ELECTION POLICY

PURPOSE

Pursuant to the powers granted to the Board of Fire Commissioners by New York State Law and the interest of fairness and orderly process, the following procedures shall remain in force and effect until amended by the Board of Fire Commissioners. The Arlington Fire District desires to memorialize the requirements of the Elections and set out a policy for the annual or special Election of the Arlington Fire District.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Election of Fire District Officers, unless appointed by the Board of Fire Commissioners (e.g., Commissioner(s), Treasurer or Fire District Secretary) at the annual Election, special Election or a special Election to vote on a proposition, is governed by various provisions of Town Law and the Arlington Fire District Board of Fire Commissioners. The Dutchess County Board of Elections does not govern the Arlington Fire District Elections, except for providing the Fire District Secretary with a list of registered voters within the Arlington Fire District for use at the Elections or may be contacted in the event of a discrepancy for verification.

Annual Election of Fire District Officers, Special Elections and Voting on a Proposition

The annual Election of Officers of the Arlington Fire District shall be held on the second Tuesday in December. All other Arlington Fire District special Elections or a vote to determine the passage of a proposition will be conducted on the date to be selected by the Board of Fire Commissioners.

Notice of Annual Election, Special Elections and Voting on a Proposition

The Board of Fire Commissioners shall give notice of the annual Election, special Election, or vote on a proposition by publication of the notice once in one of the newspapers (having a general circulation in the Fire District) that was designated at the Organizational meeting of the Fire District held annually in January. The newspaper designated at the Organizational meeting of the Arlington Fire District Board of Fire Commissioners is the: “Poughkeepsie Journal.”

Time of Publication of Notice

The notice of Election or notice of proposition vote must be published in the above newspaper no less than twenty-seven (27) days and not more than thirty-four (34) days prior to the date of the annual Election, special Election, or the date for voting on a proposition.

POSTING OF THE NOTICE OF ELECTION

Website and Signboard Posting

The Fire District Secretary of the Arlington Fire District shall post the notice of any upcoming annual, special Election or a vote for proposition on the Arlington Fire District website and request the volunteer fire companies to post such notice on their signboard at least fifteen (15) days prior to, and not more than twenty (20) days before the date of the Election.

Posting on the Town of Poughkeepsie website and Town Clerk's signboard

The Fire District Secretary of the Arlington Fire District is required to send the notice of Election to the Poughkeepsie Town Clerk for posting on the Town of Poughkeepsie website and on the Town of Poughkeepsie signboard maintained by the Town Clerk so that this posting may occur at least fifteen (15) days prior to, and not more than twenty (20) days before the Election date.

Contents of the Notice of Election

The notice of Election shall contain the hours the polls will be open, the polling locations of the Election and the subject matter of the Election.

1) Poll Hours - The hours the polls will be open for the annual Election, special Election or voting on a proposition, unless extended by a subsequent resolution of the Board of Fire Commissioners shall be between the hours of 6:00 P.M. and 9:00 P.M.

   (Extending the hours of Election - The Board of Fire Commissioners, by resolution, may extend the hours to be longer, but the minimum hours must be between 6:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. and the Election hours may not exceed 9:00 p.m. Also, any extension of the hours must be consecutive hours prior to6:00 p.m.)

2) All Elections will be held at two polling locations:

   - Wards 3, 4 & 6 - Arlington Fire District Headquarters, 11 Burnett Boulevard, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603.

   - Wards 1, 2 & 5 - Red Oaks Mill Fire House, 213 Vassar Road, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603.

3) In the case of the annual Election for Fire District Officers, the name of the officer(s) to be elected and the term of office shall be included. In the case of a special Election to vote on a proposition, the ballot shall recite the proposition to be voted upon.

