

Fraternal Order of Leatherheads  
F.O.O.L.S. International



Articles of Association  
2020

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## **PREAMBLE**

The Fraternal Order of Leatherheads Society has truly become an international organization. With its inception in 1995, the Founding F.O.O.L.S. had no idea that this organization would have grown to the size that it is today. With the help of the Fire Department Instructor's Conference and the Internet, Firefighters worldwide have been introduced to our society; one whose main purpose is to preserve the tradition, rich heritage and brotherhood of the Fire Service, a coveted possession that is found in no other profession. The Founding F.O.O.L.S., as well as all our members, see a great need for the F.O.O.L.S. in today's society. With all the obstacles we face in our jobs it is easy to lose sight of what it is we really stand for. Our forefathers have worked hard, struggled and died for what is considered by us the best job in the world, and we owe it not only to them, but also to ourselves to preserve all that they have accomplished. Moreover, it is the spirit of our fallen Brother and Sister firefighters that we must keep alive. The F.O.O.L.S. symbol of the burning globe signifies that, worldwide, firefighters are all Brothers and Sisters, regardless of racial, ethnic, religious or language differences. Just as fire burns without prejudice, we, the brave soldiers of the war that never ends, are bonded in the same way; we are all Brothers, we are all Firefighters.

With the exponential growth of the Fraternal Order of Leatherheads Society, other chapters have developed. The purpose for the Articles of Association of the F.O.O.L.S. is so we may all follow the same path in our never-ending pursuit to preserve of our beloved profession.

## **ARTICLE 1: NAME**

### **Section 1: Identification**

These Articles of Association shall govern the association known as the "Fraternal Order Of Leatherheads Society" hereinafter referred to as "F.O.O.L.S., F.O.O.L.S. International or The International".

### **Section 2: Governing Body**

The governing body of F.O.O.L.S. International shall hereinafter be known as "Executive Board" or "E-Board".

## **ARTICLE 2: PERIOD OF DURATION**

The duration of the F.O.O.L.S. shall be perpetual.

## **ARTICLE 3: PURPOSE**

### **Section 1: Mission Statement**

The F.O.O.L.S. exemplify the true meaning of the Brotherhood by providing training opportunities to Brother and Sister Firefighters worldwide. We organize benefits to assist not only a firefighter and their families in need, but our communities as well. The F.O.O.L.S. exist to strengthen the Brotherhood of our chosen profession and fuel the flame of passion we have for our calling.

## **Section 2: Vision Statement**

Brotherhood above all – leather forever!

We seek to promote brotherhood in our work, in our training, and in our personal interactions.

## **Section 3: History of the F.O.O.L.S.**

The Fraternal Order of Leatherheads Society was founded in 1995 by a group of Central Florida Firemen. This group, known today as the Founding F.O.O.L.S., had a passion for not only the camaraderie and brotherhood that is forged between firefighters, but the rich tradition and heritage of the Fire Service.

The Leatherhead is a term used for a firefighter who uses the leather helmet for protection from the hazards we face every day on the streets. The Leather Helmet is an international sign of a Firefighter, a symbol that is significant in not only tradition from the early years of firefighting, but one of bravery, integrity, honor and pride. This helmet is a sign of who we are, not what we are.

The F.O.O.L.S., like the traditional leather helmet, has always existed through the brotherhood and tradition of the Fire Service, and will continue to grow and flourish as long as there are fires to fight and emergencies to respond to. All firefighters are welcome to be a part of this great organization; one does not have to own a leather helmet to be considered a "Leatherhead". All members must be true to your profession and true to your Brother and Sister firefighters. Our membership is growing every day, and we encourage you to start a F.O.O.L.S. chapter in your department and/or area.

We ask of each one of you, let us never ever forget those of us that have gone before us in the line of duty. Because those brave souls have given all, it is up to us to always keep them alive in our hearts and our memories. Long live the F.O.O.L.S.

## **Section 4: Function**

The F.O.O.L.S. is organized to implement and give voice to the principles embodied in the Mission Statement of this organization and to:

1. Function as a Fire Service entity separate and distinct from all other Fire Service bodies or movements;
2. Provide the Fire Service the catalyst which embodies the growth of education and training;
3. Move the Fire Service's collective conscience in a positive direction by building on long standing tradition and honor;
4. Charter affiliate organizations throughout the world and promote their growth and activities;
5. Enter public information activities to spawn a new understanding of today's Fire Service.

#### **ARTICLE 4: DEFINITIONS**

1. CAN: A small flask-like container used to partake in the “Ritual of the Can”.
2. AFFILIATE CHAPTER: Sub-organization of, and chartered by, F.O.O.L.S. International.
3. EXECUTIVE BOARD: A panel of officers established to manage F.O.O.L.S. organizations.
4. FOUNDING F.O.O.L.S.: The founding fathers of F.O.O.L.S. The following are the ONLY people who may claim this title:
  - a. Michael H. Gilbert
  - b. Ken W. Ireland
  - c. Walter J. Lewis
  - d. Thomas B. Redmond
  - e. John R. Simpson
  - f. Michael A. Stallings
5. FOUNDING F.O.O.L.S. EMERITUS: The founding fathers of the F.O.O.L.S. may appoint this title to a member of the International that they feel has had a significant impact on the growth and development of the organization.
  - a. Ellen Brown
  - b. Mike Dugan
6. MEMBER: Anyone in good standing officially registered with F.O.O.L.S. International.
7. WEBSITE: Internet-based web space for promoting the F.O.O.L.S.
8. BROTHERS: A gender-neutral term used to recognize all members, both male and female.
9. MAJORITY: Two-thirds of the Executive Board.

