



SOUTH ARKANSAS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

MEETING MINUTES

Date: 7/27/2026

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. She reported that transfers had been made as necessary to support operational expenses and payroll obligations. No significant concerns were reported.

Laurie Todesco of South Arkansas Fire Protection District reported on the current billing cycle and discussed a backlog resulting from the high volume of wildland deployments and associated documentation requirements. Laurie and Marilyn Marchand are working together to improve processes and reduce backlog. Staff reported that activity levels remain exceptionally high and that billing and payroll processing continue to be a priority.

Financial Report:

- **Motion to accept June financials:**

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

Fire Chief's Report:

Chief Aaron Jonke discussed several critical issues:

- **Division Chief of Wildfire Position Funding:**

- The Division Chief of Wildfire position has been highly successful, resulting in increased mitigation and grant funding opportunities. Renewal of the position was recommended.

- **Resiliency Code:**

- The State Resiliency Code has been adopted by Chaffee County and the City of Salida with local amendments. The District will consider adoption of the same code. See resolution under *New Business*.

- **Administrative Equipment:**

- A District-issued computer was requested for Laurie Todesco to better support District functions.

- **Equipment Purchases:**

- Replacement radios are needed in the District's tender due to aging equipment – see motion under *New Business*.

- **Legislative Update:**

- Legislative updates affecting Colorado fire districts 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 vehicle bumper.

Division Chief of Wildfire:

Division Chief Bainbridge reported the following:

- **Deployments:**

- Multiple resources remain deployed across Colorado, North Dakota, and South Dakota with approximately 30 personnel assigned to incidents or severity assignments.

- **Grants:**

- Staff are evaluating various grant funding opportunities. New chipper purchased under FRWRM grant continues to be heavily utilized in community mitigation projects. Bobcat and trailer purchases remain pending due to reimbursement funds from the State.

- **Fire Conditions:**

- Fire restrictions remain in place despite precipitation due to ongoing drought conditions and elevated fire danger.

6. New Business:

- **Motion: Enter Executive Session (*closed to the public*): Pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(b) and (e) for the purpose of receiving legal advice regarding the proposed property transaction at 120 E Street and to develop negotiation strategy related to potential intergovernmental agreements.**

-

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

Motion: Motion by the South Arkansas Fire Protection District Board of Directors to adjourn Executive Session and reconvene in Regular Session. No action was taken during executive session.

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

- **Motion:** Motion by the South Arkansas Fire Protection District Board of Directors to approve the purchase and installation of replacement mobile radios for Tender 11 and 12, with total expenditures not to exceed \$7,500.00, and to amend the 2026 budget to reallocate the funds previously designated for garage door replacement at Station 12 to this purchase.
 - **Motion By:** Sheldon Morgan
 - **Second:** Phillip Gamache
 - **Vote:** Unanimous
- **Motion:** Motion by the South Arkansas Fire Protection District Board of Directors to approve the purchase of office equipment, with total expenditures not to exceed \$2,000.00.
 - **Motion By:** Art Hutchinson
 - **Second:** Phillip Gamache
 - **Vote:** Unanimous
- **Motion:** Motion by the South Arkansas Fire Protection District Board of Directors to continue the Division Chief of Wildfire position based on the District's ongoing need for wildfire mitigation, planning, grant administration, interagency coordination, operational support, and to direct staff to include funding for the position through 2027.
 - **Motion By:** Art Hutchinson
 - **Second:** Sheldon Morgan
 - **Vote:** Unanimous
- **Motion:** Motion by the South Arkansas Fire Protection District Board of Directors to update the authorized users and signers on the District's Collegiate Peaks Bank checking account, High Country Bank accounts, and ColoTrust accounts by adding Marilyn Marchand-Gouin, District Operations and Finance Coordinator, as an authorized signer, removing any former officers, former Fire Chiefs, or other individuals no longer authorized by the District, and authorizing the Board President and Secretary-Treasurer to execute all documentation required by each institution.

- **Motion By:** Phillip Gamache
- **Second:** Sheldon Morgan
- **Vote:** Unanimous
- **Resolution:** Motion by the South Arkansas Fire Protection District Board of Directors to adopt Resolution 2026-02, establishing the Chaffee County Wildfire Resiliency Code with local amendments (Ordinance 2026-02) by reference as the District's code, with all references to Chaffee County as the Authority Having Jurisdiction replaced by the District.
 - **Motion By:** Sheldon Morgan
 - **Second:** Art Hutchinson
 - **Vote:** Unanimous
- **Resolution:** Motion by the South Arkansas Fire Protection District Board of Directors to adopt Resolution 2026-03, establishing and authorizing the District's credit card program with UMB Bank, n.a., updating the Designated Officers and authorized users as set forth in Exhibit A, and adding Marilyn Marchand-Gouin, Operations and Finance Coordinator, as an authorized user.
 - **Motion By:** Phillip Gamache
 - **Second:** Sheldon Morgan
 - **Vote:** Unanimous

7. Adjournment:

- **Motion to adjourn the meeting at 1033**
 - **Motion to Adjourn:** Sheldon Morgan
 - **Second:** Art Hutchinson
 - **Vote:** Passed Unanimously

Submitted by: _____



Art Hutchinson, Secretary Treasurer

