

Columbia County Volunteer Firefighters Association

98th Annual Convention

July 29, 2023

*Hosted by the
Ghent Vol. Fire Co. #1
Ghent, NY 12565*

Parade Rules

GENERAL

1. If possible, the Local Convention Committee (LCC) shall route the parade in such a manner to make the length of the route of march not more than one (1) mile from the start line to the finish line. The official start and end of the parade for marching units shall be conspicuously marked.
2. The LCC will furnish competent judges in sufficient numbers to properly review the paraders in competition. The recommended minimum number of judges is twelve, 8 for fire units and 4 for auxiliary units. The LCC shall also furnish 3 qualified counters to count the paraders in the line of march at various points along the route. The LCC will appoint a knowledgeable person to be present at the meeting of the judges and counters the morning of the parade, and at the scoring session immediately following the parade.
3. The Columbia County Volunteer Firefighters Association (CCVFA) will provide a copy of these rules to the LCC in ample time for distribution to the judges at least 10 days prior to the parade. The LCC will meet with the judges and counters prior to the dress parade to instruct the judges and counters as to their duties and to resolve any questions that may arise regarding these rules. They will also meet with the judges and counters immediately following the parade to tally the scores and to select the winners of all awards. This is to be completed and the list of award winners (as determined by the judges) turned over to the LCC prior to any other business that the judges, counters or the LCC may have. In all cases the decision of the judges will be the final word.
4. The Ghent Fire Company will denote the beginning and the end of the judging area.
5. The LCC shall reserve the right to place units in the parade lineup as they see fit for the best presentation of the parade to the public.
6. To compete for awards, fire units must have 5 or more members in the line of march, Auxiliary units must have 5 or more members in the line of march and must march as a separate unit.

7. Competing fire units will be judged on three components: color guard, uniforms and marching. The apparatus will be judged separately. The score received in each component will account for $\frac{1}{3}$ of the units score for category awards. Auxiliary units will be generally judged on uniform and marching, however, any auxiliary unit marching with a separate color guard for that auxiliary unit will cause that color guard to be scored for color guard awards.
8. No more than 2 members of a parading fire unit shall ride in each apparatus (driver + 1). When available, seat belts must be worn in accordance with State Law. It is required that all personnel riding on any apparatus or in any private vehicle be wearing a seatbelt. Any member riding in what is considered an unsafe position as determined by the parade judges shall cause that fire unit to be disqualified. It is not the position of the CCVFA to require those in the parade to be operating in a manner that is inconsistent with established safety standards, nor should this association assume any liability for anyone who wishes to ignore these standards. Any fire unit having a member riding in any other position than those described above does so without the sanction of the CCVFA or the LCC.
9. There shall be no emergency lights, sounding of sirens, ringing of bells or the sounding of any other noise making or warning devices while the apparatus is in the line of march. There shall be no display of lights, horns, sirens, or any other warning devices prior to or following the parade unless a unit is responding to a bona fide alarm. There shall be no display of lights, horns, sirens, or any other warning devices of apparatus being driven through the streets where the parade is being held. A violation of any portion of rule 9 will result in disqualification from all parade awards.
10. Daytime running lights are not emergency lights. There will be no advertising of any kind on any apparatus.
11. Hose beds on all apparatus shall be exposed so judges can determine cleanliness and neatness of the hose pack and associated equipment.
12. Apparatus shall be operated by duly qualified/authorized personnel of the participating fire unit and shall be operated in a manner consistent with these rules and the laws of the State of New York.
13. Personal vehicles used for life/incapacitated members shall be operated by a member of the marching unit. A firefighter may drive auxiliary members provided they are a member of the fire unit associated with the auxiliary. Dark tint windows must be in the down position.
14. All apparatus and vehicles in the line of march shall be cleaned and polished, all equipment in place and in working order. No equipment or articles shall be carried on apparatus/vehicles other than equipment used in fire, emergency and first aid services. Carrying refreshments, clothing, etc., shall be subject to demerits for the hiring unit.
15. The first apparatus that is in the line of march will be judged during the parade.
16. All apparatus should display the year and model in front passenger window. There will be separate award categories for year and antique apparatus.