## **ARTICLE 5: MEMBERSHIP**

### **Section 1: Prerequisites**

The F.O.O.L.S. invites any firefighter that supports the tradition of the fire service. We have fire chief's on down to the newest firefighter amongst our ranks. The F.O.O.L.S. exists to keep the tradition of the fire service alive. We encourage anyone that is proud to be in this great profession to join the F.O.O.L.S. and help us keep the tradition alive. F.O.O.L.S. International reserves the right to decline or revoke membership for just cause as seen fit by the Executive Board of the International. The member may challenge the revocation of their status by written appeal to the International within 30 days of receipt of notice of such revocation. Failure to appeal within 30 days shall confirm the revocation and bar any later challenge or appeal. The decision by the F.O.O.L.S. International E-Board will be final.

### **Section 2: Eligibility**

Eligibility requires members to hold or have held the status of firefighter in one or more of the following capacities:

1. Career Firefighter
2. Paid-On-Call Firefighter
3. Volunteer Firefighter
4. Retired from any of the above

### **Section 3: Becoming a Member**

1. Members must be true to one's profession and agree to uphold the mission statement of the F.O.O.L.S.
2. Members must apply and make a \$20.00 donation to the International.
  - a. Only members who are registered with the International shall be eligible for appointment or membership to affiliate chapters.
  - b. To obtain membership with F.O.O.L.S. International, one must get in touch with a local affiliate chapter and request sponsorship into that chapter or start an affiliate chapter in their area.
  - c. The International does not accept individual memberships.
3. Electronic Membership Applications
  - a. Purpose
    - i. The electronic membership application process was developed at the request of several local chapters, in hopes of easing and expediting the application process.
    - ii. While the International has had a longstanding policy of a "hard-copy" application process, advancements in technology and the exponential growth in membership has made it crucial for the International to revise the application process to better serve the local chapters and their members.
  - b. The E-Application

- i. The e-application is a PDF document that is available from the International to local chapter treasurers, secretaries or membership trustees.
  - ii. The International membership e-application is not to be distributed to prospective members for individual submittal to the International Treasurer.
- c. E-Application Process
- i. Local chapters will retain the ability to have a chapter-specific application and may process said application in any fashion they see fit.
  - ii. The International E-application will be completed electronically whenever possible to aid in legibility during processing.
  - iii. The International E-applications will require the prospective member to sign the application. This may be completed in one of the following ways:
    - 1. The application may be completed electronically, printed, signed, and scanned at a resolution of 75-100 dpi.
    - 2. The application may be completed electronically and a scanned signature image can be inserted into the signature line.
    - 3. The applicant's name may be typed in lieu of an actual signature.
    - 4. The application may be printed, completed by hand, and scanned at a resolution of 75-100 dpi.
    - 5. If the E-application is being completed by a member of the chapter's E-Board, the name of the E-Board member may be inserted as a proxy signature.
  - iv. It is imperative that all the applications be filled out completely, including fire department rank.
    - 1. "Career", "Paid on Call", "Volunteer", and "Retired" are NOT fire department ranks, but rather relate to employment status.
    - 2. "Firefighter", "Engineer", "Lieutenant", etc. are examples of fire department rank.
- d. Invoicing & Payment
- i. Electronic applications will be accepted by the International from a local chapter's secretary, treasurer or membership trustee only.
  - ii. Once received by the International Treasurer:
    - 1. E-Applications will be reviewed for completeness.
    - 2. The applicant's name and chapter will be cross-checked with the International's membership database.
    - 3. An electronic invoice will be submitted to the local chapter's treasurer for the total amount due for the number and types of applications received.
      - a. New member: \$20.00 each



- b. Membership transfer: \$20.00 each
    - c. Replacement membership card: \$20.00 each
  - 4. Electronic invoices will include a service fee to offset processing fees incurred by the International through the third-party vendor.
    - a. Service fees will be computed on a case-by-case basis and will reflect only the amount incurred by the International.
  - 5. Electronic invoices will include the applicant's name and will also serve as a confirmation of receipt by the International Treasurer.
  - 6. Once the payment for the invoiced amount has cleared, applications will be transferred to the next step of processing by the International Secretary.
- 4. An applicant is not a member "in good standing" until his/her membership application is processed by the International and a membership number is issued.
  - a. Only members who are registered with the International shall be eligible to hold office in any F.O.O.L.S. organization.
  - b. Only members who are registered with the International shall be counted for delegate appointment, or International committee representation.
- 5. Individual Membership
  - a. Any existing member not affiliated with a chapter is strongly encouraged to join an established chapter or start an affiliate chapter in their area.
  - b. Members whose chapter ceases to exist may apply for individual membership status with the International. These membership applications will be reviewed and approved at the discretion of the International E-Board based on active membership and record of past participation.
  - c. All existing individual members will maintain their status, provided they remain current on their annual individual membership dues assessment.
  - d. Starting in 2015, members without a chapter will be required to fill out an Individual Member Questionnaire annually.
  - e. Members who are pre-paid will be grandfathered from filling out the questionnaire until their effective date ends.
  - f. All questionnaires will be reviewed by the International's Executive Board for approval.

