

CONSTITUTION

OF THE

VIGILANT FIRE SOCIETY.

INSTITUTED AT BOSTON

JAN 12, 1807.



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1817.

CONSTITUTION.



PREAMBLE.

TO stop the progress of destructive conflagration—to render mutual assistance in the hour of peril—and to extend the influence of effective friendship—We, the subscribers, have associated under the name of the

VIGILANT FIRE SOCIETY.

Convinced that in such institutions, order is indispensably necessary, we agree to be governed by the following regulations, and pledge ourselves to each other, to support our officers in enforcing their complete execution.

ARTICLE I.

This society shall consist of a number not exceeding thirty. Any citizen, having been proposed at a previous meeting, shall be ballotted for, and if he obtains nine tenths of the votes of the members present, shall be considered a member.

ART. II.

This society shall be governed by a President, Secretary, and Standing Committee consisting

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of three members; who shall (excepting the Secretary) be chosen by ballot in January annually. And no member shall be considered eligible for the office of President, two years successively.

ART. III.

It shall be the duty of the President to preserve order and regularity, and to examine the accounts of the Secretary, and report at the meeting in April annually.

ART IV.

The office of Secretary shall be sold at auction, to the lowest bidder, in January annually; and it shall be his duty to record all proceedings of the society, to demand and receive all fines and assessments, and to pay all demands against the same. He shall, within six days previous to every quarterly meeting, notify one quarter of said society, in their turns, to visit the places of abode, and examine the buckets, &c. of every member. He shall also attend himself, at every visit. He shall also notify each member of every meeting, at least three days previous, by leaving, or causing to be left, at his dwelling a notification, having written thereon the name, place of abode and business, of every person proposed for admission and of all removals; and call the roll within half an hour after the time expressed in the notification. He shall attend every meeting of the society, and bring their records complete. Upon application of six members, he shall call a special meeting of the society, at the time requested. He shall, with advice of the President, provide dinner or supper at

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every quarterly meeting, at such place as shall be agreed on by the society at a preceding meeting. And in case of a new choice of Secretary, he shall deliver to his successor all the books, papers, &c. belonging to the society.

ART. V.

It shall be the duty of the Standing Committee, in all cases, to determine the validity of excuses offered for avoiding the payment of fines; and their judgment shall be final.

ART. VI.

Each member shall keep in good order, at his dwelling, in some conspicuous place, two buckets, two bags, one bed-key, and one screw-driver. The buckets and bags shall be marked with the first letter of the owner's christian name, and with his sir name at length; and the buckets shall be well painted, with the following motto lettered thereon:

Prompt in danger—Vigilant.

Every member shall constantly keep the rules and regulations of this society, with the members' names, places of abode and business; which he shall bring at every quarterly meeting complete. Any member is at liberty to withdraw his name from this society, provided he pays all that may be due from him; but shall not be entitled to any part of the funds.

ART. VII.

It shall be the duty of the members, at the alarm of fire, to repair immediately with buckets.

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bags, &c. to the place where it appears, and if the property of any member be in danger, they shall exert their utmost endeavours under the direction of the person or persons then exposed, if present, to assist him or them in securing his or their effects. Any member removing his place of abode or business, shall make known the same to the Secretary, within three days.

ART. VIII.

There shall be four quarterly meetings, viz. on the second Monday of January, April, July, and October; at such hour and place as shall be agreed on by the society, at a preceding meeting.

ART. IX.

Should a day set apart for national or state purposes occur in any of the above appointed meetings, the Standing Committee and Secretary, with the advice of the President, shall appoint some other time as near the original time as convenient, which shall be considered regular.

ART. X.

For the purpose of defraying the expenses of this society, there shall be an assessment laid at every quarterly meeting if necessary.

ART. XI.

No person, except a member, shall be admitted at any meeting.

ART. XII.

Any loss of buckets or bags, in time of fire, shall be sustained by the society; provided the owner

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advertise the same in one of the publick papers, at his own expense, within three days of the actual loss.

ART. XIII.

Every member present shall give a vote on all questions brought before the society, and in case of an equal division, the President shall give a casting vote.

ART. XIV.

Any member who shall neglect to observe these, or any other articles agreed on by the society, and shall refuse to pay the penalty annexed, when demanded by the Secretary, or who shall absent himself four meetings successively, ceaseth to be a member of this society, and shall not be admitted again without the usual ceremonies of election.

ART. XV.

All business which shall be necessary to be transacted at any meeting of the society, shall be done before dinner or supper.

ART. XVI.

The society shall have a watch word, which shall be proclaimed by the Secretary at each meeting; any member who shall fail to give it correctly when challenged shall be fined twenty five cents.

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FINES FOR THE SECRETARY.

	Dolls. Cts.
Each omission in keeping the records complete	1
“ “ to notify each member of every meeting	1
“ “ to insert the name of any person proposed on each notification	1
“ “ to insert every removal on each notification	2
“ “ to notify one fourth of the society to inspect buckets, &c.	2
“ “ to attend at any meeting of the society	5
“ “ to bring the records at any meeting	1
“ “ to call a special meeting	5
“ “ to deliver the books, &c. to his successor	5
“ “ to attend every quarterly meeting to inspect buckets, &c.	3

FOR THE COMMITTEE.

For not deciding on any question the same evening it is laid before them, each member	1
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FOR THE MEMBERS.

Omitting to attend at the alarm of fire	1
“ to inform of a removal	2
“ to keep the rules and regulations complete, and producing them at every stated meeting	1
Absence at roll call	50
Absent the meeting to pay his assessment of the day	
For not attending the Secretary at the examination of buckets, &c.	2
Omitting to keep his buckets, &c. in order, and in a suitable place, each article	1