Ballot Preparation

The Fire District Secretary shall prepare the ballots for all Elections of Fire District Officers, special Election or Election to vote on a proposition. The Fire District Secretary may seek the assistance of counsel in preparing the ballot. Ballots may be paper or voting machines may be used. The ballots for Election of Fire District Officers must contain the name(s) of the candidate(s). In addition, the ballots must provide proper blank lines to allow write-in candidates for each office to be filled at such Election. If the vote is for a proposition to be voted upon, the ballot must contain the proposition.

Write-In Ballots

Ballots prepared for the Election of Fire District Officers shall specify the name(s) of the candidate(s) properly filed with the Fire District Secretary. Accordingly, in each Election there must be proper lines for write-in candidates. Write-in ballots are ballots to be used only to vote for any person whose name does not appear on the paper ballot or the voting machine as a nominated or designated candidate for the Fire District office.

Absentee Ballots

No absentee ballots are permitted in the Arlington Fire District.

Ballot Box

The ballot box or other secure storage containers are to be locked at the opening of the polls for the purposes of securing the ballots during the Election, and it shall not be opened until the close of the polls for the purposes of counting of ballots by the Election officials. Each Inspector shall be responsible personally for the custody of each ballot box or other secure storage containers and its contents from the time the Election begins until the ballot box or secure storage container is delivered, according to law, to the Election officials at which time it shall be opened, and the votes canvassed.

Poll Watcher's Certificate

Each candidate may appoint up to two (2) Poll Watcher's for each polling location. The Poll Watcher certificate may be obtained by contacting the Fire District Secretary in advance of the Election or at the time of the Election. Each Poll Watcher certificate must be signed by the candidate, and it must be filed with the Election Chairperson or any Election Inspector prior to the opening of the polls.

FIRE DISTRICT BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Designation of the Fire District Board of Elections

At least forty (40) days before the Election, the Board of Fire Commissioners shall designate, by resolution, the Fire District Board of Elections. The Board shall designate a resident Fire District elector, who must be a registered voter within the Arlington Fire District to act as Chairperson of the Election. The Board of Fire Commissioners shall also designate not less than two (2) but no more than four (4) resident Fire District

electors at each polling location, who must be registered voters of the Arlington Fire District, to act as Election Inspectors at such Election. Additional Fire District resident electors may be appointed for additional assistance. Elective officers of the Fire District are not allowed to serve as the Chairperson or as an Election Inspector.

Payment to the Fire District Board of Elections

The Board of Fire Commissioners, upon the appointment of the Arlington Fire District Board of Elections, shall adopt a resolution providing that such Chairperson and Election Inspectors shall be compensated for their respective services at the Election. If the hours of the polls are open from six o'clock in the evening until nine o'clock in the evening, each Board of Election official shall be compensated the sum of seventy dollars ($70.00) per official. If additional consecutive hours prior to six o'clock in the evening are determined and specified in the notice of Election, each official of the Fire District Board of Elections shall be compensated a sum not to exceed one hundred dollars ($100.00).

QUALIFICATION TO VOTE

Every elector of the Arlington Fire District living in the Town of Poughkeepsie who is registered to vote and who has resided in the Arlington Fire District for the period of thirty (30) days preceding election of Fire District Officers, a special Election or Election at which a proposition shall be submitted, shall be qualified to vote.

Affidavits

In the event a resident's name is not listed in the registered list of voters provided by the Dutchess County Board of Elections, the registered voter must complete an "Official Ballot of Affidavit Voter" envelope and a "Statement of Affidavit Voter" affirming that the elector is registered to vote and resides and has resided in the Fire District for a period of thirty (30) days preceding any Election and be provided a ballot. Once the affidavit and ballot are completed by the resident, they must seal both the "Statement of Affidavit Voter" and their ballot in the official affidavit envelope provided by an Election Inspector. Both the resident and Election Inspector must complete the affidavit envelope in its entirety, or it will be considered invalid.

