South Arkansas Fire Protection District

MEETING MINUTES

Date: July 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 0904 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 June Board Meeting Minutes

- Motion to accept the June Board Meeting Minutes.
  - **Motion by:** Sheldon Morgan
  - **Second by:** Art Hutchinson
  - **Vote:** Passed unanimously

4. Open Session

No public was present.

5. Reports

Sarah Marques of Walke and Associates provided a written financial report. Transfers had been made as necessary to support operational expenses and payroll obligations. No significant concerns were reported.

Laurie Todesco reported on the current billing cycle and a backlog caused by high wildland-deployment volume and documentation requirements. Laurie and Marilyn Marchand were working together to improve processes and reduce the backlog. Activity remained exceptionally high, and billing and payroll processing remained priorities.

Financial Report

- Motion to accept June financials.

- **Motion by:** Art Hutchinson
- **Second by:** Phillip Gamache
- **Vote:** Passed unanimously

Fire Chief's Report

- Division Chief of Wildfire Position Funding
  - The position had been highly successful, increasing mitigation and grant-funding opportunities. Renewal was recommended.
- Resiliency Code
  - Chaffee County and the City of Salida adopted the State Resiliency Code with local amendments. The District would consider adopting the same code.
- Administrative Equipment
  - A District-issued computer was requested for Laurie Todesco.
- Equipment Purchases
  - Replacement radios were needed in the District tender due to aging equipment.
- Legislative Update
  - Colorado fire-district updates were reviewed, including firefighter health programs, district revenue protections, disability-benefit updates, and wildfire-resilience initiatives.
- Tender 12 Update
  - Tender 12 was involved in a minor traffic accident. No personnel were injured, and damage was limited to the bumper.

Division Chief of Wildfire

- Deployments
  - Multiple resources remained deployed across Colorado, North Dakota, and South Dakota, with approximately 30 personnel assigned to incidents or severity assignments.
- Grants
  - Staff were evaluating grant opportunities. The new FRWRM-funded chipper was heavily used in community mitigation. Bobcat and trailer purchases remained pending due to State reimbursement funds.
- Fire Conditions
  - Restrictions remained in place despite precipitation because of drought and elevated fire danger.

6. New Business

- Enter Executive Session pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(b) and (e) for legal advice regarding the proposed property transaction at 120 E Street and negotiation strategy related to potential intergovernmental agreements.
  - **Motion by:** Sheldon Morgan
  - **Second by:** Art Hutchinson
  - **Vote:** Unanimous
- Adjourn Executive Session and reconvene in Regular Session. No action was taken during executive session.

- **Motion by:** Art Hutchinson
- **Second by:** Sheldon Morgan
- **Vote:** Unanimous

- Approve purchase and installation of replacement mobile radios for Tender 11 and Tender 12, not to exceed $7,500, and amend the 2026 budget by reallocating funds designated for garage-door replacement at Station 12.
  - **Motion by:** Sheldon Morgan
  - **Second by:** Phillip Gamache
  - **Vote:** Unanimous
- Approve purchase of office equipment, with total expenditures not to exceed $2,000.
  - **Motion by:** Art Hutchinson
  - **Second by:** Phillip Gamache
  - **Vote:** Unanimous
- Continue the Division Chief of Wildfire position and include funding through 2027 for wildfire mitigation, planning, grant administration, interagency coordination, and operational support.
  - **Motion by:** Art Hutchinson
  - **Second by:** Sheldon Morgan
  - **Vote:** Unanimous
- Update authorized users and signers on District accounts by adding Marilyn Marchand-Gouin, District Operations and Finance Coordinator, removing individuals no longer authorized, and authorizing the Board President and Secretary-Treasurer to execute required documentation.
  - **Motion by:** Phillip Gamache
  - **Second by:** Sheldon Morgan
  - **Vote:** Unanimous
- Adopt Resolution 2026-02, establishing the Chaffee County Wildfire Resiliency Code with local amendments, Ordinance 2026-02, by reference as the District code and replacing references to Chaffee County as Authority Having Jurisdiction with the District.
  - **Motion by:** Sheldon Morgan
  - **Second by:** Art Hutchinson
  - **Vote:** Unanimous
- Adopt Resolution 2026-03, establishing the District credit-card program with UMB Bank, n.a., updating designated officers and authorized users in Exhibit A, and adding Marilyn Marchand-Gouin as an authorized user.
  - **Motion by:** Phillip Gamache
  - **Second by:** Sheldon Morgan
  - **Vote:** Unanimous

7. Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn the meeting at 1033 hours.
  - **Motion by:** Sheldon Morgan
  - **Second by:** Art Hutchinson
  - **Vote:** Passed unanimously

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