VISION
(Who we’re becoming.)
The leaders in engineering a fire-safe world.

MISSION
(Why we exist.)
To define, develop, & advance the use of engineering best practices; expand the scientific knowledge base; & educate the global fire safety community to reduce fire risk.
promote the profession’s Code of Ethics and provide impartial evaluations on questions of ethics within the profession. The committee routinely reviews the Code of Ethics and updates it as needed as well as establishes the processes for complaints.

Proposed Revisions to Section K

K. CODE OF ETHICS

In the practice of their profession, SFPE members must maintain and constantly improve their competence and perform under a standard of professional behavior which requires adherence to the highest principles of ethical conduct with balanced regard for the interests of the public, clients, employers, colleagues, and the profession. SFPE members are expected to act in accordance with the SFPE Code of Ethics and all applicable laws, and actively encourage others to do so.

1. Filing a Complaint
a. SFPE will process complaints alleging a violation of the Code of Ethics against persons currently holding any grade of SFPE membership. The complaint must be in writing, must identify the specific canons alleged to be violated, and must be accompanied by documentation sufficient to preclude the need for research on the part of the Society. The Society is not obliged to conduct an independent investigation of the complaint or gather data beyond that provided by the Complainant.

b. Complaints are to be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer, and all communications between the parties involved and the Society are to be through the Chief Executive Officer or the Chief Executive Officer’s designee.

c. The alleged violation must have occurred not more than five years before the filing of the complaint.

d. Society members involved in deliberations on the complaint who, at any time during these procedures, believe that they may not be able to act objectively and impartially on the complaint, shall recuse themselves. In such cases, additional members may be recommended with the Board of Directors’ approval until the complaint is resolved. In no case will the Society act with fewer than five members having reviewed the complaint.

e. After determining that the persons named in the complaint currently hold membership in the Society, the Chief Executive Officer will distribute a copy of the complaint to the Subcommittee for Professional Ethics and Standards of Conduct. The Subcommittee for Professional Ethics and Standards of Conduct will consider all information relative to the complaint by a majority vote and decide, as expeditiously as possible, whether the complaint is relevant to one or more Code of Ethics, by responding in one of two ways: "affirmative" (the issues in the complaint, as filed, are considered to be relevant to one or more of the Code of Ethics); or, "negative" (the issues in the complaint, as filed, are not relevant to any of the Code of Ethics, and are either issues involving professional practice, technical matters or other issues of a non-ethical nature).
f. If the vote on the complaint is affirmative, the accused SFPE member will be provided with a copy of the complaint and allowed to respond to the allegations in writing within 30 days for consideration. At the discretion of the Subcommittee for Professional Ethics and Standards of Conduct, additional data may (but is not required to) be gathered in other ways, including a request for additional data from the Complainant or the accused SFPE member. If it is determined that there has been a breach of the Code of Ethics, the Subcommittee for Professional Ethics and Standards of Conduct will identify appropriate actions against the accused SFPE member, which may include removal as a member of the Society, and recommend these with their report to the SFPE Executive Committee. The accused SFPE member may appeal the decision as outlined in "Appeals" below.

g. If the Subcommittee for Professional Ethics and Standards of Conduct votes negatively, this decision, with its reasons, will be sent to the SFPE Executive Committee for affirmation and official notification to the Complainant. The Complainant may appeal the decision as outlined in "Appeals" below.

h. The Subcommittee for Professional Ethics and Standards of Conduct's findings and conclusions will be sent in a written report to the Executive Committee, which may affirm the report or return the report to the Subcommittee for Professional Ethics and Standards of Conduct with requested modifications. Reports of the Subcommittee for Professional Ethics and Standards of Conduct may only be released in total and without further modifications. The Society will notify both parties of the decision of the Executive Committee. The accused SFPE member may appeal the decision as outlined in "Appeals" below.