QUALIFICATION FOR OFFICE

Petition Requirement

All candidates for office must obtain an official petition form from the Fire District Secretary or designated employee of the Arlington Fire District and submit same to the Fire District Secretary with a minimum of twenty-five (25) signatures of registered voters of the Arlington Fire District. The petition must be returned no later than twenty (20) days prior to the date of the Election. If there are multiple offices being contested at the annual Election of officials, the individual petition must designate the office being sought by indicating in their petition, the length of the term of office they are seeking. No candidate may submit petitions for more than one (1) office. All portions of the petition must be completed in its entirety. Verification of the first twenty-five (25) random registered voters who signed the petition will be conducted by the Fire District

Secretary using the list obtained by the Dutchess County Board of Elections. The Fire District Secretary may call upon the Dutchess County Board of Elections for assistance in verifying signatures or names if they are not legible. Upon verification of the first twenty-five (25) signatures, the Fire District Secretary will contact the candidate to confirm their name being placed on the official ballot. Failure to obtain twenty-five (25) registered voters will lead to the candidate's name being rejected, and the candidate's name will not be placed on the official ballot.

Residency Requirement

Every Fire District Commissioner, Treasurer and Fire District Secretary must, at the time of their Election or appointment and throughout their term of office, be a resident of such Fire District. *[The Treasurer and Fire District Secretary (who is not a Commissioner) may be non-residents, provided the Board of Fire Commissioners make the appropriate determination as set forth in the Town Law.]*

Department Membership

A Fire District Commissioner, the Treasurer or the Fire District Secretary may be members of one of the Arlington Fire District volunteer fire companies (Engine Co. #1, Red Oaks Mill Fire Company, Rochdale Fire Company or Croft Corners Fire Company) during the time of their term of office. However, a member currently employed by Arlington Fire District cannot hold the office of Fire Commissioner.

Arson Conviction

A conviction of arson in any degree disqualifies a Fire District Commissioner, Treasurer or Fire District Secretary from holding office or from being a candidate for any Fire District office. Any Fire District Commissioner, Treasurer or Fire District Secretary who is convicted of arson in any degree during their term of office, forfeits their office and shall be disqualified from completing such term of office.

Distance Markers

The Fire District Secretary shall conspicuously place, distance markers at a distance of one hundred feet (100') from the polling places. The distance markers shall be placed at least one-half hour before the opening of the polls and shall remain until such polls are closed.

Electioneering

While the polls are open, no person shall do any electioneering within the polling place or around any public area within a one-hundred-foot (100') radius in a public manner. No electioneering banner, button, poster, or placard, etc. on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate or proposition to be voted upon, shall be allowed in or around the polling place or within the one-hundred-foot (100') radius during the Election.

No Alcohol Use

While the polls are open, no person shall consume any alcoholic beverages within the polling place.

Closing the Polls

Voters who are in line to cast their ballot or in the polling place at the time fixed by law for the closing of the polls, shall be allowed to vote.

Custody of the Ballots

The Election Officials shall retain the custody and control of all official ballots within the polling place from the opening of the polls until the announcement of the result of the canvass The Election Chairperson must provide all ballots at the end of the Election to the Fire District Secretary for record keeping purposes.

Public Announcement of the Results

After the polls have been closed for the Election of Fire District Officers or a special Election to vote on a proposition, the Election Inspectors shall immediately canvass the ballots cast and the Chairperson of the Election shall publicly announce the result. The canvass of ballots shall be within the view of those members of the public wishing to be present. However, at no time, shall the members of the public interfere with the counting process and no ballots be exhibited to any person other than the Election Inspectors until the results have been announced publicly by the Election Chairperson.

Filing the Certificate of the Results

Within seventy-two (72) hours after the public announcement of the results of the Election or vote on a proposition, the Election Chairperson and Election Inspectors shall execute and file a certificate of the result of the canvass with the Fire District Secretary of the Board of Fire Commissioners of the Arlington Fire District. The Fire District Secretary shall file the signed certificate with the Town of Poughkeepsie Town Clerk.

The American flag shall be kept displayed at each polling place throughout the Election.

Board of Fire Commissioners approved: 11/21/22