at any time to provide guidance to newly elected officers. In even years, the president and secretary shall be elected. In odd years, the vice president and treasurer shall be elected.

Section 7. -- In the event that the number of Corps members drops to less than 8, the sections of Article III shall be changes as follows:

Section 1: The President, in consultation with the remaining officers, may appoint interim officers to fill positions that are vacant at that time. The duties of multiple offices may be combined as necessary. The interim slate will remain in effect until the next regular election cycle where at least one member is nominated for each regular office.

Sections 2,3,4,5 -- These sections shall be suspended until the next regular election cycle where at least one member is nominated for each regular office.

## **Article IV.**

### **Duties of the Officers**

#### **A. President**

It shall be the duty of the president to: preside at all meetings of the Corps; to call special meetings whenever he shall deem it for the interest of the Corps, or to do so upon the written request of five members; to appoint all committee chairmen unless otherwise provided; enforce the constitution and by-laws and as far as possible see that all members are justly and impartially treated. He shall not vote on any question, except the election of officers and members, unless in case of equal division, when the president's vote shall decide the question. He shall be governed by parliamentary usages and shall have general supervision of the affairs and business of the Corps. The president shall, either personally or through an appointed delegate, represent the Corps at all functions where the Corps is expected to be represented officially.

#### B. Vice President

It shall be the duty of the vice president to perform all the duties of the president in his absence; keep a correct roll of all members of the Corps and provide a copy thereof to the president, Fire Chief, or Board as needed; notify all members of regular or special meetings when ordered to do so by the president; keep the roll calls of members present at all meetings and official Corps events; and notify each new member of his/her election. It will also be the vice president's responsibility to be the liaison between the Corps officers and committee chairmen, if deemed necessary.

#### C. Secretary

It shall be the duty of the secretary to keep a true record of proceedings of all Corps meetings in a book for that purpose; to read the minutes of the previous meeting at the next regular meeting of the Corps; to conduct all correspondence of the Corps under the direction of the president; to read all communications; and to maintain a copy of the Corps' constitution and by-laws. He shall keep on file all documents belonging to, or relating to the business of, the Corps. He shall post the minutes of the last business meeting of the Corps on a bulletin board in the fire station, no later than two weeks after the meeting. The posted minutes shall remain in place until the posting of minutes for the next meeting. In case of sickness or absence he shall have the record books at the meeting place for meetings, and appoint a temporary delegate to fill his role.

#### D. Treasurer

It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive all moneys collected by the Corps and give a receipt for same if necessary; deposit all moneys received by him in appropriate accounts designated by the Corps and the Board, the money deposited in such account(s) to be withdrawn only by checks or drafts signed by the president or treasurer under their official titles; pay all bills due for the Corps or delegate them to the Board Treasurer in a timely manner; to keep a correct account of all receipts and disbursements in suitably prepared books; render a monthly written report of the financial condition of the Corps to the president for his report to the Board, including all receipts and disbursements since the previous report, and shall render a like report at any other time when requested by the Corps, Fire Chief, or Board to do so.

#### E. Fire Officer Liaison

The Civilian Corps shall have a liaison to the firefighters and officers of the fire department. The liaison will be an officer of the fire department chosen by the Fire Chief. The Liaison shall assist the Corps with its initial founding and then assist with coordinating activities occurring between the firefighters and the Corps. The Liaison shall receive all requests directed to the firefighters or administration by the Corps, and

relay the same to the Chief and his staff. The Liaison shall represent the interests of the Corps during officer meetings. The Liaison shall not vote on Corps matters.

#### F. Officer Delegates

If an officer of the Corps is unable to attend an event where their presence is required, they shall appoint a temporary delegate to serve in their place. Delegates shall not have voting powers.

#### G. Committee Chairs

It shall be the duty of the chairperson of each committee to assure completion of the tasks assigned to the committee by the Corps. He shall call meetings by contacting members at least one week in advance if possible, and confirm that members received said notice. It will also be his responsibility to document and report on committee progress to the vice president and the Corps. The committee chair or his delegate must be in attendance at any events that fall under the direction of the committee. If a committee chair is aware of a previous schedule conflict at the time of his appointment, he shall not accept the chairmanship.