i. Any report prepared by the Society relating to the complaint will be made available to the Complainant and the accused SFPE member. No public release of information is authorized by any parties involved in the complaint unless approved by the Board of Directors.

j. Appeals to the Board of Directors must be received by the Society within 90 days of the day that the official notification of the decision of the Executive Committee was sent by first-class mail.

k. Upon the filing of an appeal, the President will appoint an Appeals Ad Hoc Task Group comprised of five members of the Board, not more than two of whom are on the Executive Committee. A Chair will be appointed from the Appeals Ad Hoc Task Group. In cases where the Executive Committee has voted negatively, the Complainant will be notified of the time and date of the hearing on the appeal and will be invited to attend. In cases where the Executive Committee has voted affirmatively, both the accused SFPE member and the Complainant will be notified of the time, date, and location of the hearing on the appeal and will be invited to attend. The hearings may be in the form of a conference call. Legal counsel may attend the hearings.

l. Within one week of the conclusion of the hearing, the members of the Appeals Ad Hoc Task Group, by majority vote, will issue a recommendation to the Board of Directors, to be sent along with any dissenting opinions of the committee members, who, by majority vote, will decide the appropriate action. The accused SFPE member and the Complainant will be notified of this decision which shall not be further appealed.
3. Jelenewicz delivered a comprehensive CEO update. SFPE’s financial consultant is making excellent progress in streamlining internal procedures, particularly in invoice processing and database enhancement. Significant strides have been made in improving our account/vendor relationships and enhancing reporting for our staff. The recruitment process for a senior accountant is underway, and SFPE has initiated interviews with promising candidates. SFPE is actively working on updates to our complaint policy, whistleblower policy, and open-door policy, engaging legal expertise to provide recommendations. Furthermore, adjustments are being made to our family leave and other policies to better serve our team.

Herron presented the most up-to-date registration status for our Annual Conference. SFPE currently has 424 registered attendees as of this morning, and we have an additional forty to fifty registrants pending. Registrations continue to come in steadily, suggesting the possibility of surpassing last year’s record in Detroit, which stood at 438 attendees.

Action: Jelenewicz will add approving the “Chair” to the Standing Rules.

Action: Jelenewicz will report the financial consultant’s findings at the Annual conference BOD Meeting.

4. Jönsson emailed an update regarding the upcoming October workshop. Saturday 10/7, the Board of Directors are scheduled to host a workshop led by an external consultant, Gina Abudi. Kindly submit the previously sent assessments for review. Additionally, in the October consent agenda, which will be circulated next week, there will be a Board of Directors meeting procedure outlined. This procedure is based on the meetings held in January and March earlier this year, and Jönsson has collaborated with SFPE staff to develop this document.

5. Kimball guided the discussion by informing the Board the Finance and Audit Committee has granted approval for the audit and has circulated it to the Board. The 990 form has been reviewed by the Board, and although the audit doesn’t require approval, it has been duly conducted. All the previously mentioned concerns have been thoroughly addressed and updated and the 990 form is now in its final version.

6. Kimball spearheaded the discussion on the updated optimistic and pessimistic scenario budgets. The budget has been a significant focus for the Finance and Audit Committee, with Kimball being cognizant of the intricate details involved in the presentation. Recognizing the need for thorough consideration, it’s understood that reaching a final decision will require some time. SFPE foresees a deficit for 2024, prompting proactive efforts by the Finance and Audit Committee to strategize on cost recovery and ongoing spending reductions. The board collectively agreed that SFPE will select a single budget to proceed with.

Action: Finance and Audit Committee will present a revised version of the budget and will send it to the board before the Annual Conference.
7. AOB: Tubbs expressed an interest in addressing the lifetime Member status issue. She is seeking guidance on how best to approach this matter and understand its current status. While it was previously discussed in 2015, there’s a recognition that it might be timely to revisit this topic. The goal is to navigate this in a manner that is considerate of our lifetime members and ensures they feel valued and engaged.

Meeting Adjourned at 10:17