17. Any vehicles belonging to a unit's band may not fall into the parade line of march. Band units doing so will result in demerits for the hiring unit.
18. Units arriving after the parade has started shall fall in at the end of the parade regardless of the division to which they were assigned. In the event a unit falls into a division while the parade is in progress, they shall be marked on the judge's sheet as 'wrong position' and shall receive demerits.
19. Respect must be shown for the property in the City/Town/Village that is hosting our organization. In the event a member of a fire unit is found destroying or in any way molesting the same, the offending organization will be disqualified from winning any awards and the individual(s) will be prosecuted. Always respect the colors of our Country and the property of our host as well as the citizens and merchants of the community we are guests in.
20. The parade shall be judged based on appearance of marchers and apparatus from the standpoint of cleanliness, neatness, orderliness, and sobriety. The rules of this parade shall apply regardless of the age of apparatus or type of uniform worn by marchers. The decision of the judges is final.
21. Should there be a tie for any fire unit/auxiliary unit award, the tie shall be broken by awarding to the unit with the most members in the line of march. If a tie still exists, the head judge of the parade shall use other established and accepted methods to break the tie. In all cases the decision of the judges will be final.
22. The convention dress parade of the CCVFA shall be judged in accordance with the rules herein set forth and judged accordingly using forms and demerits approved by CCVFA.
23. It shall be the responsibility of each marching unit to always guard their equipment against damage or loss. Neither the LCC or the CCVFA assumes any liability for damage or loss suffered by any parade participant.
24. A suitable reviewing stand shall be provided by the LCC to allow guests of the LCC and the officers of the CCVFA to review the parade. The American Flag shall be present on the reviewing stand and shall be positioned properly. A suitable public address system shall be present on the stand for the use of the announcer. The LCC shall work with the announcer to provide the most accurate and up to date information on the line up as possible.

UNIFORM CLASSIFICATIONS

1. All marching units must wear the uniform as prescribed by their department or company (uniform of the day). Dressed and bloused uniforms will compete for the same award. Fire departments with multiple companies may march as a department in a company specific uniform provided that each company marches separately behind its own identifying banner. Departments with multiple companies who wear a department uniform need not separate.
2. Special uniforms, when the members of a special squad such as fire police, rescue or explorer are not issued parade uniforms of that unit, they may wear the uniform issued to them for such special duty but must parade as a separate unit at the rear of the units' marchers and must not intermingle with the marchers of the main unit.
3. It is permissible to display the American Flag patch on the shoulder of the uniform. Displayed flags must be uniform in presentation. Shoes should be of the same color and of similar design.

4. There will be no demerits for length of service indicators on any uniform regardless of classification. Positioning of indicators on the uniform shall be consistent throughout the unit.
5. As a safety consideration, all drivers will be exempted from wearing gloves, but may wear them if they so desire.
6. The presentation of the unit pertaining to design, color, style, patches, and accessories shall be uniform except as noted. Demerits will result in instances where uniformity is not constant. Non-uniform patches shall also result in demerits.
7. Municipal officials may march at the head of their unit in civilian clothes. The foregoing item will not be subject to demerits.
8. No jewelry other than fire service badges and awards shall be worn on the uniform or person exposed to view. Wedding and engagement as well as medic alerts are the exception.
9. All hair including facial shall be neat in appearance.

PARADE MARCHING

1. Any movement by a marching unit other than forward, which shall delay the forward progress of the parade will disqualify the entire unit. The entire unit includes the color guard, fire unit, auxiliary unit, apparatus, and musical unit. The entire unit will be held in violation in the event their musical unit retards the progress of the parade.
2. In the event an alarm for fire or ambulance is sounded while the parade is in progress, all units of the parade shall move to the right side of the roadway on the approach of the responding apparatus or ambulance and remain halted until the vehicle(s) have proceeded past.
3. There shall be no disorderliness during the parade such as smoking, chewing, carrying, or drinking beverages, etc. Any unit conducting themselves in such a manner during the parade as to bring discredit to themselves or the volunteer fire service shall be disqualified from the winning of any parade awards.
4. Incapacitated and/or life members of a fire unit will be permitted to ride in private vehicles directly in the rear of the unit, see parade formation. They shall be in the uniform of the company or department to be counted in the line of march.
5. Personnel of local fire units, auxiliary and those involved with the presentation of the parade will be counted as personnel in the line of march for their respective marching unit provided notification to the LCC is given prior to the parade.
6. Where the last rank of marchers has one or more open files (positions) the marchers in that rank shall fill the files from the right side. (Odd man on the right)
7. The highest-ranking officer in line will salute the reviewing stand.

