



# South Arkansas Fire Protection District

## Meeting Minutes

**Date:** December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**Time:** 0900 Hours

**Location:** 124 E Street, Salida, CO 81201

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### Board Members Present:

- Harold Starbuck
- Fred Jackson
- Jeff Graf
- Rich Edgington

### Board Members Absent:

- Art Hutchinson (excused)
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### 1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by President Harold Starbuck at 0907 hours.

### 2. Approval of the Agenda:

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

### 3. Approval of November Board Meeting Minutes:

- **Motion to accept the November Board Meeting Minutes**
  - **Motion By:** Rich Edgington

- **Second By:** Fred Jackson
- **Vote:** Passed unanimously

#### 4. Open Session:

- **Sheldon Morgan and Mike Sugaski** both thanked the board for sending a team of eight individuals from Firecamp to address mitigation concerns around their properties on Methodist Mountain.

#### 5. Reports:

##### **Financial Report:**

Laurie Todesco, from South Arkansas Fire Protection District, provided a financial update for the board concerning the \$3.4 million that is currently outstanding.

- Laurie informed the board that the state is processing funds more slowly, causing delays in receiving allocated resources. However, she assured the board that despite the delay the state will process the invoices and pay allocated funds as soon as possible.
- **Motion to accept the monthly financials:**
  - **Motion:** Jeff Graf
  - **Second:** Rich Edgington
  - **Vote:** Passed Unanimously

##### **Fire Chief's Report:**

Chief Aaron Jonke discussed several critical issues:

- **Operations:** Chief provided an update around operations that will be implemented moving forward, namely First Due, a software function that aims to improve capabilities and metrics of the department. Chief also discussed how he aims to consolidate department rules and procedures that will streamline expectations moving forward.
- **Community Evaluation:** Chief also expressed the uptick in heating fires (chimney, wood stoves, furnace, space heaters) due to the colder

months and that the community should be aware of the threats that this presents.

- **Staffing / Personnel:** Chief addressed the recent hiring of (7) reserve personnel that will help backfill current positions as well as the hiring of (1) fulltime firefighter. Written testing for the fulltime firefighting position starts on December 20<sup>th</sup>.
- **Fleet Condition:** Chief communicated that Brush 112 faced a \$2,600 repair to address its activated limp mode. Repairs are scheduled to be made.
  - **President of the Board, Harold Starbuck** asked Chief Jonke about the availability of a Type III, Chief Jonke confirmed that they are still available, currently priced at \$563,000 to \$730,000.
- Chief addressed grants that are currently being worked on:
  - **FRWRM:** It is a high priority to secure this grant, as it will support wildfire mitigation efforts in and around the community. Additionally, the grant will facilitate the promotion of a qualified crew member to the position of Wildland Chief. The Chief is hopeful in the likelihood of obtaining this grant, though official confirmation is not expected until March 2025.
  - **DFPC:** directed towards firefighter personal protective equipment (PPE) with emphasis on replacing fire shelters and opens at the first of the year.
  - **Radio replacement:** a grant through the Office of Emergency Operations to facilitate the upgrade of the District's older radios
  - **AFG:** applying for a grant through the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program to improve training operations in the fire

department and the replacement of the tower that is 30 years old.

- **Slip-on:** Chief Jonke noted that he is currently looking in to Slip-on grants. Essentially trying to build our own Type 6 brush trucks.
- **Legislative Update:** Chief Jonke is actively monitoring legislation regarding property taxes, as it may have a significant impact on special district fire departments across the state. Governor Polis has acknowledged the challenges this legislation could pose and plans to address the issue by March 2025
- **New Fire House Report:** Construction is nearly wrapped with focus directed towards pouring concrete, although incimate weather could affect this timeline. Set to be in the new fire house on January 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- **Other Updates:**
  - **NCCC Team** is set to move in to the 124 E St. station on January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025.
  - **Chief Jonke** communicated that he reached out to BLM to offer support from the Board with mitigation efforts but has yet to hear back – will report with any update.
  - **Chief Jonke** confirmed that the department will increase the exclusion fee to \$1,000.00 for an individual to leave the district. This will take affect January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025.

- **Assistant Fire Chief Report:**

**Chief Rohrich** reported that the board will need to remove the retired fire chief from financial accounts.

- **Wild Land Coordinator:**

**Captain Bainbridge** reported on the district's current wild land team and equipment deployments as well as maintenance / repairs that are needed:

- **Team Deployment:** no staff is currently deployed, although fire season will pick up soon with potential assessment being directed towards Oklahoma and Texas.
  - **Equipment Deployment:**
    - **Type 6:** returned back to station
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**6. Unfinished Business:**

- SAFPD Christmas Party: Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm

**7. New Business:**

- **Resolution No. 2024-06 *Resolution to Appropriate Sums of Money***
    - **Motion to approve Resolution No. 2024-06**
    - **Motion By:** Fred Jackson
    - **Second:** Rich Edgington
    - **Vote:** Passed unanimously
  - **Resolution No. 2024-07 *Funding of a Wildland Chief of Operations***
    - **Motion to approve Resolution No. 2024-07**
    - **Motion By:** Fred Jackson
    - **Second:** Rich Edgington
    - **Vote:** Passed unanimously
  - **Resolution No. 2024-08 *Appointing Chief Jonke Designated Elections Officer***
    - **Motion to approve Resolution No. 2024-08**
    - **Motion By:** Rich Edgington
    - **Second:** Jeff Graf
    - **Vote:** Passed unanimously
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- **Resolution No. 2024-09 Resolution to Set Mill Levies**

- **Motion to approve Resolution No. 2024-09**
- **Motion By:** Jeff Graf
- **Second:** Fred Jackson
- **Vote:** Passed unanimously

**8. Public Hearing:**

- **Motion:** Motion adopt Resolution No. 2024-10 *The IGA Between the South Arkansas Fire Protection District and the City of Salida*
  - **Motion By:** Fred Jackson
  - **Second:** Jeff Graf
  - **Vote:** Passed Unanimously
- **Motion:** Motion to adopt Resolution No. 2024-11 *The Adoption of the 2025 Budget*
  - **Motion By:** Rich Edgington
  - **Second:** Fred Jackson
  - **Vote:** Passed Unanimously

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**9. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn the meeting at 0954**

- **Motion to Adjourn:** Rich Edgington
- **Second:** Fred Jackson
- **Vote:** Passed Unanimously

Submitted by:



**Jeff Graf, Acting Secretary Treasurer**