

**Introduced: 6/20/11 Adopted:
6/20/11 Reviewed: 2/1/13**

Social Networking & Use of Electronic Devices

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to address the appearance of official presence of the Fire District and subsequently the Fire Company's good name when used on social networking or internet web sites. It is the intent to set a minimum standard for the posting of any information which may be sensitive or detrimental to the organization. In relation to the posting of information on public web sites, the Fire District intends to manage photographs and the use of electronic devices both on and off duty when there are references made to the Fire District and Fire Company as well as the Ladies Auxiliary.

Objective:

To set a policy that all shall comply with based on the authority given by the New York State Town Law Article 11, sub section 175(10) "Fire Districts may organize, operate, maintain and equip fire companies...and provide for the removal of members for cause." In addition (11) states that Fire Districts "may adopt rules and regulations governing all fire companies and fire departments in said district and prescribing the duties of the members thereof and enforce discipline..."

POLICY:

A. The use of words Boght Community Fire Company, Boght Community Fire District or Boght Community Fire Company Ladies Auxiliary on the internet or other communications systems without prior authorization or approval other than for advertising a fund raising event that has been voted on by the membership and approved by the Board of Fire Commissioners shall be prohibited.

1. Officers, members and employees are not permitted to utilize the words Boght in any form as stated above on any internet sites, blogs, Face book, My Space or similar pages or resources set up for communications on the internet or on other communications systems without the express permission of the Board of Fire Commissioners.
2. Boght Community Fire Company is a volunteer fire company operating under Boght Community Fire District to provide public service to the Town of Colonie residents. As such it is important for the Board of Fire Commissioners to make certain that the public is not misled into believing that some internet communications resource is an official resource of the District or Fire Company that is authorized to provide official information, when it is not.
3. The only way to prevent the spread of misinformation in this regard is for the Board to regulate the dissemination of information under the official name of the District, Company and Auxiliary.
4. Nothing contained herein shall prevent officers, members and employees from using their

personal computer and communications resources to participate in communications on the internet or other communication systems so long as they do not do so under the name of Boght Community Fire Co., Boght Community Fire District or Boght Community Fire Company Ladies Auxiliary and as long as they do not communicate privileged or confidential district or department information or images or otherwise communicate in a manner that is unprofessional or violates this policy.

5. Personal blogs shall have a clear disclaimer that the views expressed by the author do not represent the views of the fire district, company or auxiliary.
6. Logos of the fire district and or company may not be used on a social network or internet site without written consent of the authority having jurisdiction.
7. This policy shall be jointly enforced by the Fire District and the Administrative Officers of the Fire Company and Auxiliary.

B. Under no circumstances will members other than the official photographer of the Boght Community Fire Company be allowed to use a personal camera, video recorder, or the camera/video function of a personal electronic device or any other digital imaging device during any incident unless requested by the command officer.

1. All incident photography/video shall be for clinical, documentation or training purposes only and conducted by or at the direction of Command personnel in charge at the incident, using approved department equipment.
2. All photographs containing individual patient information are covered by HIPAA privacy laws and must be protected in the same manner as patient care reports and documents.

3. Any on-scene images and or any other images taken by a member of the Fire District, Company or Auxiliary in the course and scope of their duties are the sole property of the Boght Community Fire District, Boght Community Fire Company or Boght Community Fire Company Ladies Auxiliary and are under the control of the Chief. This includes images taken inadvertently with a member's own electronic imaging device.

1. No images taken by a member other than the company photographer in the course or scope of their duties may be used, printed, copied, scanned, e-mailed, posted, shared, reproduced or distributed in any manner without the express written permission from a member of the Command Staff or Board of Fire Commissioners. This prohibition includes the posting of any official photographs on personal web sites, public safety agency web sites and or e-mailing to friends, relatives or colleagues.
2. All official photographs shall be downloaded to an appropriate file and stored in secure database with controlled access. After being downloaded images on memory cards shall be erased.
3. The use of unauthorized helmet cameras is strictly prohibited.
4. Personal use of fire department cameras is strictly forbidden.

