South Arkansas Fire Protection District

MEETING MINUTES

Date: 9/22/2025

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 0902 hours.

2. Approval of the Agenda

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

3. Approval of August Board Meeting Minutes

- Motion to accept the August Board Meeting Minutes
  - **Motion By:** Sheldon Morgan
  - **Second By:** Phillip Gamache
  - **Vote:** Passed unanimously

4. Open Session: No public comments were received.

5. Reports

Financial Report

Sarah Marques of Walke and Associates confirmed that all payroll tax overpayments have been received. Sarah reported that the largest expenses are related to payroll and visa charges. She also mentioned that the second installment of the City of Salida IGA payment is scheduled for the end of the month.

Laurie Todesco reported that truck profits for 2025 are doubling compared to 2024. Billing is being processed promptly as it is received.

- **Motion to accept the August financials:**
- **Motion:** Sheldon Morgan
- **Second:** Art Hutchinson

- **Vote:** Passed unanimously

Fire Chief's Report

Chief Kathy Rohrich reported for Chief Aaron Jonke and discussed several critical issues:

- 2023 DFPC Audit
  - The Department of Fire Prevention and Control (DFPC) is currently auditing 2023, with a focus on the benefits fee rate that was established. Chief Jonke has sent a letter to the state requesting guidance on the best approach to justify the rates set.
- Apparatus
  - New tires were purchased to address the wear and tear on deployed SAFPD vehicles. Additionally, the skid plates on new tenders were adjusted to avoid any future maintenance issues.
- 2026 Budget Recommendations
  - Recommendations for the 2026 budget will be presented to the Secretary Treasurer at the October 2025 board meeting to begin the budgeting process.
- Personnel
  - Tyler Oster, from the SFD Reserve Program, was hired and began his position on September 18th. Lieutenant testing is scheduled for October 8".
- Inclusion / Exclusion Procedures
  - Developing a process for home / landowners to navigate the inclusion / exclusion process. Pamphlets will be created to inform residents and posted on the SAFPD website.
- Strategic Planning Prep & Recommendations for 2026
  - Consideration for Strategic Planning meetings to be held to develop board goals and achievable timelines. Recommendations for 2026 include in-state personnel only, controlled deployments, emphasis on apparatus deployment, control wages, administrative capacity, and overall increased board involvement.

Assistant Fire Chief Report

Chief Rohrich reported on a few administrative items:

- Collegiate Peaks / High Country Bank
  - Chief Rohrich confirmed with the board that all required signatures for adding new signers to the accounts have been completed. She also noted that the PDPA Number is needed for High Country Bank and stated she will obtain it by the October 2025 meeting.

Division Chief of Wildfire

Division Chief Bainbridge reported the following:

- Grants
  - Currently in the process of applying for the FRWRM and CoSwap grants, with FRWRM funds designated for equipment. Mitigation work under the CoSwap grant is planned to be carried out by SCC crews and state-supported work programs. The GOCO/CYCA grant was submitted in August, with a status update anticipated in December.
- Mapping
  - Collaborating with the City of Salida to enhance mapping of SAFPD areas, including the recent addition of fuel treatment zones and aerial imagery of the Methodist Subdivisions.
- Mod

    - Chipping, saw work, and slash hauling have begun, with pile burning scheduled to start when conditions are safe and permitted.
- Dispatches
    - Tender 11 was demobilized from California as of September 15th.
    - Engine 311 remains deployed in California and will stay there until conditions change.
- Community Initiatives
    - Meeting with Choctaw Heights, Boot Hill, and Pinon Hills on becoming Firewise Communities.

6. New Business

- The board discussed the possibility of establishing a mobility aid donation program, allowing community members to borrow equipment such as wheelchairs, crutches, and scooters as needed, with the expectation that items be returned to the department.

Further discussion is scheduled for the October 2025 meeting.

7. Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn the meeting at 0947
    - **Motion to Adjourn:** Art Hutchinson
    - **Second:** Sheldon Morgan
    - **Vote:** Passed Unanimously

Submitted by

Art Hutchinson, Secretary Treasurer