

**HERNANDO COUNTY  
FIRE CORPS  
September 19, 2011**

### **Mission**

To render support services to Hernando County Fire Rescue and other emergency organizations in Hernando County and to assist our community in the capacity for which we are trained.

### **Vision**

In five years, Hernando County Fire Corps will become a self funded volunteer group capable of providing assistance in the area of firefighter safety, school safety, smoke detector distribution in an attempt to reduce the chance of deaths or injuries from fire or accidents or help mitigate loss when it occurs. To accomplish these goals, we will also need to attract additional members and to be able to provide them with uniforms, training and motivational supports to make Hernando County Fire Corps an organization they want to join so that we can effectively provide the services listed above.

### **Values**

Such worthy and laudable goals may come about only through the cooperative efforts of all our members working as one, and by solemnly pledging ourselves to support our Officers in the discharge of their responsibilities and to hold ourselves bound in honor to conform to and abide by the Constitution and Bylaws, Rules and Regulations of Hernando County Fire Corps, Hernando Fire Rescue and the Code of Conduct to be adopted by Hernando County Citizens' Corps.

**ARTICLE 1**  
***Name and Purpose***

**Section 1.** The organization shall be known as Hernando County Fire Corps.

**Section 2.** The object shall be aiding in the delivery of support services such as but not limited to providing rehab for emergency workers at fire and events at the request of emergency organizations in Hernando County, rendering first aid services at community events, life safety presentations to enhance fire, home, school and wildfire safety awareness for the expressed purpose of reducing injuries and limiting property loss by increasing community awareness. We will also provide ancillary administrative and logistic services. These services will be as adjunct services as long as these duties do not cause loss of existing jobs.

**Section 3.** Hernando County Fire Corps shall pursue becoming and maintain 501 (C) (3) status with the purpose of securing grants and donations in order to carry out our objectives of providing services as outlined in this document and providing member uniforms and award presentations providing that this is in the best interest of the organization. Members will not be paid but may be reimbursed for expenses incurred in carrying out the goals of the organization. Hernando County Fire Corps may make distributions to other qualified 501 (C) (3) organizations with approval of the membership. No substantial part of Hernando County Fire Corps activities shall be carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation or participate in any political campaigns.

**Section 4.** All members are volunteers.

**Section 5.** The Commanders, Line Officers an appointee of Hernando County Fire Rescue and the immediate outgoing Commander shall be the governing body of Hernando County Fire Corps. The immediate outgoing Commander shall serve on this body until replaced by the next outgoing Commander and as long as they are a member of Hernando County Fire Corps. They may serve as an Honorary member. This governing body shall act as an advisory group to Fire Corps. Only Hernando County Fire Corps members shall have voting rights. This group will consult on use of grant funding and monitor any issues that may come up that appear conflicts of interest.

## ARTICLE 2

### Membership

**Section 1.** There shall be two classes of membership, active and honorary.

**Section 2.** No person shall be eligible for active membership in the Corps unless that person is qualified under the Hernando County Fire Corps Constitution and Bylaws. The applicant must be at least 18 and have a valid driver's license. The applicant must be able to serve in the desired position in Fire Corps. A person, for example, that has asthma should not serve on a fire rehab callout but certainly could participate in administrative, educational or logistic functions. These limitations should be made known to an officer by the member.

**Section 3.** Members shall be a United States citizen or legal alien regardless of race, color, religion, creed or gender. Before becoming a member, a background check will be completed and fingerprints taken by the Hernando County Sheriff's Office and meet the criteria of Homeland Security, Hernando County and Florida State requirements which at the present time is a Level II background check.

**Section 4.** Any person applying for active membership in the Corps shall obtain the regular application form of the Hernando County Fire Corps from an Officer of the Corps or from the web site. The application shall be properly completed and reviewed. Fire Corps shall submit the application to a Hernando County Fire Rescue designee who shall submit the application to the Sheriff's Office for completion of a background check and fingerprinting. Should the background check come back with any felony convictions, the application will be rejected. Truthful information must be disclosed on the application. Falsifications or omissions on the application of any nature will render the applicant unfit to serve in the Corps.