### **Article V. Membership**

#### A. Adult Membership

Section 1. -- Adult membership in the Civilian Corps is open to anyone age 18 or over who has an interest in supporting the goals of the Corps. Direct affiliation through a PVFD firefighter is not required for membership.

Section 2. -- A person wishing to become a member must fill out an application for that purpose. The information in the application shall only be used by the PVFD for the purposes of contacting the individual or performing a background check if deemed necessary.

Section 3. -- A person wishing to become a member must be of good character, and must not have any serious felony convictions. A background check may be completed through the local police department to verify this.

Section 4. -- Prospective members shall complete a six month probationary period, where the membership will observe how the new member interacts with the Corps and department as a whole. At the end of 3 months, the Corps officers and the Fire Officer Liaison shall evaluate the prospective member. During the initial 3 months, if a majority of the officers of the Corps and the Fire Officer Liaison think the new member will not be a positive asset to the PVFD, the following protocol will be enacted:

- 1) At the end of 3 months, a person delegated by the officers will notify the prospective member of the negative interaction and give them the remainder of the probationary period to improve. The Secretary shall record the notification.

- 2) At the end of the probationary period, the Corps Officers and Fire Officer Liaison shall again evaluate the prospective person. If improvement has not occurred, the President will ask the new member to leave the organization.

If the probationary period is completed successfully, the new member shall be granted membership in the Corps.

#### B. Junior Membership

Section 1. --Junior membership is open to anyone below age 18 who has an interest in supporting the goals of the Corps. Direct affiliation through a PVFD firefighter or adult Corps member is required for membership.

Section 2. Junior members must be supervised at all times by a mentoring adult in the Corps. The mentor shall make sure that the junior member's involvement in the Corps does not create a detriment to the junior member or the Corps.

Section 3. -- Prospective members shall complete a six month probationary period, where the membership will observe how the new member interacts with the Corps and department as a whole. At the end of 3 months, the Corps officers and the Fire Officer Liaison shall evaluate the prospective member. During the initial 3 months, if a majority of the officers of the Corps and the Fire Officer Liaison think the new member will not be a positive asset to the PVFD, the following protocol will be enacted:

1) At the end of 3 months, a person delegated by the officers will notify the prospective junior member of the negative interaction and give them the remainder of the probationary period to improve. The Secretary shall record the notification.

2) At the end of the probationary period, the Corps Officers shall again evaluate the prospective person. If improvement has not occurred, the President will ask the new member to leave the organization.

If the probationary period is completed successfully, the new member shall be granted membership in the Corps.

## **Article VI.**

### **Duties of Membership**

Section 1. --It shall be the duty of all members to make all reasonable efforts to attend all the functions of the Civilian Corps; attend all regular and special meetings; participate in activities and chores; and to promote the Corps and PVFD.

Section 2. --If a member is absent, without making prior notice of their absence, for a period of 3 months more, it shall be assumed that they are no longer interested in being a member of the Corps. In this case, the president shall contact the member by telephone or in person and confirm their commitment to being in the Corps. Letters or e-mails shall not be used to confirm a member's commitment to the organization. If the member cannot be reached, fails to give valid excuse for the absence, or fails to attend any additional Corps events without valid excuse, they shall be declared resigned from the Corps, as if they completed Article VII, section 1. The secretary shall make record of such at the next regular meeting of the Corps.

## **Article VII.**

### **Resignations, Leave of Absence, Reinstatements**

Section 1. -- All resignations of members shall be made in writing and presented at a regular meeting, and if approved by a majority of the members present, shall be accepted. All property in the possession of the resigning member belonging to the Corps or the PVFD shall be returned at that time.

Section 2. -- Any member whose resignation has been accepted by the Corps and who wishes to be reinstated shall make written notice of such to the Secretary. It will be

proposed at the next regular meeting or special meeting called to transact general Corps business, and if a majority of the members present concur, they will be reinstated. Any member who has been expelled from the Corps for violations against the Corps or PVFD must have their reinstatement approved by the Fire Chief and Board.