#### **Section 4: Conduct Unbecoming a FOOL**

1. If at any time the affiliate chapter's E-Board finds that a F.O.O.L.S. member from their chapter has acted in a way as to tarnish the F.O.O.L.S. name; the affiliate chapter can discipline the member as they deem appropriate, up to and including revoking the member's Membership (member must relinquish his/her membership card).
2. Acts that tarnish the F.O.O.L.S. name consist of, but are not limited to:
  - a. Using the F.O.O.L.S. name for personal benefit; either F.O.O.L.S. International or an affiliate F.O.O.L.S. chapter.
  - b. Theft or fraud.
  - c. Accusations beyond a reasonable doubt with verifiable proof.
  - d. Any felony conviction.
  - e. Acting in a manner that brings disgrace to F.O.O.L.S. International or to an affiliate chapter.
  - f. Defamation of a F.O.O.L.S. member.
  - g. Any member whose behavior is illegal or unlawful shall have their membership REVOKED.
    - i. The action(s) of this member may cause their chapter's charter to be revoked as well.
    - ii. The International E-Board will be available to affiliate chapter E-Boards for guidance, but the decision will be made by the affiliate chapter.

## **ARTICLE 6: AFFILIATE ORGANIZATIONS (CHAPTERS)**

### **Section 1: Copyrights, Trademarks & Intellectual Property**

1. No person, group, or organization may use the name “F.O.O.L.S.”, the “Flaming Globe”, or any confusingly similar designation except an organization to which F.O.O.L.S. International grants affiliate status.
  - a. The Flaming Globe is a trademark of F.O.O.L.S. International, and may not be used singularly to represent or advertise an affiliate chapter. It may however be used, with permission, from the International E-Board, in conjunction with an affiliate’s logo.
2. Any and all logos, proposed artwork, and symbols must be approved by the International E-Board prior to any production.

### **Section 2: Charters**

1. F.O.O.L.S. International shall charter affiliate chapters from any qualifying parties requesting such status in each state, territory, or country.
2. Parties wishing to become affiliate chapters shall petition for such status in writing (using the Chapter application form) to F.O.O.L.S. International.
  - a. This petition shall be signed by no fewer than five (5) members of the party requesting affiliation.
  - b. Affiliate chapter applications must be accompanied by a \$150.00 chapter activation fee.
    - i. The chapter activation fee will include the membership fees for the five (5) new or transferring Executive Board members.
  - c. Affiliate chapter status shall be granted only to those parties that adopt the Mission Statement and Articles of Association of F.O.O.L.S. International.
  - d. F.O.O.L.S. International reserves the right to decline or revoke charters for just cause, as seen fit by the Executive Board of the International.
    - i. The affiliate chapter may challenge the revocation of its status by written appeal to the International within 30 days of receipt of notice of such revocation.
    - ii. Failure to appeal within 30 days shall confirm the revocation and bar any later challenge or appeal.

### **Section 3: Formal Organization of Affiliate Chapters**

1. Formal organization of affiliate executive board is set forth within these bylaws and shall mirror the International.
  - a. No affiliate chapter will be allowed to form sub-chapters within its organization.
  - b. Refer to Article 6, Section 2 for affiliate chapter authorization.
2. In addition to the International Articles of Association, affiliate chapters may choose to adopt chapter-specific Articles of Association.
  - a. Chapters may choose to include sections on:
    - i. Chapter-specific dues structure
    - ii. Membership application process
    - iii. Membership retention guidelines
    - iv. Regional or local guidelines
    - v. Etc.
  - b. Chapter-specific Articles must mirror the current International Articles as closely as possible.
  - c. Chapter-specific Articles must be approved by the International E-Board.

### **Section 4: Dues**

1. Affiliate chapter & individual dues shall be paid by January 1 of each year.
  - a. Dues are payable via check or PayPal (fees will be applied prior to payment).
2. Affiliate chapters will be responsible to pay said dues in the following manner, based on the chapter's active membership as of October 31 of that year:
  - a. 5 – 50 active members = \$75.00 per year
  - b. 51 – 100 active members = \$125.00 per year
  - c. 101 – 200 active members = \$225.00 per year
  - d. >201 active members = \$325.00 per year
3. Affiliate chapters not submitting a dues payment by June 30 will have its charters revoked.
  - a. An affiliate chapter whose charter has been revoked will be required to follow these steps to regain active status within the International:
    - i. A new chapter application must be submitted to the International.
      1. The application must be completed with E-Board designations; and
      2. The application must include the \$150.00 chapter donation.
  - b. Members of a chapter failing to meet the dues obligation will be prohibited from attending the annual F.O.O.L.S. convention.

4. The chapter hosting the annual convention will have its annual chapter dues waived for the following year.
  - a. In the case where multiple chapters host a single convention for a given year, each chapter will receive a 50% discount applied to their annual chapter dues for the following year.
    - b. Chapters who have representation via full conference registration and full conference attendance will receive a 25% discount on their chapter's annual chapter dues.
5. Any F.O.O.L.S. International member not affiliated with a chapter will be required to pay annual dues of \$20.00 per year, due January 1.
  - a. Individual members not complying by January 31<sup>st</sup> of each year will have their membership revoked. (See Article 5 – Membership, Section 5.5).
6. Affiliate chapters shall have autonomy to set individual membership dues.
7. It is the chapter's responsibility to notify the International of any changes to its membership roster, including:
  - a. Any information that is required on the membership application.
  - b. The member's status within the chapter.

#### **Section 5: Website**

1. Each chapter is encouraged to have a website or other social media presence to represent their organization.
2. Each chapter's website and/or social media page will be linked from the International's website.

