RENSSELAER COUNTY AMBULANCE AND RESCUE ASSOCIATION, INC

By-Laws

RCARA
12/15/2011
3/26/2013
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ARTICLE I: Name and Purpose

Section A

This organization shall be known as the Rensselaer County Ambulance and Rescue Association, Inc., (RCARA).

Section B - The purpose of RCARA;

1. Bring together, for their mutual benefit, all emergency services providing pre-hospital Emergency Medical Services (EMS) in Rensselaer County, and to provide for the general good and welfare of RCARA and each member organization.

2. Act as a course sponsor for EMS training programs.

3. Promote communications between member organizations, the NYS Department of Health, and the Regional Emergency Medical Organization, and to establish better understanding between this Association, the medical profession, and the county government.

4. Support the Rensselaer County Mutual Aid Program.

5. Promote improved communications between dispatch and field personnel.

6. Promote better public relations between RCARA, member organizations, the public, and the media.
ARTICLE II: Membership

This Association shall consist of Organizational, Individual, Associate and Life Members.

Section A - Organizational Members

1. All emergency medical services agencies providing pre-hospital medical care may become an organizational member by making application.

2. Each member organization may send a delegate or an alternate delegate to each RCARA meeting. A delegate representing the member organization must attend at least three (3) meetings per year and pay dues annually for the member organization to remain in active status.

Section B - Individual Members

1. Individual membership will be open to any and all persons providing EMS Prehospital care in Rensselaer County and the surrounding area.

2. Individual membership is not required to have an affiliation with a member organization.

3. An individual member must attend at least three (3) meetings per year and pay dues annually to remain in active status. A member that cannot attend the minimum number of meetings may make a request, in writing, to the Board of Directors for a waiver of this requirement. The Board of Directors will consider work, illness, or other extenuating circumstances what prohibit a member from attending when evaluating the request for a waiver.

Section C - Associate Members

1. A person or organization may become an associate member by making application. Associate members are not required to pay any membership fees or yearly dues.

2. An associate member does not have the right to vote or hold elective office. They may be placed on committees at the discretion of the President.

3. An associate member is not required to have an affiliation with a member organization.
Section D – Life Members

1. After ten (10) continuous years of service to the RCARA, an individual member will be granted Life Membership.

2. A Life Member does not pay dues, but must attend at least three (3) meetings per year to be eligible to vote.

3. Life Members may hold office, serve on committees and serve as a Zone Coordinator.

ARTICLE III: Application for Membership

Section A - Organizational Membership

1. Application for membership must be presented at a regular open meeting by the applying EMS organization. The application must be accompanied by one year’s dues, which is non-refundable.

2. The application shall then be presented to the body for voting. Voting shall be by roll call with a majority affirmative vote of those members present necessary for acceptance.

Section B - Individual Membership

1. Application for individual membership must be presented at a regular open meeting by the applying individual. The application must be accompanied by one year’s dues, which is non-refundable. Each applicant must be at least 18 years of age. No applicant shall be denied membership on the basis of race, sex, creed, or national origin.

2. The application shall then be presented to the body for voting. Voting shall be by a count of hands or roll call with a majority affirmative vote of those members present necessary for acceptance.

Section C – Associate Membership

1. Application for associate membership must be presented at a regular open meeting. There is no fee. Each applicant must be at least 18 years of age.

2. The application shall then be presented to the body for voting. Voting shall be by a count of hands or roll call with a majority affirmative vote of those members present necessary for acceptance.
ARTICLE IV: Officers

1. The officers of this organization shall be as follows:
   - President
   - Vice-President
   - Secretary
   - Treasurer
   - Board of Directors, (consisting of five (5) Members).

A. The above officers shall be elected for a term of two (2) years without restriction of regarding re-election.

B. The Board of Directors will be elected for two (2) years on a rotating basis such that three persons are elected in a given year, then two persons are elected the following year.

2. To become an officer, one must be an active member or delegate serving RCARA for at least the preceding year.

ARTICLE V: Duties of Officers

Section A – President

1. The President shall preside at all regular meetings, appoint all committees, preserve order, and enforce all laws, rules, and regulations.

2. He/she shall have no vote on any question except:
   a. Those directed for officers only, or
   b. When there is an equal division, in which case he/she shall cast the deciding vote.

3. He/she shall take no part in discussion or debate on any matter or question arising at the meeting unless given reason for casting a vote, except he/she vacates temporarily the official seat.

4. He/she will be given $50.00 (fifty dollars) from the County Association’s Treasury as an operating budget for the office of President. He/she shall present receipts at each meeting as the money is spent. Additional funds may be supplied to the President as the need arises by the consent of three members of the Board of Directors.