Section 3 -- Any member may request a leave of absence as the member deems necessary. Request for the leave shall be submitted to the officers and documented by the Secretary. All property in the possession of the member granted a leave of absence belonging to the Corps or PVFD shall be returned at that time, or may be kept in the member's possession if the Corps Officers deem it to be beneficial. Reinstatement may be done at any time by making a request to the President or Vice president. Upon reinstatement all previously issued property shall be returned to the member.

### **Article VIII. Impeachments**

Any officer of the Civilian Corps may be impeached for malfeasance or misfeasance of office according to the following protocol.

1. Written charges must be made and signed by at least 3 Corps members. The charges must relate to those listed in Article IX, section 2.
2. The charges must be filed with the Secretary, who will forward the charges and all other correspondence related to the matter to the remaining officers and Fire Officer Liaison. If the charges involve the Secretary, the President shall receive the charges and fill the secretary's role in handling the matter.
3. The charges shall be served upon the officer in writing, and the officer shall have at least 10 days to file a response in writing to the Secretary.
4. A Board of Review consisting of the remaining officers and Liaison shall investigate the charges within 2 weeks and allow the accused to appear before them and make a defense.
5. The Board of Review shall report their findings at the next regular meeting, or at a meeting called for that purpose. The Board of Review must issue their report within 30 days of the filing of the response by the accused.

If the charges are sustained, the accused may be suspended, removed from office, or expelled from the Corps by the board of review. The decision of the board of review is subject to an appeal to the PVFD Board of Trustees.

### **Article IX. Discipline and Expulsions**

Section 1. -- Any member may be expelled by a two-thirds (2/3) vote by written ballot of the members present at any regular meeting, provided the accused has been served a copy of charges made against him at least two (2) weeks prior to the meeting, and an opportunity was given to the accused to appear and offer a defense at the meeting. If at least 3 members present at this meeting request an investigation, a Board of Review shall be established to investigate the matter. The Board of Review will consist of the Corps officers and Fire Officer Liaison. This Board of Review will conduct an investigation, including interviewing the accused and others as deemed necessary.

Within 30 days the Board of Review shall present their findings to a meeting of the Corps membership. The membership shall then vote on expulsion as detailed above.

Section 2. -- The following charges are worthy of discipline and possible expulsion:

- A. The member committed an act that caused a violation of the ethics or trust of The Civilian Corps or PVFD.
- B. The member committed theft of Corps or PVFD money or property.
- C. The member willfully committed an act that endangered the safety of another person while performing a Corps duty.
- D. The member engaged in physical violence, other than self defense or defense of another, while performing a Corps duty.

## **Article X. Amendments**

Section 1. --This constitution shall not be altered or amended except by a two thirds (2/3) vote of the members present at a regular Corps meeting, provided that written notice of the proposed change or amendment shall have been given and laid upon the table at a regular meeting of the Corps held at least one month previous and that such notice shall designate at which meeting the membership shall consider and vote upon the change.

Section 2. -- Amendment to the chain of authority used by the Corps shall only be done with the consent of the Fire Chief and the Board.

Section 3. -- The constitution and by-laws shall be reviewed for accuracy once every five years. The last revision was completed in\_\_\_\_\_.

## **BY-LAWS**

### **Article I. Meetings**

Section 1. -- The time and location of the annual election, regular meetings of the Civilian Corps, and special meetings as are called for the transaction of Corps business, shall be decided by the president. Once established, the time and date for regular business meetings shall remain constant, except as listed in section 3 of this article. If an officer can't be present for a meeting, they shall appoint a delegate to serve in their place. At the time of implementation of these by-laws, the regular meetings are scheduled for the first Tuesday of each month, held at the firehouse.

Section 2. -- The annual election meeting of the Corps shall be held on the first regular meeting date in the month of September.

Section 3. -- Whenever a regular meeting falls on a holiday, the president may elect to hold the meeting on another prescribed date, or cancel it. In such a case, the president shall give notice of the change to all members at least one week in advance of the new meeting date. A notice of the change shall be posted in the fire station at least one week in advance of the new meeting date.