COLOR GUARD

1. Any fire unit marching without a guarded American flag will be disqualified. One or more persons shall constitute a color guard, however, if one person is used the guard must march to the right of the American Flag. The guard shall not carry or display a flag or banner, shoulder patch exception. Such person or persons shall be either members of the fire unit or of a uniformed national service organization. The American Flag is to be always guarded. Guards shall be uniform in their presentation.
2. All eagles are displayed on flagstaffs. Eagle must always face forward.
3. The United States Flag and its guard must directly precede the fire unit in line of march. The fire unit identifying banner or flag may precede an accompanying musical or similar unit if so desired. NOTE fire company or departmental musical units will also be included in this makeup of the line. (See parade unit formation)
4. The flag of the United States shall be carried on the marching right, that is the flags own right. When in line with other flags, the United States flag shall always be to the right, however, it may also be positioned in the center of a line of flags to the front of the other flags in the line.
5. American Flags must be unfurled except during rainy or inclement conditions. The American Flag is not to be dipped or lowered to any person or anything. The unit banner or flag (not the American Flag) shall render honors to the official reviewing stand. Only the chief officer shall offer a hand salute when the colors present arms.

AUXILIARY UNITS

1. Auxiliary units shall march to the rear of the fire unit, and they shall not intermingle with the fire unit while parading. All rules that apply to fire units shall also apply to auxiliary units, except were noted above.
2. The uniform worn by the auxiliary unit must be the uniform throughout as to style, color, and accessories. Hats and or gloves if part of the uniform shall be worn with hats at the same angle. No Jewelry other than an auxiliary badge or pin may be worn exposed for view by the unit member. Wedding and engagement rings as well as medic alerts are exceptions.
3. If carried, the American Flag must be guarded (see color guard section).
4. Shoes shall be of similar style and of the same color. Hose must be worn and be uniform in color. Auxiliary units may wear skirts or slacks; however, uniformity must prevail.
5. Hair shall be neat in appearance.
6. Incapacitated and life members of auxiliary units will be permitted to ride in private vehicles directly in the rear of the unit column (see parade unit formation section).

PARADE UNIT FORMATION

The following chart shall be used by fire and auxiliary units for establishing the correct order. It should be noted that **not all** components apply to all marching units. The officer in charge of the marching unit should review this chart and disperse their unit for the best presentation. The indicated distance in feet represents maximum separation between components. Marching units should maintain a max separation of 100 feet between units and division breaks should be no more than 150 feet. A company or department flag may be carried in the color guard of the unit and be used as the unit identification.

Unit Identification (banner) (optional position)

10 feet

Musical unit

20 feet

American Flag Color Guard

(may include unit flag in lieu of banner)

10 feet

Unit identification (banner) (optional position)

Unit Chief /Assistant Chiefs

10 feet

Unit Chaplain/Past Officers

10 feet

Unit Officers/Captains/Lieutenants

10 feet

Unit Members

10 feet

Explorers Officers

10 feet

Explorers Members

20 feet

Life Members Vehicles

10 feet

Auxiliary Color Guard (If applicable)

10 feet

Auxiliar Banner

10 feet

Auxiliary Officers

10 feet

Auxiliary Unit

10 feet

Auxiliary Members Vehicles

20 feet

Chief's vehicles

20 feet

Apparatus 1

20 feet

Apparatus 2

20 feet

Apparatus 3

ESCORT DIVISION

1st DIVISION

2nd DIVISION

3rd DIVISION