#### **Section 6: Autonomy**

The autonomy of the affiliate chapter shall not be abridged by the International or any committee of the International, except as provided by these Articles of Association.

## ARTICLE 7: FORMAL ORGANIZATION AND DUTIES

### Section 1: Executive Board Officers and Elections

1. Members wishing to be considered for election to the International E-Board must be current members in good standing of an active affiliate chapter.
  - a. A member who has already been elected to the International E-Board, who's chapter folds during his/her term, will be permitted to complete the remainder of the term with 100% approval of the rest of the current E-Board.
2. The International E-Board will be comprised of the following positions.
3. The organizational structure may be employed for affiliate chapters.
2. Any amendments to this structure must be approved by the International.
3. President
  - a. The President or his designee shall preside at all conventions and all meetings of F.O.O.L.S. International.
  - b. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of F.O.O.L.S. International, with full authority to direct its business and affairs.
  - c. Responsible for representing F.O.O.L.S. International, and is the primary contact for interaction with the media, other fire service organizations, and related agencies.
  - d. Oversees, and is responsible for all actions of F.O.O.L.S. International.
  - e. Responsible for the continued growth of F.O.O.L.S. International and its affiliate chapters.
  - f. Provide to the general membership, a growth plan and implementation strategy.
  - g. Must be an accomplished public speaker and have the ability to interact with people on many levels.
4. Vice President
  - a. The chief assistant to the President, performing such duties as the President prescribes.
  - b. Attends all meetings of F.O.O.L.S. International and all F.O.O.L.S. International conventions.
  - c. Delegate and shall perform the duties of the President in the event that the President is unable to perform the duties of the office.
  - d. Ensure all information pertinent to F.O.O.L.S. International is disseminated to the general membership, E-Board, and Founding FOOLS.
    - i. This information will include:
      1. Minutes from E-Board meetings
      2. Yearly convention meetings

- ii. This information shall be gathered and submitted to the Public Relations Chair for posting on the website.
- e. Must have a working knowledge of Microsoft Office.

5. Secretary

- a. Perform all duties assigned by the President.
- b. Attend all meetings of F.O.O.L.S. International, all F.O.O.L.S. International conventions, and shall act as the secretary thereof, keeping such records as necessary.
- c. Responsible for the tracking of current and new chapters and members of F.O.O.L.S. International.
- d. Assist in developing and maintaining new chapters.
- e. Has the authority to validate new chapters.
- f. Assist affiliate chapters with membership issues and related items.
- g. Abide by guidelines for the establishment of new chapters.
- h. The Secretary is the primary contact of the Secretary/Treasurer for all Chapter/ Membership fees.
- i. The primary contact with all affiliate chapters and general membership pertaining to membership to F.O.O.L.S. International.
- j. Ensures that new applicants are assigned to the closest affiliate chapter, when the chapter is within a reasonable driving distance and make contact with such chapter for assistance with this membership.
  - i. A reasonable driving distance shall be defined as within 30-minutes from the member's address to the affiliate chapter's location.
- k. Maintain an accurate database of membership with an effective system of information storage, management, and retrieval.
- l. Must have a working knowledge, or the willingness to learn Microsoft Office and database technology.
- m. The main point of contact for the AIL Accidental Death and Dismemberment policy for all members in good standing.

## 6. Treasurer

- a. Shall perform all duties assigned by the President.
- b. Attend all meetings of F.O.O.L.S. International, all F.O.O.L.S. International conventions, and shall act as the treasurer thereof, keeping such records as necessary.
- c. The recipient for all mail addressed to F.O.O.L.S. International and distribute same to the appropriate E-Board member for action.
- d. Receive, expend, and account for the funds for the F.O.O.L.S. International under the supervision and direction of the E-Board.
- e. Oversee bank accounts, general accounting, budget, tax, and audit activities of F.O.O.L.S. International.
- f. Oversee financial and computerized accounting system controls and standards to ensure timely financial and statistical reports for the E-Board and the accountant/tax advisor.
- g. Advise the E-Board of any irregularity, lack of compliance, or problems, whether actual or potential, concerning the financial systems, financial operations, financing plans, accounting, audits, budgets, and any other matter of a financial nature.
- h. Coordinate the accounting activities with outside vendors and suppliers contracted by F.O.O.L.S. International; including, but not limited to, accountants, auditors, web hosting, and the banking institution.
- i. Must have a working knowledge of, or the willingness to learn Microsoft Office, QuickBooks, and/or QuickBooks Pro.
- j. Requires experience or willingness to learn accounting and tax reporting.

## 7. Training Chair

- a. Attend all meetings of F.O.O.L.S. International and all F.O.O.L.S. International conventions.
- b. Responsible for the coordination and facilitation of the monthly Fire Engineering Blog Talk Radio program.
- c. Serve as the point of contact for the dissemination of training materials to affiliate chapters and general membership.
- d. Assists requesting chapters with the development, implementation, and evaluation of their training plans.
- e. Maintains records and prepares reports showing individual chapter training events being conducted.
- f. Assists chapter Training Chairs in acquiring instructors/presenters to teach various courses for their chapter.
- g. Assists chapter Training Chairs with the process of obtaining facilities and/or venues for training.