**Section 5.** Applicant will become a member upon a acceptable outcome of the background check and receive an identification card with picture provided by the member. During the application process, applicants may attend meetings and training as observers only.

**Section 6.** Any nonmember who renders an exceptional service to the Corps may be elected into the Corps as an Honorary member. Such proposal for Honorary membership shall be made in writing and presented at a regular Corps meeting. The proposal shall be referred to the officers for review. Upon report of the officers at a regular meeting, the candidate may be confirmed as an Honorary member by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the active members present. An Honorary member shall have no physical responsibilities as active members. Such member shall not ride the apparatus. The Honorary member may be assigned to Corps committees by the Commander. Such member shall have a voice when recognized by the Presiding Officer but shall not have a vote in Corps activities and shall not pay dues or assessments. The Commander shall have the right to exclude an Honorary member should there be a potential for a conflict of interest.

**Section 7** Any member may be removed from the Corps for not fulfilling their obligations to Fire Corps as stated in the Constitution and Bylaws of Hernando County Fire Corps. Charges may be brought by any member to the Commander or by the Commander. These charges shall be in writing and investigated by the Officers and acted upon as required by the Bylaws.

**Section 8.** Dues. Members shall pay \$12 (twelve dollars) per year due April of each year. Failure to pay dues will make a member not in good standing and be subject to dismissal after being three(3) months in arrears.

**Section 9.** Members must attend at least 50% of all meetings and put in a minimum of 24 hours of service each year to remain a member. A meeting can be made up by volunteering an additional 2 hours per missed meeting. No member shall be able to make up more than two (2) meetings with volunteer hours and those hours shall be in addition to the 24 required. The Officers will review the membership requirements at the end of each year and deal with those members who have not fulfilled the membership obligations.

**Section 10.** Members will receive a copy of these Constitution and By Laws and sign for it. It is the responsibility of the member to be familiar with the rules and regulations they are to be governed by.

**Section 11.** Members may be granted a leave of absence for up to six (6) months for all reasons other than military. Military will be for the duration of orders. At the end of the six month period, the member may reapply for additional time. Grants will be reviewed by the Officers. Grants may be requested for health issues, military leave, work related issues or personal reasons. If a leave is requested for personal reasons, only one 6 month leave will be granted. During this time regardless of the leave reason, members are not to wear Fire Corps equipment or represent Fire Corps at events. Membership requirements will stop during leaves except for dues. Dues must be current for leave to be granted. All leaves must be made in writing to the Corps Secretary. Specifics need not be listed and just a broad category need be listed. A member can request to be reactivated at anytime, and Corps requirements will again be in effect.

**ARTICLE 3**  
***Elected Officers and Delegates***

**Section 1.** The Officers of the Corps shall consist of a Commander, Deputy Commander for Operations and a Deputy Commander for Administration. Line officer positions will be Public Relations Officer, Training Officer, Logistics Officer. In addition there will be a Secretary, Financial Secretary and Treasurer. The Secretary, Treasurer, Financial Secretary are not line Officers.

**Section 2.** The terms of office shall be for one year. Should a vacancy occur during the tenure period of any elected officer, a successor shall be elected as soon as possible as numerated in the By Laws.

**Section 3.** Officers shall be elected at the annual meeting each year. There are no term limits.

**Section 4.** Additional positions may be added to accommodate growth or goals of the organization by a two thirds vote of members present.

**Section 5. Duties of the Officers**

**1. The Commander will**

Preside at all meetings.

Plan with county officials regarding Fire Corps responsibilities

Determine goals and objectives of Fire Corps

Guide the officers of the organization

With the Treasurer develop a budget or spending guidelines for money obtained through fundraising or grant submissions.

Have the authority to spend \$200 maximum per month for Corps emergencies without approval from the membership but shall be read into the minutes.

Appoint committees as needed and be a member ex officio.

Carryout the constitution and By Laws in a fair and efficient manner.

Suspend members for violation of Constitution and By Laws and provide hearings as defined in the bylaws.

