



SOUTH ARKANSAS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

MEETING MINUTES

Date: 3/30/2026

Time: 0900 Hours

Location: 611 Oak Street, Salida, CO 81201

Board Members Present:

- Harold Starbuck
- Sheldon Morgan
- Phillip Gamache

Excused Board Members:

- Art Hutchinson
 - Rich Edgington
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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:** Phil Gamache
 - **Vote:** Passed unanimously

3. Approval of February Board Meeting Minutes:

- Motion to accept the January Board Meeting Minutes
 - **Motion By:** Sheldon Morgan
 - **Second By:** Phil Gamache

- **Vote:** Passed unanimously

4. **Open Session:** John Chmil of Lyons Gaddis Attorneys and Counselors attended virtually to introduce himself to the Board, having been selected to serve as legal counsel for the South Arkansas Fire Protection District.

5. **Reports**

Laurie Todesco of the South Arkansas Fire Protection District presented a summary of received and outstanding amounts for the current billing cycle. She also agreed to provide a year-over-year profit summary for each truck asset, as requested by Board Member Sheldon Morgan.

Financial Report:

- **No motion was made to accept February Financial Report as they were not provided by the time of the meeting.**

Fire Chief's Report:

Chief Aaron Jonke discussed several critical issues:

- **DFPC Audit:**

- Currently ongoing – Chief Jonke reported that it is likely reaching a conclusion, depending on DFPC workload.

- **Admin Assistance:**

- Researching a position to assist with billing, payroll, accounting, and systems assessment. Job has been posted on Indeed, City of Salida website, SAFPD Website, Facebook, Special Districts Association (SDA) and DFPC.

- **Personnel:**

- Chief Jonke reported that he anticipates benefits to be concluded by May first.

- **Fire Service Study:**

- Finalizing details and speaking with key stakeholders.

- **Old Fire House:**

- Reported that the property assessment for old fire house is complete and waiting for finalized report. Chief Jonke communicated that conversations with the City Administrator around this property is ongoing.

- **Wildfire:**

- Chief Jonke emphasized the importance of maintaining local availability of assets and scaling deployment to support community events given current weather conditions. A coordination meeting was held with DFPC, the Sheriff's Office, U.S. Wildfire representatives, BLM, and Chaffee County volunteer firefighters to discuss severity planning.

- **CRFF Subcontracting:**
 - Communications with DFPC regarding heavy equipment subcontracting were not successful. Efforts are now focused on establishing agreements with local heavy equipment providers to ensure immediate resource availability.
- **Resiliency Code:**
 - An unfunded state mandate is creating challenges in transitioning to the updated Resiliency Code, which will replace the current WUI code. Division Chief Bainbridge will oversee completion of this work.
- **Legislation:**
 - Reported house bill that will allow electronic postings for Special Districts instead of newspaper postings. Chief will continue to monitor this bill.

Assistant Fire Chief Report:

Chief Rohrich reported on a few administrative items:

- **Personnel Benefits Package:**
 - Researching benefits package for SAFPD personnel – reported that the process is slow and ongoing.

Division Chief of Wildfire:

Division Chief Bainbridge reported the following:

- **Grants:**
 - COSWAP – crew started on 3/23 and have mitigated approximately 5 acres.
 - FRWRM – purchase orders were submitted, truck purchased, and chipper purchased / delivered.
 - Common Ground – mitigation is ongoing.
- **Deployments:**
 - **E112** – Oklahoma
 - **E311** – Texas
 - All engines are continuing their deployments until further notice.
- **Fire Conditions:**
 - Stage I fire restrictions are in effect for unincorporated Chaffee County, effective March 24.
- **Additional Equipment:**
 - Consideration of UTV with slip-in unit to access more rural areas.

New Business:

- No new business was proposed.

6. Adjournment:

- **Motion to adjourn the meeting at 0938**
 - **Motion to Adjourn:** Sheldon Morgan
 - **Second:** Phil Gamache
 - **Vote:** Passed Unanimously

Submitted by:



4/14/26

Sheldon Morgan, Acting Secretary Treasurer / Board Member