- h. Assists the Convention Training Coordinator with organizing and implementing classes and hands-on training for the convention if necessary.
- i. Maintain an advanced knowledge of principles and practices of up-to-date fire and emergency services practices and tasks.
- j. Assists the International Public Relations Chair in posting training events, seminars, and conferences members of our organization may be interested in attending.
- k. Ensure submitted training articles are reviewed in a timely manner Public Relations Chair.
- l. Regularly review postings related to training and training events both on the International's web site and various social media platforms for accuracy and relevance.
  - i. Posts not already shared by the International should be brought to the attention of the Public Relations Chair.
- m. Ability to maintain knowledge, skills, and abilities, through recurrent training, to perform the tasks assigned as required by the President and/or Vice President.
- n. Training Chair Preferred Qualifications:
  - i. Minimum requirements:
    1. Currently hold the rank of Training Officer for a minimum of five years; or
    2. Past Training Officer for a minimum of five years; or
    3. Nationally recognized fire service instructor with the ability to provide training commensurate to the F.O.O.L.S. training initiatives.
    4. Working knowledge of Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.
    5. Working knowledge of sending and receiving email (Outlook, Gmail, etc.)
    6. General knowledge and aptitude with social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter.
  - ii. To perform this job successfully, an individual should be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The qualifications listed are representative of the knowledge, skill, and ability preferred.
    1. Associate's Degree (A.A.) or equivalent from a two-year college or technical school.
    2. Bachelor's Degree (B.A. preferred)
    3. Minimum of five years' experience as a fire officer in a career or combination department.
    4. Experience as a fire service instructor.
    5. Experience working with, supervising, and training volunteer and career firefighters.

## **Section 2: International Support Staff and Elections**

1. Members wishing to be considered for election to the International Support Staff positions must be current members in good standing of an active affiliate chapter.
2. A member who has already been elected to an International Support Staff position, who's chapter folds during his/her term, will be permitted to complete the remainder of the term with 100% approval of the current E-Board.
  - a. Public Relations Chair
    - i. Maintains Internet-based communications, including but not limited to:
      1. The F.O.O.L.S. International web site
      2. The F.O.O.L.S. International Facebook page
      3. The F.O.O.L.S. International Twitter feed
      4. The F.O.O.L.S. International YouTube channel
      5. Any other social media platform that may come into vogue.
    - ii. Reviews and approves applications to the "Members Only" portion of the International web site.
    - iii. Assists the International E-Board in dissemination of messages and/or other relevant information.
    - iv. Coordinates with the Training Chair for the timely posting and sharing of training-related information.
    - v. Assists the Quartermaster with web store maintenance.
    - vi. The Public Relations Chair may at his/her discretion make use of an E-Board approved Public Information Officer to assist in the dissemination of the F.O.O.L.S. message.
  - b. Quartermaster
    - i. Maintains an adequate supply of merchandise offered for sale by the International.
    - ii. Maintains the merchandise store portion of the International's web site.
    - iii. Provides for the sale of F.O.O.L.S. International merchandise at FDIC and at the annual International convention.
      1. Shipping and/or transportation of merchandise to and from the venue.
      2. Providing for personnel to staff the sale table(s).
    - iv. Accepts payment in the form of cash, check, credit card, and PayPal for the sale and shipment of International merchandise.
    - v. Coordinates merchandise budget and transfer of funds to International bank accounts with the Treasurer.

3. Executive Board and Support Staff members shall hold office for a period of four years.
  - a. Effective December 2013, elections for the office of Vice President and Secretary, and Social Media Chair shall be held.
  - b. Effective December 2015, elections for the office of President, Treasurer, Education Chair, and Quartermaster shall be held.
  - c. Each of these elections shall be held on a rotational basis, every four years.
    - i. The intent of this rotation is to maintain E-Board continuity of service to the membership by not changing the entire E-Board at once.
  - d. Elected positions take effect on January 1, immediately after the elections.
  - e. These positions shall be maintained by said personnel until voted out of office, resignation, or by a unanimous vote of no confidence by the E-Board of F.O.O.L.S. International.
    - i. Considering the unprecedented change in the International E-Board, the Founding F.O.O.L.S. reserve the sole privilege of appointing the International E-Board from a list of prospective candidates.
      1. This covenant shall stand until a time that there are less than three living members of the Founding F.O.O.L.S. or the remaining Founding F.O.O.L.S. give up this privilege.
        - a. At this time, general elections for these positions shall be held with regard to the rules set forth in this document.
      - ii. This new E-Board shall fall under the leadership and direction of the Founding F.O.O.L.S.
  - f. To be eligible for a position on the International E-Board, a member must:
    - i. Be a member in good standing, per Article 5, for a minimum of three years.
    - ii. Have attended at least one F.O.O.L.S. International annual convention.
  - g. One individual may not hold two offices on the same E-Board simultaneously.
4. Affiliate chapters may appoint additional positions to their Executive Board, but must maintain the offices of:
  - a. President
  - b. Vice President
  - c. Secretary
  - d. Treasurer
  - e. Education Chair

- f. The positions of Secretary and Treasurer may be combined into one position, but the E-Board must be maintained at an odd number to ensure proper voting status.
5. Family members are prohibited from holding office together on a F.O.O.L.S. Executive Board.

**Section 3: Management of Affairs**

1. The Executive Board shall have control and management of all the affairs, properties, and funds of F.O.O.L.S. International, consistent with these Articles of Association.
2. The Executive Board shall establish and oversee an organizational structure to implement the purpose of the F.O.O.L.S. as stated in Article 3.
3. F.O.O.L.S. International shall adopt rules of procedure for the conduct of its meetings and carrying out of its duties and responsibilities.

## **ARTICLE 8: MEETINGS AND CONVENTIONS**

### **Section 1: Quorum**

A majority of the membership of the Executive Board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at all meetings.

