



# South Arkansas Fire Protection District Meeting Minutes

**Date:** September 9, 2024

**Time:** 0900 hours

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

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## **Board Members Present:**

- Harold Starbuck
- Fred Jackson
- Art Hutchinson

## **Board Members Absent (Excused):**

- Jeff Graff
  - Rich Edgington
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## **Meeting Proceedings:**

### **1. Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by President Harold Starbuck at 0900 hours.

### **2. Approval of the Agenda:**

- **Motion:** Fred Jackson moved to accept the agenda as presented.
- **Second:** Art Hutchinson.
- **Vote:** Passed unanimously.

### **3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:**

- **Motion:** Fred Jackson moved to approve the minutes from the previous board meeting as presented.
- **Second:** Art Hutchinson.
- **Vote:** Passed unanimously.

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## Open Session:

- **Mike Sugaski**, a member of the team for over 10 years, addressed the board and expressed his interest in serving on the board.
  - **Andy Majeski** shared his recent wildfire deployment experience in California.
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## Reports:

### 1. Financial Report:

- **Sarah Marques**, from Walke & Associates, reviewed the budget and financial statements for the previous month, noting no significant variances.
- She will forward a copy of the annual audit to the Fire Chief.
- The Fire Chief and Sarah will collaborate on ensuring the 2025 budget line items are aligned with the City of Salida's annual fire department budget.
- **Motion to Accept the Monthly Financials:**
  - **Motion:** Fred Jackson
  - **Second:** Art Hutchinson
  - **Vote:** Passed unanimously.

### 2. Attorney Report:

The attorney is currently reviewing the intergovernmental agreement (IGA) and has requested an executive session with the board to discuss further details.

### 3. Fire Chief Report:

Chief Aaron Jonke discussed several critical issues:

- Three team members are out due to joint injuries, accounting for 25% of the department. This poses staffing challenges, and the Chief is working on using interagency firefighters through the reserve program to mitigate the impact.
- The **Fire Ops One-on-One** class held for department heads was a success, with participants experiencing live fire simulations. The Chief plans to extend this opportunity to City Council members in 2025.
- **Fleet Concerns:** There were concerns regarding Engine 112's condition, which has been reported as poor. The Chief discussed plans to use Engine 111 for mitigation purposes and is exploring options for Type 6 and Type 3 apparatus procurement.

- **Fire Camp Collaboration:** Efforts are underway to build a partnership with Fire Camp, a wildland firefighter training school. This relationship will benefit the district by providing training opportunities and supporting wildland mitigation efforts.
- **Legislative Update:** Initiatives 50 and 108 have been pulled from the ballot, with **House Bill 24B-1001** introduced to address tax issues affecting special districts. The Governor has pledged a more permanent fix by March 2025.
- **Future Direction:** Chief Jonke emphasized the need for strategic investments in personnel, including creating a full-time wildland coordinator position, providing healthcare for admin staff, and upgrading aging apparatus. He stressed the importance of consolidating fire services in the county's rapidly growing southern region.

4. **Assistant Fire Chief Report:**

Chief Rohrich reported that after months of effort, the Department of Local Affairs has finally corrected all of the district's information. This process required significant work on her part.

5. **Wildland Coordinator Report:**

Captain Bainbridge reported on the district's current wildland deployments:

- Several assets are deployed, mainly in California, where a crew swap was recently required. California authorities indicated they will continue using district resources for as long as possible.
- Colorado is entering a dry spell, and wildfire conditions in the state, including the local area, are expected to worsen in the coming months.
- There was an air tanker carbon monoxide issue in Colorado Springs, leading to the relocation of state assets to the front range.

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**Unfinished Business:**

- None.

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**New Business:**

- **President Starbuck** suggested that the board defer action on future matters until a special meeting, which he will schedule immediately. He expressed the importance of having the entire board present to discuss moving forward.
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**Good of the Order:**

- None.
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**Adjournment:**

- **Motion to Adjourn:** Fred Jackson
  - **Second:** Art Hutchinson
  - **Vote:** Passed unanimously.
  - The meeting was adjourned at
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Respectfully Submitted,  
Art Hutchinson  
Acting Secretary Treasurer