South Arkansas Fire Protection District

MEETING MINUTES

Date: March 30, 2026

Time: 0900 Hours

Location: 611 Oak Street, Salida, CO 81201

Board Members Present

- Harold Starbuck
- Sheldon Morgan
- Phillip Gamache

Board Members Excused

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

3. Approval of February Board Meeting Minutes

- The source heading states February Board Meeting Minutes; the motion text states January 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 after being selected to serve as legal counsel for the South Arkansas Fire Protection District.

5. Reports

Laurie Todesco presented a summary of received and outstanding amounts for the current billing cycle. She 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 the February Financial Report because it had not been provided by the time of the meeting.

Fire Chief's Report

Chief Aaron Jonke discussed the following items:

- DFPC Audit
  - The audit was ongoing and likely nearing a conclusion, depending on DFPC workload.
- Administrative Assistance
  - A position was being researched to assist with billing, payroll, accounting, and systems assessment. The job was posted on Indeed, the City of Salida website, the SAFPD website, Facebook, the Special Districts Association, and DFPC.
- Personnel
  - Benefits were anticipated to be concluded by May 1.
- Fire Service Study
  - Details were being finalized and key stakeholders contacted.
- Old Fire House
  - The property assessment was complete and the finalized report was pending. Conversations with the City Administrator were ongoing.
- Wildfire
  - Chief Jonke emphasized maintaining local asset availability and scaling deployment to support community events under 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 unsuccessful. Efforts shifted to agreements with local heavy-equipment providers for immediate resource availability.
- Resiliency Code
  - An unfunded state mandate was creating challenges in transitioning to the updated Resiliency Code, which would replace the WUI code. Division Chief Bainbridge would oversee completion.
- Legislation
  - A House bill allowing electronic postings for special districts instead of newspaper postings was reported. The Chief would continue monitoring it.

Assistant Fire Chief's Report

- Personnel Benefits Package
  - Research into a benefits package for SAFPD personnel was slow and ongoing.

Division Chief of Wildfire

- Grants
  - COSWAP crew started on 3/23 and mitigated approximately five acres.
  - FRWRM purchase orders were submitted; a truck and chipper were purchased, and the chipper was delivered.
  - Common Ground mitigation was ongoing.

- Deployments
  - E112 was in Oklahoma.
  - E311 was in Texas.
  - All engines continued deployments until further notice.
- Fire Conditions
  - Stage I fire restrictions were in effect for unincorporated Chaffee County beginning March 24.
- Additional Equipment
  - A UTV with a slip-in unit was under consideration to access rural areas.

New Business

No new business was proposed.

6. Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn the meeting at 0938 hours.
  - **Motion by:** Sheldon Morgan
  - **Second by:** Phil Gamache
  - **Vote:** Passed unanimously

Submitted 4/14/2026 by Sheldon Morgan, Acting Secretary Treasurer / Board Member. Scanned signature removed.