### **Section 2: Meeting Call**

The International shall meet at such times and locations as may be determined by any of the following:

1. Action of a committee
2. Call of the President
3. Written request of 1/3 or more of its members

### **Section 3: Annual Convention**

1. The International shall hold an annual convention.
2. General Information
  - a. It shall be hosted by a chapter(s) in good standing with the International.
  - b. The International Executive Board shall approve the date of the convention no later than one year prior.
  - c. June to October is the Executive Board's desired time for the convention.
  - d. All costs associated with the convention shall be the responsibility of the chapter(s) hosting.
    - i. F.O.O.L.S. International will provide and present the annual awards.
    - ii. The hosting chapter(s) may request up to \$1000.00 of financial assistance.
      1. The request must be made in writing no earlier than the first scheduled day of the convention and no later than 30 days after the closing ceremonies.
      2. The request must include financial documentation and/or receipts for which the funds will be used.
      3. The request may be submitted via standard mail or email to [treasurer@foolsinternational.com](mailto:treasurer@foolsinternational.com) at which time it will be reviewed and voted upon by the International E-Board.
  - e. Only active members who are in good standing with the International shall be permitted to attend the annual convention.
    - i. The hosting chapter will provide the International Secretary with a copy of the registration roster no later than one week prior to the start of the convention.
    - ii. Late additions to the registration roster will be provided on an as-needed basis.

### 3. Eligibility

- a. To be eligible to host the International convention, an affiliate chapter must:
  - i. Have been in good standing with the International for three years; and
  - ii. Have had at least one member of their chapter attend two consecutive prior conventions.
- b. The hosting chapter(s) of the International convention shall be selected by a vote of the membership, the International Executive Board, and the Founders.
- c. Chapter(s) interested in hosting a convention shall put forth their interest in writing to the International Executive Board two months prior to the convention at which they plan to present.
  - i. Presentations shall be conducted at the convention two years prior to the desired year of hosting.
    1. Example: To host the 2020 convention, a chapter(s) will perform their presentation at the 2018 convention.
  - ii. This will allow the chapter(s) selected two years to properly prepare for their convention.
- d. The awarded chapter(s) shall give an update on the progress of their convention planning at the convention prior to their host year.

### 4. Presentation

- a. Prospective hosting chapter(s) desiring to host the convention shall conduct a presentation to the convention attendees of their interest.
- b. In the presentation, the chapter(s) should address why hosting the convention in their city/region would be in the International's best interest.
- c. A vote at the convention will follow the presentation for final selection.

### 5. Voting

- a. Voting to select the chapter(s) to host the International convention shall be conducted by an official ballot provided by the International.
- b. Each chapter present at the convention will be provided one ballot for voting.
  - i. Only one vote will be allowed per chapter.
- c. Each Founder and Executive Board member of F.O.O.L.S. International in attendance at the convention will be given one vote.
- d. Should there be a tie between two or more chapters, the Founders and Executive Board members in attendance will vote again to break the tie.

- i. If the second vote results in another tie, the International President's vote shall be pulled to eliminate the tie.
- e. All ballots shall be archived for three years by the International Secretary for official record of the vote.

## 6. Convention Awards

### a. Dana Hannon Award

- i. Dana Hannon was a F.O.O.L.S. member that made training a part of his life. He was an FDIC East/FDIC West HOT instructor, as well as a member of the FDNY and Wyckoff, NJ Fire Department. Dana was killed on September 11, 2001.
- ii. This award will be given to the F.O.O.L.S. member who shows a true passion for training his brother and sister firefighters. Through training, we can ensure that our brothers and sisters will have the knowledge and skills that will protect them on the job.

### b. Chris Blackwell Award

- i. Chris was a firefighter for the FDNY, assigned to Rescue 3. Chris was also a F.O.O.L.S. member, receiving his membership card only three months before being killed in the attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. Chris had a knack for training, teaching collapse rescue both at the FDNY and FDIC West as a HOT instructor. Chris was awarded numerous times with medals for bravery from the FDNY.
- ii. This award will be given to the most active F.O.O.L.S. chapter. A chapter that has been active in their own community and the fire service community through fund raising events, training opportunities, and the like. A F.O.O.L.S. chapter that has shown not only their fellow firefighters, but the public, the true brotherhood of our profession through purpose, kindness, and dedication.
- iii. This award will be chosen by the International E-Board, based on the chapter's social media activity, training/after action reports submitted to the International, any other reports the chapter has made to the International regarding their activities.

### c. John Mickel Award

- i. Osceola County Fire Rescue Lt. John Mickel died in the line of duty during a live fire training exercise. His dedication to training and brotherhood were evident in his work, as well as by the performance of his crew.
- ii. This award is designated for a chapter that spreads the spirit and the word of the F.O.O.L.S. through brotherhood.
- iii. This award will be chosen by the International E-Board, based on the chapter's social media activity, training/after action reports submitted to the International, any other reports the chapter has made to the International regarding their activities.

