South Arkansas Fire Protection District

MEETING MINUTES

Date: April 27, 2026

Time: 0900 Hours

Location: 611 Oak Street, Salida, CO 81201

Board Members Present

- Harold Starbuck
- Art Hutchinson
- Sheldon Morgan
- Phillip Gamache

Board Members Excused

- Rich Edgington

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by President Harold Starbuck at 0901 hours.

2. Approval of the Agenda

- Motion to accept the agenda as presented.
  - **Motion by:** Sheldon Morgan
  - **Second by:** Art Hutchinson
  - **Vote:** Passed unanimously

3. Approval of March Board Meeting Minutes

- Motion to accept the March Board Meeting Minutes.
  - **Motion by:** Sheldon Morgan
  - **Second by:** Phillip Gamache
  - **Vote:** Passed unanimously

4. Open Session

Mike Sugaski asked how SAFPD determines when to escalate to Stage II fire restrictions or lift Stage I restrictions, and how those decisions are communicated and coordinated with other agencies. Chief Jonke stated that restriction levels are based on fuel-moisture conditions and aligned with the Forest Service, neighboring counties, and the Sheriff's Office.

5. Reports

Sarah Marques of Walke and Associates provided an update on deposits and current balances.

Laurie Todesco reported amounts received and outstanding for the current billing cycle and provided an update on asset ROI tracking.

Financial Report

- Motion to accept March financials.
  - **Motion by:** Art Hutchinson

- **Second by:** Phillip Gamache
- **Vote:** Passed unanimously

Fire Chief's Report

- Fire Service Issues
  - Chaffee County Fire Protection District submitted a letter requesting exclusion from the Fire Service Study. Discussions were in early stages and direction had not been finalized. The Board agreed to contact the CCFPD Board for clarification, shared perspectives, and coordination opportunities.
  - The Board discussed a CCFPD resolution regarding charging for emergency response, expressed concern about automatic and mutual aid impacts, affirmed its intent to honor existing aid agreements, and supported ongoing communication with partner agencies.
- Department Administration
  - Interviews for the SAFPD Operations and Finance Coordinator position began on 4/23 and were to continue through early May.
- DFPC Audit
  - The audit was ongoing. All requested information had been provided to DFPC.
- Additional Equipment
  - Starlink equipment had been ordered and delivery was pending. It would be installed in apparatus as soon as practicable.
- 124 E Street Appraisal
  - The station appraisal was received at approximately $1.1 million. Options discussed included retaining the former station for employee housing and community mitigation needs.

Assistant Fire Chief's Report

- DOLA
  - The volunteer state pension match was accepted; SAFPD would receive $5,224.
- Benefits Package for Personnel
  - Chief Rohrich established a Death and Disability Fund, or AD&D, for personnel, to be billed to fires on which personnel were deployed.

Division Chief of Wildfire

- Deployments
  - Engine 112 was in South Dakota.
  - Engine 311 was in Texas.
- Fire Conditions
  - SAFPD was under Stage I restrictions, while Fremont County was under Stage II. A Potentially Dangerous Situation notice was issued April 22 due to high winds and receptive fuels.
- Grants
  - DOC SWIFT, or COSWAP, mitigated eight acres in Piñon Ridge.
  - Common Ground mitigation continued, with approximately 100 acres treated.
  - FRWRM delivered a fully insured Vermeer chipper and Dodge Ram 3500.
  - Work continued on apparatus decals and mitigation signage.

6. New Business

- Motion to approve the proposed AD&D insurance plan for personnel.
    - **Motion by:** Sheldon Morgan
    - **Second by:** Art Hutchinson
    - **Vote:** Passed unanimously

7. Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn the meeting at 0948 hours.
    - **Motion by:** Phillip Gamache
    - **Second by:** Sheldon Morgan
    - **Vote:** Passed unanimously

Submitted by Art Hutchinson, Secretary Treasurer. Scanned signature removed.