

**Village of Centuria
Polk County, Wisconsin
Ordinance Amendment NO. 03-2026**

The Village Board of Trustees of the Village of Centuria, Polk County, Wisconsin, do ordain the following ordinances:

Chapter 244. Fires and Fire Prevention

Article I. Fire Protection

§ 244-1. Impeding fire equipment prohibited.

No person shall impede the progress of a fire engine, fire truck or other fire apparatus of the ~~Centuria Area Fire Commission ("Fire Department")~~ **Fire Department** along the streets or alleys of such Village at the time of a fire or when the Fire Department of the Village is using such streets or alleys in response to a fire alarm or for practice.

§ 244-4. Vehicles to yield right-of-way.

Whenever there shall be a fire or fire alarm or the ~~Centuria Volunteer~~ Fire Department shall be out for practice, every person driving or riding in a motorized or other vehicle shall move and remain to the side of the street until the fire engine and fire truck and other fire apparatus shall have passed.

Chapter 59. Fire Department

§ 59-1. Fire Department constitution and bylaws; goals.

A. Goals of the fire defense program.

(1) The primary objective of the fire defense program is to serve all citizens, without prejudice or favoritism, by safeguarding, collectively and individually, their lives against the effects of fires and explosions.

(2) The second objective of the fire defense program is to safeguard the general economy and welfare of the community by preventing major conflagrations and the destruction by fire of industries and businesses.

(3) The third objective of the fire defense program is to protect the property of all citizens against the effects of fire and explosions. All property deserves equal protection, regardless of location or monetary value.

B. Fire Department recognized. The ~~Centuria Volunteer~~ **Unity Fire Association** is hereby officially recognized as the Fire Department ~~of the serving the~~ Village of Centuria, and the duty of the firefighting and the prevention of fires in the Village is delegated to such Department. ~~Its organization and internal regulation shall be governed by the provisions of this chapter and~~

by such bylaws adopted by the Department as are approved by the Village Board, except as is otherwise provided by law and ordinance. The Unity Fire Association shall be responsible for the program of fire defense for the citizens and property within the Village of Centuria.

C. Bylaws and Organization. ~~The Centuria Fire Department shall adopt bylaws for the control, management and government of and for regulating the business and proceedings of the Department, which bylaws, after adoption by a 2/3 vote of the members of the Department, shall not become effective until approved by the Village Board. Amendments shall be adopted in the same manner.~~ The Unity Fire Association shall be organized and governed pursuant to its bylaws.

D. Appropriations. The Village Board shall appropriate funds to provide for operation and for such apparatus and equipment for the use of the Fire Department as it may deem expedient and necessary to maintain efficiency and properly protect life and property from fire.

E. Organization.

~~(1) Composition.~~ The Fire Department shall consist of the following officers: one Chief, a First and Second Assistant Chief, and a Secretary-Treasurer, together with one master mechanic and as many drivers and firefighters who are residents or employed within the Centuria Fire District as may be appointed by the Chief, provided at no time shall the Department consist of less than 22 active members.

~~(2) Active membership.~~ Active membership in the Department for members other than the Chief shall cease at 55 years of age unless the Department shall, by a majority vote, approve of the person continuing as an active member. Upon reaching age 55, active members shall become honorary members and be assigned to lighter duties.

~~(3) Membership.~~

~~(a) Application for membership.~~ Any person desiring to be a member of the Fire Department may file with the Secretary an application in such form as the Fire Department may require. Each applicant shall also file a certificate of physical fitness from such physician as the Chief may designate.

~~(b) Resignations.~~ All resignations from the Department shall take the same course as applications for and appointments to membership.

~~(4) Chief and Assistant Chiefs.~~

~~(a) A vacancy in the office of Chief shall be filled by election by the members of the Department.~~

~~(b) The First and Second Assistant Chiefs shall be appointed by the Chief from members of the Department.~~

(5) Election of officers. The election of the Secretary-Treasurer and such social officers as the bylaws may require shall be held at the annual meeting of the Department in such manner as is provided in the bylaws. In case of any vacancy, the Chief shall appoint a member in good standing to fill the office until the next annual election.

F. Powers and duties of Chief.

(1) General supervision. The Chief shall have the general supervision of the Department, which supervision shall be subject to and not conflict with this chapter and the bylaws of the Department. The Chief shall be responsible for the safety of the members of the Department.