- d. Josh Early Award
  - i. Josh Early was a career firefighter assigned to Engine Company 27 of the Charlotte Fire Department. He also served as a part-time firefighter with the Harrisburg Fire & Rescue Department. His service was steeped in tradition and pride in being an American firefighter. Because of Josh's dedication and commitment to being a firefighter, he took great pride in being an inaugural member of the Charlotte Metro F.O.O.L.S. Josh died three days after sustaining injuries at a fire in a private dwelling while serving the Harrisburg FD.
  - ii. The Josh Early Award was created to honor a rookie or new firefighter who shows initiative and passion for the job.
- e. FOOL of the Year
  - i. This F.O.O.L.S. member is an all-around ambassador to the mission statement of our organization. A member that has spread the message of the F.O.O.L.S. not only through his or her own chapter, but outside the F.O.O.L.S., bringing in new members, and starting new chapters. By setting a good example to other firefighters, a positive image of our organization is spread to all who encounter him/her.
  - ii. The FOOL of the Year will have his/her convention registration fee reimbursed by the International.
- f. Award selection process
  - i. Apart from the John Mickel Award, all other awards are awarded to current F.O.O.L.S. members who have been nominated for the specific award by another F.O.O.L.S. member or chapter.
  - ii. The International E-Board will review each nomination and vote on the recipient.
  - iii. Each award recipient will be presented a plaque at the Annual Convention in recognition of their achievement.

#### **Section 4: Affiliate Participation**

1. Chapters are encouraged to sponsor meetings, gatherings, and events sponsored by the chapter to celebrate the brotherhood of our profession.
2. Announcements of meetings and events should be forwarded to F.O.O.L.S. International so F.O.O.L.S. worldwide can be made aware of the growth of our organization.



## Section 5: Ritual of the Can

1. The Ritual of the Can is a symbolic ritual to be performed at all F.O.O.L.S. events, staff meetings, and conventions.
  - a. All affiliate chapters are required to have a “can”.
2. The Ritual of the Can must begin all F.O.O.L.S. events, meetings, and conventions with a shot taken from it by each member of the E-Board, and if desired, each member attending the meeting or convention.
3. The can shall be filled with a beverage of preference, as voted on by the E-Board.
4. The member having possession of the can shall raise the can and toast those present and those who have gone before, and have the first shot (see the Official F.O.O.L.S. Toast).
  - a. That member shall then pass the can to the President and likewise down the ranks.
  - b. Each member will partake.
5. Official F.O.O.L.S. Toast

***In the grips of death we depend on our sisters and brothers,***

***Through smoke and fire we protect each other.***

***Our calling is clear,***

***We shall not wander,***

***When protecting life,***

***It's death before dishonor.***

***Here and now we raise our glass,***

***A toast to the fallen heroes of the past.***

***Tradition, brotherhood, duty forever,***

***For this could be our last drink together!***

***Slainte!***

6. The member who has the can in his/her possession at the beginning of the meeting, or other F.O.O.L.S.-related activity shall receive the can back and announce the last shot of the night from the can.
  - a. The last shot will be a toast in remembrance of all the brothers and sisters who are no longer with us, but rather they are present in spirit.
  - b. This shot goes onto the ground, for that is where they lay.
7. After the shot is poured onto the ground, the can is passed down to the next ranking official of the Executive Board.

- a. The can is then secured in his/her possession until the next related F.O.O.L.S. gathering.
  - b. The process of exchanging possession of the can is perpetual.
8. The can represents brotherhood, trust, and is a gesture of faith in one another.
    - a. The partaking of the Ritual of the Can bonds us together in our struggle to preserve the heritage of the fire service.

### **Section 6: Challenge Coin**

1. The challenge coin is a symbolic coin at, but not limited to, F.O.O.L.S. events, meetings, and conventions.
  - a. All affiliate chapters are encouraged to have a coin.
2. The coin is to be carried on all persons in attendance at, but not limited to, all F.O.O.L.S. events, meetings, and conventions.
3. The coin shall be made of metal and no smaller than one inch in diameter.
4. The coin shall display the affiliate chapter's logo and/or the F.O.O.L.S. International logo.
5. Each member having possession of a coin shall produce said coin when requested.
  - a. The coin must be within arm's reach or within one step after being requested to produce said coin.
6. If the coin is not produced, the member being requested to produce the coin will kindly purchase one beverage of choice to the requesting member.
7. If any member in possession of a coin drops a coin, this is an "Accidental Coining".
  - a. Every member in the immediate area who produces a coin shall kindly receive one beverage of choice from the member who dropped the coin.
8. The coin represents brotherhood, trust, and is a gesture of faith in one another.
  - a. The partaking of the coin bonds us together in our struggle to preserve the heritage of the fire service.

## **ARTICLE 9: PARLIMENTARY PROCEDURE**

### **Section 1: Rules of Order**

The rules of contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, shall govern the F.O.O.L.S. in all cases to which they are applicable.

### **Section 2: Order of Business**

1. The standing order of business for all meetings and conventions of the F.O.O.L.S. shall be as follows:
  - a. Call to order
  - b. Ritual of the Can
  - c. Adoption of the agenda
  - d. Adoption of previous minutes
  - e. President's report
  - f. Vice President's report
  - g. Secretary's report
  - h. Treasurer's report
  - i. Training Chair
  - j. Public Relations Chair
  - k. Quartermaster
  - l. Old business
  - m. New business
  - n. Resolutions
  - o. Other business/open forum
  - p. Adjournment

## **ARTICLE 10: INTERNATIONAL FINANCES**

### **Section 1: FDIC, Indianapolis, IN / Rosecrance Florian Symposium**

Founding FOOLS and active E-Board members will be reimbursed for registration, travel, and lodging in the following manner:

1. Registration
  - a. The International will register or reimburse each member up to \$50.00 for FDIC main exhibition hall registration.
    - i. This amount is subject to change, allowing for fluctuations in FDIC registration costs.
  - b. The International will register or reimburse each member up to \$300.00 for Rosecrance Symposium registration.
    - i. This amount is subject to change, allowing for fluctuations in Rosecrance registration costs.
  - c. The International will not reimburse members for costs associated with attending FDIC classroom sessions or hands on training events.
  - d. Copies of all registration-related receipts must be turned in to the International Treasurer within 30 days of the event.
2. Travel expenses
  - a. Travel expenses will be reimbursed up to \$300.00 per member.
  - b. Members traveling with family members, significant others, or other F.O.O.L.S. members will be reimbursed up to half of the submitted travel total, not exceeding \$300.00.
  - c. Members traveling via personal vehicle shall submit fuel and toll receipts for verification of reimbursement totals.
  - d. Copies of all travel-related receipts must be turned in to the International Treasurer within 30 days of the event.
3. Lodging Expenses
  - a. Lodging expenses will be reimbursed at 100% for standard double occupancy rooms where two or more members share the room.
  - b. Lodging expenses will be reimbursed at 50% for standard double occupancy rooms where only one member occupies the room or is sharing the room with his/her spouse, significant other, family, or other F.O.O.L.S. member(s).
  - c. In the event hotel rooms are pre-booked by the International, members may be responsible for reimbursing the International for expenses above those stated above.

## **Section 2: Annual F.O.O.L.S. Convention**

Founding FOOLS and active E-Board members will be reimbursed for registration, travel, and lodging in the following manner:

1. Registration
  - a. The International will register or reimburse each member for one full convention registration.
    - i. Registration fees related to additional convention activities are the responsibility of the member.
  - b. Copies of all registration-related receipts must be turned in to the International Treasurer within 30 days of the event.
2. Travel expenses
  - a. Travel expenses will be reimbursed up to \$400.00 per member.
  - b. Members traveling with family members, significant others, or other F.O.O.L.S. members will be reimbursed up to half of the submitted travel total, not exceeding \$400.00.
  - c. Members traveling via personal vehicle shall submit fuel and toll receipts for verification of reimbursement totals.
  - d. Copies of all travel-related receipts must be turned in to the International Treasurer within 30 days of the event.
3. Lodging Expenses
  - a. Lodging expenses will be reimbursed at 100% for standard double occupancy rooms where two or more members share the room.
  - b. Lodging expenses will be reimbursed at 50% for standard double occupancy rooms where only one member occupies the room or is sharing the room with his/her spouse, significant other, family, or other F.O.O.L.S. member(s).
  - c. Any additional items associated to a room bill will be the responsibility of the member. Examples of items not covered by the International are as follows:
    - i. Room service meals/drinks
    - ii. Hotel restaurant/bar
    - iii. Pay-per-view movies/entertainment
    - iv. Internet fees (unless required for International business)
  - d. In the event hotel rooms are pre-booked by the International, members may be responsible for reimbursing the International for expenses above those stated above.
4. The International will donate up to \$1000.00 at the request of the President of the hosting chapter.

### **Section 3: Additional Expenses**

1. Founding F.O.O.L.S. and E-Board members may be permitted budgeted funds in accordance with their position.
  - a. Board members will be informed of their annual budget by the International Treasurer once approved by the International President.
2. Any expenditure not listed in the annual budget and is anticipated to exceed \$250.00 will require the approval of the majority of the E-Board.
  - a. Voting may take place via email, phone, text, or Skype.

## **ARTICLE 11: AMMEDNMENTS & RESOLUTIONS**

### **Section 1: Amendment Voting**

These Articles of Association may be amended by a majority vote of the International Executive Board.

### **Section 2: Resolution Voting**

Resolutions must be approved by a majority vote of the International Executive Board.

### **Section 3: Amendment & Resolution Conflict**

Amendments and resolutions must not conflict with Article 3 or Article 6 of this document.

## **ARTICLE 12: DISSOLUTION**

In the event of dissolution, the residual assets of the organization will be turned over to one or more organizations which themselves are exempt as organizations as described in Sections 501(c)(3) and 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954; or corresponding sections of any prior or future law, or to the Federal, State, or Local government for exclusive public purpose.

## ARTICLE 13: APPROVAL OF ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION

### Section 1: Adoption

These Articles of Association shall become adopted upon majority approval of the International Executive Board and will supersede any previous Articles of Association or guidelines of the F.O.O.L.S.

### Section 2: Affiliate Chapter Responsibility

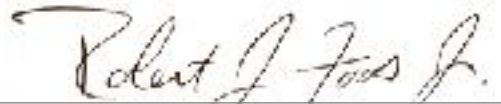
1. Each affiliate chapter agrees to mirror these written Articles of Association.
  - a. Affiliate chapters do not write their own Articles of Association.
  - b. If there are any chapter-specific amendments, they must be submitted in writing and approved by a majority vote of the International Executive Board.
  - c. Chapter-specific items must follow the format set forth by the International Executive Board.
2. The document containing the format will be available both on the F.O.O.L.S. International website, as well as by contacting [secretary@foolsinternational.com](mailto:secretary@foolsinternational.com).

### Section 3: Effective Date

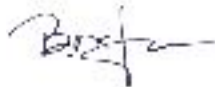
December 31, 2019



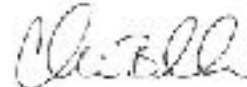
Rich Stack, President



Robert Faas, Vice President



Ben Fleagle, Secretary



Chris Bednarek, Treasurer



Rob Fisher, Training Chair