**2. The Deputy Commander for Administration will**

Assume the duties of The Commander in his/her absence.

Manage personnel issues such as volunteer hours, records of training, certifications, emergency contacts issued equipment.

Submit all reports as required for Citizens' Corps or Hernando County Fire Rescue.

Schedule manpower request received from authorized Fire Department personnel.

Schedule events

**3. Deputy Commander for Operations will**

Assume the duties of The Commander in his/her absence

Work directly with the Training Officer and Logistic Officer to carry out the goals of Fire Corps in regards to training and maintenance of equipment and vehicles.

Develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and Standard Operating Guidelines(SOG) regarding operational issues and responses.

Determine equipment purchases that Fire Corps needs to carry out its functions.

Develop safe scene operations to employ at call outs.

Develop an accountability system at operational scenes.

#### **4. The Public Relations Officer will**

In the absence of the Commander, will be the Public Information Officer for Fire Corps and communicate policies, functions, and general interests of Fire Corps to the public.

To develop and improve the reputation of Fire Corps to the public via various media such as press releases, speakers bureau, radio or TV appearances.

Work with the Deputy Commander for Admin to promote recruiting activities.

Plan with the Hernando County Fire Rescue ,Fire Prevention Office, school and public education events.

Act as a line officer should other officers not be present at events and be familiar with all aspects of Fire Corps.

Manage the web site.

Assume the duties of the Deputy Commander for Administration in their absence.

All other duties assigned by the Commander.

#### **4. The Training Officer will**

Develop and coordinate ongoing training to new and veteran members to align skill requirements with Fire Corps needs.

Work with Commanders, Officers and Hernando County Fire Rescue advisor to identify training needs.

Develop a training calendar, course materials and instructors to accomplish the scheduled training.

Evaluate operations to make sure training is effective and if not develop remedial training to bring members up to adequate levels.

Develop and maintain a library of training materials and make them available in headquarters or online.

This position is a line officer and should be familiar with all aspects of Fire Corps.

Hold CPR/AED certification, Emergency Vehicle Operations Course(EVOC) and is familiar with operation of all equipment.

Work with the Logistic Officer to develop training related to proper operation and maintenance of all equipment.

Assume the duties of the Deputy Commander for Operations in their absence.

All other duties assigned by the Commander.

#### **5. The Logistic Officer will**

Inventory all operational equipment ,supplies and maintain a working level of same.

Develop a maintenance checklist for inspection of equipment.

Assist the Training Officer in developing training for safe operation of vehicles and equipment.

Develop a maintenance and supply checklist for medical supplies and equipment.

Assist Hernando County Fire Rescue with projects they might request and develop a cadre of members suitable for these assignments.

This position is a line officer and should be familiar with all aspects of Fire Corps.

Assume the duties of the Deputy Commander for Operations in their absence.

All other duties assigned by the Commander.

**6. The Secretary will**

Take minutes and maintain proper records of such meetings.

Record attendance at meetings and report same to Deputy Commander.

Generate correspondences as requested by the Commanders or results of item agendas requiring correspondence.

Make voting ballots for elections.

Be familiar with web site operation so to notify members of meetings or events.

This position is not that of a line officer and should not assume command of a scene unless they are the first arriving member.

**7. The Treasurer will**

Keep the Corps finances in order and maintain a proper record of all transactions including receipts and disbursements in ledger format.

Give a monthly report of expenses and receipts at each meeting so they are recorded in the monthly meeting minutes.

Co sign any checks of those listed on the checking account.

The Treasurer and the Commander may not cosign a check if they are related unless authorization is requested and voted on by the membership.

Work with the Financial Secretary so that a second journal is kept of all transactions.

This position is not that of a line officer and should not assume command of a scene unless they are the first arriving member.

**8. The Financial Secretary will**

Keep a separate set of books or journal to keep duplicate transactions recorded at meetings so that an audit can be conducted once a year.

Collect dues from members and send delinquency notices or contact by phone or email to facilitate collection.

Publish a report of those delinquent or arrears in their dues.

Fulfill the duties of the Treasurer at meetings in the absence of the Treasurer.