Section B – Vice President

1. The Vice-President shall take the place of the President in his/her absence and perform his/her duties.
Section C – Secretary

It shall be the duty of the Secretary to;

1. Call the roll and keep a correct account of the RCARA’s meetings.
2. Keep a correct account of all attendees and absentees.
4. Provide at every meeting all necessary books and papers relating to the affairs of RCARA.
5. Deliver to his/her successor all books and papers, along with any other property the Secretary may have in his/her possession belonging to RCARA.
6. Verify eligibility of members to vote prior to any vote cast.
7. Answer correspondence concerning the Association as requested by the President.
8. Maintain and update the Bylaws of RCARA with amendments approved by the membership. All changes of the bylaws MUST include the date of the amendment.

Section D – Treasurer

It shall be the duty of the Treasurer;

1. Receive all monies due to RCARA and give a receipt for the same.
2. Keep a correct account of all monies received, paid out and reports same to the Association monthly.
3. Safely keep monies for the use and benefit of RCARA in a bank account.
4. Subject to the order of the President or Presiding Officer, pay all bills endorsed by vote of the Association.
5. Keep a correct account of all the monies received and place said receipts on file for the yearly audit.
6. Notify all members who are in arrears and inform the Association of the same yearly.
7. Present to the Secretary at the annual election a list of eligible voters.
8. In the absence of the Treasurer, the President is authorized to act as Treasurer Pro Tem.
Section E - Board of Directors

1. The duties of the five (5) Directors are to control and manage the affairs and finances of the Association in accordance with the laws of New York State Pertaining to Corporations.

2. Board of Directors shall annually elect a Chairperson from their membership in January who will preside at all meetings of the Board.

3. A quorum of the Board of Directors is required to conduct business. A quorum is no less than (3) members.

4. Meet as necessary, as but no less than quarterly.

5. The Chairperson of the Board shall report at each regular meeting of the Association concerning the proceedings of the Board of Directors.

6. Review the By-laws of RCARA at least every (2) two years and file a report to the membership.

7. Enforce the By-laws and policies of RCARA

8. Act as the body to which all complaints concerning RCARA shall be addressed.

9. Board of Directors shall function as an auditing committee, and make final approval of the yearly Association budget. The Board shall examine and report at the annual meeting in December the true condition of the finances of all accounts, including training, of RCARA.

10. Course Sponsor Administrator (Training Coordinator) this position is appointed by the BOD based on the review of resume’s and subsequent interviews.

11. Serve, with the President, to investigate and refer any and all charges to the appropriate authorities.

ARTICLE VI: Term of Officers

1. The term of office shall commence on the first day of the month following elections and continue for two (2) years.
A. Should a vacancy occur in any office other than the Board of Directors, nominations to fill the vacancy shall be opened under the heading of new business at the first regular meeting following notification to the President that such a vacancy exists, and to remain open until the close of unfinished business at the next regular meeting, when voting shall take place. Voting shall be by ballot, notice of such election having been given at the regular meeting at least one (1) month previous there-to by the Secretary. In the event that the vacancy occurs in the Presidency, the Vice-President will automatically move up to the President, and assume the duties of the President until the above procedures can be completed.

B. If any member of the Board of Directors are absent from more than half of the Board Meetings during the calendar year, it shall be at the discretion of the remaining members of the Board as to whether or not he/she shall be referred to the body of RCARA and be disqualified as a member of the Board of Directors. This may be done by a 2/3 vote of RCARA members present and voting. At this time another member shall be nominated by the Association to be elected at the next regular meeting to fill the unexpired term of the member thus disqualified.

ARTICLE VII: Zone Coordinators

Section A – Eligibility

1. To become a Zone Coordinator;

   A. An active member of RCARA for at least one (1) year.

   B. An active member with an EMS agency in the Zone they represent for one (1) year.

   C. Certified as an EMT or higher.

   D. Have required ICS and NIMS certifications.

   E. Elected by the member organization within the Zone they represent.

   F. Remain in the Zone from where they are elected for the duration of their term.

   G. Comply with the Bureau of Public Safety, Field Guide.

   H. Be confirmed by the Bureau of Public Safety.
2. The Bureau of Public Safety (BPS) shall notify the elected Zone Coordinator, member organizations from the appropriate zone and the President of RCARA when the confirmation process is complete. If the Zone Coordinator is not confirmed by the BPS, the zone shall caucus and elect another for the continuation of the BPS confirmation process.

Section B – Zones Represented

1. The Zone Coordinators of RCARA shall be as follows: Northeast, Southwest, Southeast, Northwest, and Urban. Coordinators shall be elected by their quadrant for a term of two (2) years.