(2) Presiding officer. The Chief shall preside at all meetings of the Department, call special meetings, preserve order, decide all points of order that may arise and enforce a rigid observance of this chapter and bylaws.

(3) Command of firefighting operations. The Chief shall be present at all fires, if possible, and have complete command and entire responsibility of all firefighting operations, plan the control of the same, direct the action of the Department when it arrives at the fire, observe that the Department does its duty, grant leaves of absence at a fire when he/she may deem it proper, and see that the fire apparatus is kept in proper condition at all times.

(4) Disciplinary actions. The Chief may demote or expel any officer or member of the Department for neglect or refusal to perform his/her departmental duties or for nonresidence, subject to an appeal from such demotion or expulsion to the Village Board.

(5) Department budget. Not later than October 1 of each year, the Chief shall file with the Village Clerk-Treasurer a detailed estimate of the appropriations needed for the conduct of the Department during the ensuing fiscal year.

(6) Reports to the Board. The Chief shall submit a written report to the Village Board not later than February 1 of each year and at such other times as he/she deems desirable relating to the conditions of various pieces of apparatus and appurtenances; the number of hydrants and the condition of the same; the number of fires occurring since the previous report, and the date of the same and loss occasioned thereby; the total number of active members in the Department, and resignations and expulsions from the Department. The Chief shall also report upon the drill and training program of the Department together with other pertinent information, including recommendations for such improvements as he/she deems proper and necessary for the operation of the Department.

(7) Enforcement of fire prevention ordinances. The Chief shall enforce all fire prevention ordinances of the Village and state laws and regulations pertaining to fire prevention and shall keep citizens informed on fire prevention methods and on the activities of the Department.

(8) Fire record book. The Chief shall keep a fire record book of every fire to which the Department was called and shall enter in such book the locality of fire, time alarm was

~~received, cause of fire, where fire started, cause of delay (if any) in responding, amount of insurance carried on buildings and contents, estimated fire loss, time fire was extinguished, names of members responding and general remarks.~~

~~(9) Apparatus inventory. The Chief shall keep an inventory of all apparatus and equipment and an inventory of all hose, showing dates and results of tests on each length, which shall be individually numbered.~~

~~(10) Duties of commanding officer. He/she shall perform such other duties as are usually incumbent on the commanding officer of the Fire Department.~~

G. Village Board to authorize fire equipment.

~~(1) Authorization. The Village Board shall provide such apparatus and equipment for the use of the Fire Department as it may deem expedient and necessary to maintain efficiency and to properly protect life and property from fire.~~

~~(2) Other use. No apparatus shall be used for any purpose except for firefighting within the Village limits and such townships under contract or in training therefor, except pursuant to an agreement approved by the Village Board after the Chief has given his/her recommendations on such use. With the approval of the Chief, such apparatus may be used for emergency purposes other than firefighting within or out of the Village.~~

§ 59-2. Police power of Department; investigation of fires.

[Amended 8-12-2024 by Ord. No. 03-2024]

A. Police authority at fires.

(1) The Chief and assistants or officers in command at any fire are hereby vested with full and complete police authority at fires **and Any officer of the Centuria Volunteer Fire Department** may cause the arrest of any person failing to give the right-of-way to the Centuria Volunteer Fire Department in responding to a fire **call**.

(2) The Fire Chief may prescribe certain limits in the vicinity of any fire within which no persons, excepting firefighters and police officers and those admitted by order of any officer of the Fire Department, shall be permitted to come.

(3) The Chief shall have the power to cause the removal of any property whenever it shall become necessary for the preservation of such property from fire or to prevent the spreading of fire or to protect the adjoining property, and during the progress of any fire he/she shall have the power to cause the removal of all wires or other facilities and the turning off of all electricity or other services where the same impedes the work of the Fire Department during the progress of a fire.

B. Fire inspection duties.

(1) The Fire Chief ~~or the Chief's designee~~ shall be the Fire Inspector of the Village of Centuria and shall have the power to appoint one or more deputy fire inspectors and shall perform all duties

required of the Fire Inspector by the laws of the state and rules of the Department of **Safety and Professional Services, Industry, Labor, and Human Relations**, particularly § 101.14, Wis. Stats.