**ARTICLE 4**  
**Meetings**

**Section 1.** The regular monthly meeting shall be held in the Corps's quarters on the third Monday of each month at 18:30 hours. Since we serve other organizations, we might on occasion hold meetings in the quarters or designated areas of those organizations. In the event that the third Monday of a month shall fall on a legal holiday, religious holy day or on a Corps sanctioned activity, such meeting for that month shall be changed at the direction of the Officers or with the approval of the membership present at a prior meeting . Should an emergency arise and a meeting has to be canceled, a new meeting may be called by the Officers.

**Section 2.** The Annual meeting shall be held on the first Monday in April at 1800 hours, of each year for the purpose of electing officers. The process will be described in the By law section.

**Section 3.** Special meetings may be held at any time by order of the Commander or upon written request of (7) seven active members. Calls for special meetings shall specify the time, object or objects thereof and no other business than that stated in the call may be considered at any such meetings.

**Section 4.** A notice of all meetings stating the time and place shall be prepared and delivered by not less than four days prior to the meeting. Notice may be written, email , One Call or website.

**Section 5.** Seven active members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

**Section 6.** At the Annual Corps meeting and election, the Commander shall appoint the presiding officer, or in the Commander's absence, by the next highest ranking elected Corps Officer.

**Section 7.** The Commander or presiding officer, with the concurrence of the members present, at any Corps meeting shall have the power to exclude Honorary member where it shall appear to his satisfaction that the continued presence of said member would create a situation resulting in a conflict of interest.

**Section 8.** Email or website calendar shall be the accepted method of notification. One Call Now will be used for meeting reminders if available. Members who do not have email will have to make other arrangements for notifications.

**ARTICLE 5  
DISSOLUTION**

**Section 1.** By a vote of a majority of members at a meeting to dissolve, remaining monies will be donated to a qualified 501(c)(3) organization(s) in Hernando County or to the Hernando County Government if it can be for the expressed purpose of providing funds to the Hernando County Fire Rescue Department.

## **BY Laws**

### **Article One**

#### **Nomination and Election of Officers**

**Section 1.** Any active member whose name has appeared on the Corps roll for a period of one year and who meets the requirements of the Corps Constitution & Bylaws shall be eligible for nomination to office. A member desiring to be nominated for Corps office shall make such request, in writing, to the Nominating Committee by the February meeting. Nominations shall be closed at the March meeting. Write in voting or absentee ballots shall not be permitted.

**Section 2.** The election must be by written ballot.

**Section 3.** The Presiding Officer shall appoint at every election two tellers and one inspector, who shall collect all ballots cast, ascertain the correct number and report the number of votes cast for each candidate, immediately upon canvass of same. Tellers will count the votes and the inspector shall observe and confirm the count. Tellers and inspector shall not be a candidate for any office set forth in Article 3, Section 1 of the Constitution.

**Section 4.** A list of qualified and eligible candidates shall be provided to the inspector and tellers prior to the balloting. Names shall be placed on the ballot in order of the dated nomination request is received. The ballot shall be written or printed and shall contain the offices to be balloted upon, names of candidates for said offices and sufficient space for write-ins for said officers. Ballot shall contain a provision for marking the appropriate box with an "X" or a "v" (check marks). Where there is an ambiguity or uncertainty as to the individual intended to receive the vote, the tellers and inspectors shall make the determination whether to allow or disallow said vote. This determination will not invalidate the entire ballot per se. In the event of a tie vote, a run-off election shall take place immediately following the determination of those candidates who have received a tie vote on the first or prior ballot; the succeeding ballot shall be in writing and secret. This procedure shall be repeated until a winner has been determined. Only members present shall vote in the event of a tie vote and runoff elections. If two candidates remain tied after two successive ballots, the winner shall be determined by coin flip. The individual with seniority will call the flip.

**Section 5.** No Nomination of Officers shall be accepted unless the member is present or has signified his/her consent in writing and be in good standing according to Corps' Constitution and Bylaws.

**Section 6.** All nominations for all Officers shall be made no later than at the regular meeting in March.

**Section 7.** If during the term of an elected office it shall become vacant that office shall be filled for the balance of the unexpired term by appointment of the Commander.