   A. **EMS 201** serves the *Northeast* zone, including the Towns of Berlin, Grafton and Petersburgh.
   
   B. **EMS 202** serves the *Southwest* zone, including the Towns of East Greenbush, Schodack and the City of Rensselaer.
   
   C. **EMS 203** serves the *Southeast* zone, including the Towns of Nassau, Sand Lake, Stephentown and Schodack.
   
   D. **EMS 204** serves the *Northwest* zone, including the Towns of Hoosick, Pittstown, Schaghticoke, and Johnsonville.
   
   E. **EMS 205** serves the *Urban* zone, including the Towns of Brunswick, North Greenbush, Poestenkill and the City of Troy.

Section C - Duties of the Zone Coordinators

1. The duties of the Zone Coordinators shall be as follows:
   a. Schedule zone meetings a minimum of twice annually or as requested by an EMS agency’s chief line officer.
   b. Act as a liaison between RCARA, member organizations and the Bureau of Public Safety (BPS).
   c. Regularly attend the RCARA monthly meeting and report activities, meetings, multiple alarms, and projects that are occurring in their zones.
   d. Assist agencies in their zones as necessary through their Chief Line Officer.
e. Field Responsibilities:
   I. Respond when dispatched to;
      a. All major incidents when three (3) or more ambulances are requested.
      b. Respond at the request of a particular ambulance service to any scene.
      c. Respond to all multiple fire alarms and special requests.

   II. Make known to the Incident Commander and/or ambulance Crew Chief in charge that assistance is available at his/her request.

   III. If not dispatched, the Zone Coordinator must notify the dispatcher, prior to response, if possible.

2. Should there be dissention between a Coordinator and members of his/her quadrant which cannot be resolved, the Rensselaer County Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Coordinator shall be contacted. He/she shall meet with the Coordinator and the quadrant to resolve the dissention. In the event there are still multiple complaints by the majority of Chief Line Officers in the quadrant, the Rensselaer County EMS Coordinator will bring the matter to the Board of Directors for resolution. The Board will meet with delegates from all dissenting squads and their Coordinator to solve the dissention.

Section D – Term of office: Zone Coordinators

1. Term of office shall for two (2) years, however will not commence duties of the Zone Coordinator until confirmation by the BPS.

2. Voting shall be by ballot of the delegates of the member EMS organizations present for the appropriate zone. Notice of elections will be mailed (USPS and E-mail), to each member EMS organization immediately after receipt of the list of nominees by the Secretary of RCARA. Each member EMS organization shall have one (1) vote.

3. Should a vacancy occur, nominations to fill the vacancy shall be opened under the heading of new business at the first regular meeting following notification to the President and the EMS organization in the effected zone, that such a vacancy exists. Nominations will remain open until the close of unfinished business at the next regular meeting, when voting shall take place.
ARTICLE VIII - Course Sponsor’s Administrator (Training Coordinator)

Section A – Eligibility

1. To become the Course Sponsor’s Administrator:

   A. Have knowledge of the training programs and DOH’s role in it (being an instructor would be helpful, but is not absolutely required to do the job).

   B. Be willing to adhere strictly to DOH and RCARA requirements.

   C. Be able to handle the program’s finances and budgeting, to balance the accounts, and to see to it that all IRS requirements are met.

   D. Have good organizational skills, including the ability and willingness to meet important deadlines.

   E. Have good interpersonal skills to deal constructively with instructors, DOH, provider agencies, etc.

   F. Have the time needed to do the job properly in line with the growing complexity of the program’s requirements.

   G. Have storage space available for forms, manuals, course records, and the like.

   H. Have the ability to troubleshoot problems when they arise.

   I. Be able to retain a neutral attitude toward all program participants and not be caught up in factionalism.

2. The Course Sponsor’s Administrator is appointed by the Board of Directors, based upon resumes and subsequent interviews.

Section B – Duties of the Course Sponsor’s Administrator

1. The duties of the Course Sponsor’s Administrator include, but are not limited to, all of the following:

   a. Initiate EMS courses, through review of proposed courses, selection of faculty and facilities, provision of equipment and supplies, and distribution of course announcements.
b. Order textbooks, protocol manuals, Student Reference Guides, RCARA policy and procedure manuals, equipment, supplies, forms, and instructional materials.

c. Prepare all required paperwork for the startup of each course and for each practical skills examination.

d. Ensure adherence to all applicable laws, regulations, and legal directives as well as RCARA policies and procedures.

e. Administer the financial aspects of the program, including timely submission of vouchers, payment of staff and bills, procuring adequate liability insurance, and ensuring timely and accurate completion of all required IRS forms and reports.

f. Maintain up-to-date instructor credential files and an inventory of training equipment.

g. Serve as liaison between DOH and the program, troubleshooting problems and clarifying requirements as questions arise.

h. Participate with DOH in site visits and audits as required.

i. Order CPR and first aid materials through AHA and NSC and maintain continuation of AHA and NSC training center designations.