(2) While acting as Fire Inspector pursuant to § **101.14(2)**, Wis. Stats., the Fire Chief or any officer of the ~~Centuria Volunteer~~ Fire Department designated by the Fire Chief shall have the right and authority to enter any building or upon any premises in the Village of Centuria at all reasonable hours for the purpose of making inspections or investigations which, under the provisions of this Code, he/she may deem necessary. Should the Fire Inspector find that any provisions of this Code relating to fire hazards and prevention of fires are being violated or that a fire hazard exists which should be eliminated, it shall be **his/her fire inspectors** duty to give such directions for the abatement of such conditions as he/she shall deem necessary and, if such directions be not complied with, to report such noncompliance to the Village Board for further action.

(3) The Chief of ~~Centuria Volunteer~~ the Fire Department ("**Fire Department**") is required by himself/herself or by officers or members of the Fire Department designated by him/her as fire inspectors, to inspect all buildings, premises and public thoroughfares, except the interior of private dwellings, for the purpose of ascertaining and causing to be corrected any conditions liable to cause fire or any violations of any law or ordinance relating to the fire hazard or to the prevention of fires. Such inspections shall be made at least once each calendar year in all territory served by the **Fire Chief's** Fire Department. The Fire Chief may, at his or her discretion, require more frequent inspections than otherwise required under this section. Corrective action inspections shall occur at the time set by the Fire Inspector.

(4) Written reports of inspections shall be made and kept on file in the office of the Chief of the Fire Department in the manner and form required by the **State Department of Safety and Professional Services Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations**. A copy of such reports shall be filed with the Fire Chief.

C. Fire Inspectors Handbook. The Fire Inspectors Handbook, **State Department of Safety and Professional Services Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations**, is hereby adopted and made part of this chapter by reference.

§ 59-3. Firefighters may enter adjacent property.

A. Entering adjacent property. It shall be lawful for any firefighter while acting under the direction of the Fire Chief or any other officer in command to enter upon the premises adjacent to or in the vicinity of a building or other property then on fire for the purpose of extinguishing such fire, and in case any person shall hinder, resist or obstruct any firefighter in the discharge of his/her duty as is hereinbefore provided, the person so offending shall be deemed guilty of resisting firefighter in the discharge of their duty.

B. Destruction of property to prevent the spread of fire. During the progress of any fire, the Fire Chief or his/her assistant shall have the power to order the removal or destruction of any property necessary to prevent the further spread of fire, provided that it is inevitable that, unless such property is removed, other property is in danger of being destroyed by fire.

§ 59-4. Fire Department authorized to hold volunteer company funds.

A. Purpose and authority. This section is enacted pursuant to the authority of § 66.0608, Wis. Stats, for the purpose of authorizing "volunteer funds" to be held in the name of the Centuria Volunteer Fire Department. This section is to be interpreted in conformance with that statute as it may be amended from time to time.

B. Authorization. The Centuria Village Board does hereby authorize the Fire Chief to deposit volunteer company funds of the Fire Department in an account in the name of the Centuria Volunteer Fire Department in any public depository in which other Village funds are being held by the Village Clerk-Treasurer or designee.

C. Control of funds. The Centuria Volunteer Fire Department through its Fire Chief is granted exclusive control over the expenditure of volunteer company funds of the Fire Department. This authority is granted without limitation as to amount or type of funds. It is subject to the limitations and requirements hereinafter set forth.

D. Limitations and requirements. The following limitations and requirements shall apply to the handling and disbursement of funds from the account:

(1) Expenditures. Expenditures withdrawn from the account may be made only upon majority vote of Centuria Volunteer Fire Department members present at a duly noticed meeting of the Fire Department. Such withdrawals and expenditures may be made for any purpose that promotes the ability of the Fire Department to provide services for which it is organized.

(2) Accountings. The Fire Chief shall provide the Village with a quarterly statement at the end of March, June, September and December of each calendar year. The statements shall be provided within 30 days of the end of the calendar quarter. The statements shall include a detailed itemization of all receipts, expenditures, and the balance on hand at the end of the quarter. The source of all funds and the identity of the payee for each disbursement shall be set forth.

(3) Audit. Centuria Volunteer Fire Department accounts authorized by this section shall be included in any audit of Fire District funds. They shall be audited in the same manner as other Fire District funds.

Dated at Centuria, Wisconsin, this 10th day of August 2026



Chuck Ellsworth, Village President



Autumn Hyden, Clerk-Treasurer

VOTE:

YES 5 NO 0 ABSENT 2 ABSTAIN