Section 4. -- Special meetings for the transaction of any business may be held at any time on the call of the president as provided by section A of article IV of the constitution.

Section 5. -- Five members or a simple majority of total membership (51%), whichever is greater, shall constitute a quorum and provide power to transact business at any regular or duly called special meeting of the Corps.

Section 6. -- The recommended order of business for all regular meetings shall be as follows:

1. Roll call
2. Reading of previous minutes
3. Treasurer's report
4. Reports of committees
5. Old or unfinished business
6. New business
7. Open floor
8. Training
9. Adjournment

## **Article II. Ballots**

Section 1. -- Balloting for the election of officers shall be done with formal written ballots, and members shall be permitted to cast their votes in secret.

Section 2. -- No person whose membership has been suspended in any way shall be eligible to vote.

## **Article III. Attendance Roster**

Attendance will be taken at every official Corps meeting or function. The roster sheets will be kept by the vice president until the end of the year. The roster will be the official record of attendance.

## **Article IV. Regulation of Meetings**

Section 1. -- After a meeting has been called to order by the presiding officer, the members shall be seated and observe common courtesy for the duration of the meeting.

Section 2. -- Every member, prior to speaking shall raise their hand and wait to be recognized by the presiding officer. Once recognized, they may speak. The presiding officer shall decide the order of call should more than one person wish to speak. The presiding officer shall make all reasonable effort to allow anyone wishing to speak on a subject to do so. If it becomes obvious that such discussion ceases to be productive, the presiding officer may terminate further discussion and ask that a motion be made on the subject, or that members do further research on the subject and bring it back to a later meeting.

Section 3. -- The presiding officer shall state every motion coming before the meeting and ask for a member to second the motion. If there is no second, the motion shall be declared null. If the motion is seconded, the presiding officer shall then ask the membership if there is any further discussion about the motion, and allow members to speak about the motion.



After this discussion, the person presenting the motion may propose an amendment to the motion, if so desired. The amended motion must then be re-stated by the presiding officer, and seconded again as if a new motion. This process is repeated until there is no further discussion. The presiding officer shall then call for a vote. On general business items, a voice vote shall be sufficient, with the number of yes and no votes recorded if there are any no votes. If any Corps officer or the Liaison believes the motion to be of critical importance to the Corps, he may request a roll call vote of members present. The secretary shall then record the vote of each member, including the member's name.

Section 4. -- Amendments to motions previously approved will be handled as if it is a new item.

## **Article V. Interpretation of By-Laws**

Section 1. -- These by-laws shall not be altered or amended except by the process described in article X of the constitution.

Section 2. -- Should any dispute arise regarding the intended meaning of these by-laws or the constitution, the true meaning shall be decided by the president, subject to an appeal to the Liaison. Such decisions shall be entered in the minutes as a precedent for the future.

## **Article VI. Government and Chain of Authority**

Section 1. -- Roberts' Rules of Parliamentary Procedure is hereby adopted as reference for the government of all meetings of the Civilian Corps.

Section 2. -- The chain of authority and responsibility of the Corps shall be as described below. All appeals shall be made using this chain of authority.

- A. The membership of the Corps answers to the governance of the officers of the Corps as detailed in article IV of the constitution.
- B. The president of the Corps is responsible for overall governance of the normal affairs of the Corps.
- C. The officers of the Corps answer to the governance of the fire chief and his staff, via the officer liaison.
- D. The Board of Trustees shall oversee the governance of the fire chief and his staff.

## **Article VII. Initial Enactment and Laws Repealed**

It is understood that the Pewee Valley Fire Department Civilian Corps is a newly formed institution, with no previously existing structure or rules to encumber the implementation or execution of this constitution and by-laws. The Fire Officer Liaison is granted the authority to initially implement the details of this document in the manner most appropriate for the start-up of the organization. This may mean suspending some of the details of the constitution or by-laws until the Corps has been sufficiently staffed and organized. This constitution and by-laws shall be initially enacted through executive

order of the fire chief, effective **September 1, 2004**. This document was last revised in **August 19, 2004**.