Section C – Term of Office: Course Sponsor’s Administrator

1. The term of office of the Course Sponsor’s Administrator is continuous until a vacancy occurs through resignation, removal from office, or other reason.

Section D – Stipend: Course Sponsor’s Administrator

1. The stipend for the Course Sponsor’s Administrator shall be $5,000 annually, to be paid on a quarterly basis at the end of each quarter of the year.
ARTICLE IX: Committees

1. All committees shall be appointed by the President or the presiding officer at their discretion as the need arises.

   A. Nominating Committee;

      I. A committee on nominations shall be appointed by the President at the regular October meeting of this Association.

         i. This committee shall select a Chairman and produce a list of nominees to fill the required offices of RCARA from the active membership of the Association.

         ii. They will present their report under the heading of New Business at the November meeting. The selection of their slate shall not in any way restrict additional nominations from the floor during the November meeting or the meeting at which the elections are held.

ARTICLE X: Election of Officers

Section 1

Election of officers shall take place at the regular December meeting and shall be under the heading of Old Business, and by paper ballots, furnished by the Association.

A. The President or Presiding Officer of RCARA shall appoint a minimum of two (2) tellers, who will distribute paper ballots, receive and count the completed ballots and report their findings to the President or Presiding Officer.

B. The nominees receiving a majority of votes in the office to which they have been nominated shall be declared elected.

   I. In the event that no nominee receives a majority of votes, a run-off election shall be held between the nominees receiving the two (2) highest vote totals, ties included.

   II. In the event of a tie in the run-off election, the President or Presiding Officer of RCARA shall cast the deciding vote.

Section 2 – Eligibility for Voting

Active member organizations and active individual members shall have one (1) vote each. To be eligible to vote, one must be an active member of RCARA as defined in Article II of these bi-laws.
ARTICLE XI: Annual Dues

Section 1 - Dues

A. The dues for the Association for an organization shall be $15.00 (fifteen dollars). The dues shall be payable at or before the regular December meeting.

B. The dues for an individual shall be $5.00 (five dollars). The dues shall be payable at or before the regular December meeting.

Section 2 – Dues in Arrears

A. Any member who shall be in the arrears for dues, for the space of three (3) months shall be notified by the Treasurer. If at the end of six (6) months the member is again notified and still fails to put themselves in good standing, they will be suspended from voting on any item of RCARA.

B. Any member who may be suspended for non-payment of dues, may be reinstated at any regular meeting by 2/3 vote of the members present and voting, provided they pay all money due the Association at the time of suspension.

ARTICLE XII: Meetings

Section 1

The regular meeting of RCARA shall be held on the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 pm and location determined at the regular December meeting of the prior year.

A. All organizations will be notified in writing of the meeting locations.

B. The annual meeting shall be held on the third Thursday of December when officers for the coming year shall be elected into office.

C. All meetings shall be handled in the manner prescribed herein. Where there is no specific regulation made, the matters shall be handled as described in Roberts Rules of Order.

Section 2

A combination of ten (10) active organizational members and/or active members, including one (1) officer shall constitute a quorum to transact business at any regular meeting.
Section 3

The presiding officer at all RCARA meetings shall be as follows:

A. President

B. Vice President, in absence of the President.

C. Treasurer, in absence of the President or Vice President.

D. Secretary, in absence of the President, Vice President and Treasurer.

ARTICLE XIII: Order of Business

At all regular meetings of the Association the following order of business shall be followed:

A. Meeting opened with a salute to the flag and a moment of silent prayer.

B. Roll Call.

C. Reading of previous minutes.

D. Bills and Communications.

E. Proposition for new members.

F. Voting on new members.

G. Reports of officers and committees

H. Old Business

I. New Business

J. Other items for the Good of the Order

K. Adjournment
ARTICLE XIV: Amendments to the By-laws

Amendments may be made to these By-laws by a 2/3 vote of all active members present and voting at any regular meeting, provided that the proposed amendment shall have been reduced to writing, read in the presence of the Association and posted with the Secretary at least one (1) regular meeting before the vote thereon.

ARTICLE XV: Enactments of the By-laws

Enactment of these By-laws, upon approval of 2/3 majority voting members present and voting, shall be enforced on the first day of the month following adoption.

