



SOUTH ARKANSAS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

MEETING MINUTES

Date: 5/18/2026

Time: 0900 Hours

Location: 611 Oak Street, Salida, CO 81201

Board Members Present:

- Harold Starbuck
- Sheldon Morgan
- Phillip Gamache
- Rich Edgington

Board Members Excused:

- Art Hutchinson
-

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by President Harold Starbuck at 0903 hours.

2. Approval of the Agenda:

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

3. Approval of January Board Meeting Minutes:

- Motion to accept the April Board Meeting Minutes
 - **Motion By:** Sheldon Morgan
 - **Second By:** Harold Starbuck

- **Vote:** Passed unanimously

4. **Open Session:** No public was present.

5. Reports

Sarah Marques of Walke and Associates reported that financial activity remained stable, with expenditures consistent with income. The largest expense during the period was reimbursement to the City for personnel costs. The Board discussed the proper classification of boat-related equipment costs and agreed that associated items should be reclassified under Capital Outlay.

Laurie Todesco of South Arkansas Fire Protection District detailed both received and outstanding amounts of current billing cycle with billing backlog largely processed, pending final state billing rate approval before submission.

Financial Report:

- **Motion to accept April financials:**
 - **Motion:** Sheldon Morgan
 - **Second:** Rich Edgington
 - **Vote:** Passed unanimously

Fire Chief's Report:

Chief Aaron Jonke discussed several critical issues:

- **Resiliency Code:**
 - Discussion of new State "Resiliency Code" replacing WUI code
 - Adoption delayed; SAFPD coordinating with Chaffee County
 - Recommendation to delay adoption until next month with local amendments
- **DFPC Audit:**
 - Audit process remains ongoing and continues to require staff time
 - Issues identified with state-provided spreadsheets and data inconsistencies
 - Chief continues working to resolve outstanding items and expressed ongoing frustration with delays
- **Capital Improvement Plan**
 - Need identified for development of a formal capital improvement plan
 - Discussion emphasized importance of balancing revenue-generated operations with community responsibility
 - Continued evaluation of equipment investments and staffing impacts

- **Common Ground Meeting**

- SAFPD hosted community stakeholders and grant partners for a field tour
- Positive feedback received on mitigation strategy, including fuel breaks and home hardening efforts
- Emphasis placed on continued grant funding and regional coordination

Assistant Fire Chief Report:

- No formal report was given.

Division Chief of Wildfire:

Division Chief Bainbridge reported the following:

- **Grants:**

- COSWAP – crew will be back in Fall, 2026
- Common Ground – mitigation efforts continue
- FRWRM – bumper on MOD truck was fixed ; working on vehicle decals with Rebel Brush Trucks and Department of Corrections (DOC)
 - Chipper and MOD truck will be added to CRFF agreement for potential deployment

- **Deployments:**

- Engine 112 is deployed in CO
- Engine 311 is in Kansas / Oklahoma

- **Personnel:**

- Strong staffing levels with seasonal personnel returning
- Continued discussion regarding growth, staffing capacity, and management needs

6. New Business:

- i. **Motion: Enter Executive Session (*closed to the public*) - pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(b), (e), and (f) to receive legal advice, discuss negotiation strategy and intergovernmental agreements, and address personnel matters related to a command staff position.**
 - a. Legal advice on adopting resiliency code
 - b. Discussion on personnel matters
 - c. Strategy and negotiations

- **Motion By:** Rich Edgington
- **Second:** Sheldon Morgan
- **Vote:** Unanimous
- **Motion:** Motion by the South Arkansas Fire Protection District Board of Directors to adjourn Executive Session and reconvene in Regular Session.
 - **Motion By:** Rich Edgington
 - **Second:** Sheldon Morgan
 - **Vote:** Unanimous
- **Adoption of Resolutions(s) – Resolution No. 2026-02 –** *A resolution of the Board of Directors of the South Arkansas Fire Protection District to adopt the Wildfire Resiliency Code with local amendments.*
 - No action was taken
- **Motion:** Motion by the South Arkansas Fire Protection District Board of Directors authorizing the hiring of Hansen Communications to provide professional communications and community engagement services to assist in assessing community fire and emergency service needs, at a cost not to exceed \$2000.00.
 - **Motion By:** Rich Edgington
 - **Second:** Sheldon Morgan
 - **Vote:** Unanimous

7. Adjournment:

- **Motion to adjourn the meeting at 1034**
 - **Motion to Adjourn:** Rich Edgington
 - **Second:** Sheldon Morgan
 - **Vote:** Passed Unanimously

Submitted by: _____


Rich Edgington, Vice President / Acting Secretary Treasurer