**BY LAWS**  
**ARTICLE TWO**

**Suspensions and Expulsions**

**Section 1.** Any member of the Corps who has not performed duty as prescribed in the Corps Constitution & Bylaws shall be liable to expulsion from the Corps.

**Section 2.** The Commander shall be empowered to suspend from Corps activities for a period of up to thirty days a member for any violation of the following : Neglect of duty: direct disobedience of a lawful order; violation of the Constitution or Bylaws of the Hernando County Fire Corps; violation of the General Orders or Rules and Regulations of the Hernando County Fire Department; violation of the Vehicle and Traffic laws while responding to an alarm, and conduct unbecoming a member that would promote discord and/or decrease efficiency in the Corps or create a poor public image or any violation of the Citizens Corps code of Conduct. The Commander will deliver the charge in writing whether U.S. Mail or email if there is an email address on file within the 30 days to the member. The member has the right to appeal and can request to have the charges reviewed by the officers. If the officers vote in a simple majority to sustain the appeal, all records will be expunged from the file and the member will be allowed to return to duty. Should the appeal be denied the member will not attend any functions or use any equipment at Fire Corps disposal. Such action will result in immediate dismissal by order of the Commander. If the infraction is of such an egregious nature, the member will be asked to resign or be voted out of the Corps by a majority vote of the active, present membership.

**Section 3.** In the event that the above parties choose not to proceed as described in Section 2. the member will serve out their suspension and return after the notice date.

**Section 4.** A second offense will result in dismissal.

**Section 5.** The Commander can be disciplined or suspended by the Hernando County Chief or representative.

**ARTICLE THREE**  
**Resignations**

**Section 1.** Any member desiring to withdraw from this Corps shall tender his or her resignation in writing to an Officer of the Corps.

**Section 2.** Resignations shall be accepted conditionally until all Corps and Department property has been returned or accounted for including equipment issued by Hernando County Fire Rescue, ID card and Hernando County Fire Corps vehicle ID plate.

## **ARTICLE FOUR**

### **Committees**

**Section 1.** The Commander may appoint committees as necessary.

**Section 2.** There shall be two standing committees, Nominating and Audit.

Audit Committee Shall be appointed by the Commander in January of each Year. The records of the Treasurer and Financial Secretaries will be compared with receipts and disbursement and make sure equipment purchased is in inventory. Discrepancies will be noted and resolved before the Annual meeting. The Audit Committee will make recommendations as to improving the process so that all financial transactions are transparent. If all items are accounted for the Audit Committee will report that the books are in order. Fiscal year shall be from January 1st through December 31 of each year.

Nominating Committee will be responsible for gathering interested parties to be on the ballot. They shall be appointed in January of each year. They will recommend the ballot and assist the corps Secretary in producing the ballot. These recommendation must be made at the March meeting.

**ARTICLE FIVE**  
**Amendments**

**Section 1.** This Constitution may be amended by an assenting two-thirds vote of the active members of the Corps in attendance at any regular or special meeting provided that notice of such proposed amendment has been given at the prior meeting and has been posted for twenty-five days.

## REGULAR MEETING AGENDA FORMAT

1. Meeting called to order and Pledge of Allegiance

2. Reading of the previous minutes

3. Treasurer's Report

4. Report of the Chief

5. Report of Commander

6. Report of Deputy Commander for Administration

7. Report of Deputy Commander for Operations

8. Report of Officers

Public Education and relations

Training

Logistics

9. Unfinished Business

10. New Business

11. Receipts and Disbursements

12. Adjournment

Open Forum

Training



## **ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA FORMAT**

1. Meeting called to order and Pledge of Allegiance
2. Reading of the previous ANNUAL minutes
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Audit report
5. Commander appoints a designated Presiding Officer (not on ballot)
6. Appointed Presiding Officer appoints two tellers and inspectors.
7. Nominating Committee chair reads the ballot.
8. Meeting is adjourned for voting
9. Meeting called to order for announcement of winners.
- 10 Adjournment.