President

Chair - Board of Directors

RCARA - Board of Directors & President

Updated
12/15/2011
4/26/13
Addendums

ADMINISTRATION OF THE RCARA EMS TRAINING PROGRAM

Background

Between the late 1980’s and now, the RCARA training program has expanded considerably and additional institutional requirements have been imposed upon the program by DOH.

In the 1980’s, we offered one EMT original course and one EMT refresher course in the Fall and again in the Spring. All courses were conducted and all equipment was stored at a single site. Now we offer 2-3 such courses at a time, plus occasional CFR courses, on staggered schedules, including summer courses from time to time. While our main training site is at RPI, we offer community-based courses at various sites throughout the county. We have purchased much more equipment in support of the variety of courses and store approximately half of it in a rented storage area solely to service offsite (non-RPI) courses. We have also had to purchase newer types of equipment (e.g., defibrillator trainers) and replacements for worn and outdated equipment (e.g., the stretcher at RPI).

The CPR training program also expanded, from providing community and CPR courses through the American Heart Association (AHA) to including various levels of first aid and bloodborne pathogens courses as well as CPR courses through the National Safety Council (NSC).

There are many more paperwork and record-keeping requirements now than then, both for the teaching and for testing. This entails additional ordering of manuals and photocopying as well as increased storage space for blank forms and for records of completed courses. For example, we have had to develop detailed written policies and procedures for staff and students and retain an acknowledgment of receipt form for each instructor and student. We also have to have a written acknowledgment form signed by each practical skills exam evaluator and each student being tested attesting to their having heard the appropriate set of instructions before testing begins.

There are also more and more stringent, DOH deadlines that must be met in running EMS courses, with more severe consequences if these deadlines are missed. We also now are obligated to carry liability insurance that covers the program. All of this has combined to make running the training program far more time-consuming and demanding than it was back in the 1980’s.
Duties of the Sponsor’s Administrator

Responsibilities of the Sponsor’s Administrator are numerous and varied. They include, but are not limited to, all of the following:

- Receiving and reviewing requests for courses
- Selecting a CIC for each course and other faculty as needed, along with the CIC
- Reviewing proposed course schedules and completing course applications
- Ensuring notice to County EMS agencies and REMO of proposed courses
- Preparing a large amount of forms and materials for course startup
- Preparing of vouchers
- Paying instructional and testing staff
- Paying bills for equipment, supplies, and other expenditures
- Securing adequate teaching facilities for each course
- Ordering textbooks and workbooks through RPI Bookstore
- Ordering protocol books and student reference guides through DOH
- Ordering CPR and first aid materials through AHA and NSC
- Submitting the proper paperwork in a timely manner
- Conducting the course within budget
- Accounting for all income and expenditures for the course
- Ordering adequate equipment and supplies and getting them to RPI/offsite storage
- Providing access to offsite storage for obtaining and returning equipment
- Preparing a large amount of paperwork for practical skills exams
- Ordering audio-visual and other instructional materials for instructors
- Maintaining an inventory of the training equipment, divided by site
- Ensuring that adequate insurance continues in force
- Maintaining continuation of AHA and NSC training center designation
- Maintaining instructor credential files
- Providing instructional faculty and staff with current NYS-EMS policies
- Observing lecture and lab sessions periodically to ensure that course objectives as well as NYS-EMS and RCARA policies are being met
- Participating with DOH in site visits and audits
- Preparing and submitting sponsorship renewal documents
- Troubleshooting problems as they arise
- Clarifying requirements with DOH as questions arise
- Ensuring that required tax/financial filings are completed in a timely manner:
  -- 1099 forms to staff (akin to W2 forms) and summary to the IRS
  -- 990 tax return for nonprofit organizations to the IRS
- Adhering to the policies of NYS-EMS and RCARA
Selection Criteria

Most of the criteria should be apparent from the job responsibilities, but the following are a few of the key attributes the new sponsor’s administrator needs, not necessarily in the order of importance:

- Knowledge of the training program and DOH’s role in it (being an instructor would be helpful, but is not absolutely required to do the job).
- Willingness to adhere to DOH and RCARA requirements.
- Ability to handle the finances/budgeting, to balance the accounts, and to see to it that the IRS requirements are met.
- Good organizational skills, including the ability and willingness to meet important deadlines.
- Good interpersonal skills to deal with instructors, DOH, provider agencies, etc.
- Have the time available that will be needed to do the job properly.
- Have storage space available at home for forms, course records, and the like.
- Have the ability to troubleshoot problems when they arise.
- Strive to retain a neutral attitude and not be caught up in factionalism.