

South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District
Regular Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes
May 6, 2024 - **AMENDED**

Present:	Jim Albee, Chair	Bob Baker, Fire Chief
	Renee Anderson, Vice Chair	Mike Dell'Orfano, Chief Govt. Affairs Officer
	Rich Sokol, Treasurer	John Curtis, Deputy Chief– Emergency Services
	Sue Roche, Secretary	Kristin Eckmann, Deputy Chief – Community Services
	Kevin Leung	Matt Weller, Deputy Chief – Employee Services
	William Shriver	Dillon Miskimins, CFO Business Services
	Bruce Stahlman	Camie Chapman, CHRO Employee Services
		Allison Ulmer, Legal Counsel

Others Present: SMFR Staff Members and Citizens

MEETING CALL TO ORDER

Chair Albee called the Regular Meeting of the South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District to order at 6:25 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited at the South Metro Fire Rescue Volunteer Firefighter Pension Board of Trustees Meeting.

ROLL CALL

All of the Board members were present in person.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chair Albee recommended taking the second discussion item and moving to after the information items so anyone who does not want to stay for the Fire Chief Selection discussion are welcome to leave.

Director Anderson motioned to approve the agenda as amended. Director Roche seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE

Chair Albee asked if there were any changes to conflict of interest affirmation:

- Director Stahlman – no changes
- Director Roche – no changes
- Director Anderson – no changes
- Chair Albee- no changes
- Director Shriver – no changes
- Director Sokol – no changes
- Director Leung – no changes

PUBLIC COMMENT

N/A

CONSENT AGENDA

April 1, 2024 South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District Regular Board Meeting Minutes
April 15, 2024 South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District Special Board Meeting Minutes

Director Stahlman motioned to approve the consent agenda as presented. Director Sokol seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

ACTION ITEMS

- 1. Lobbyist Professional Services Agreement Extension** – Chief Dell’Orfano informed that the legislative session is almost over, and it has been a good and interesting session. Everything that we were hoping to happen, happened. From collectively testifying, working with him and Director Anderson, coordinating subject-matter specialists, Lobbyist Driver has helped kill some bills as well as get some critical amendments. Overwhelmingly, the feedback is that she has worked out great.

Chief Dell’Orfano reminded that in 2023, SMFR entered into a professional service agreement with 3015 Policy Center, Ltd. For lobbying services. That agreement expires on May 31, 2024 and Staff recommends an extension through the next legislative session.

Director Anderson stated that Lobbyist Driver has been very thoughtful in navigating to keep our brand as well as working with the legislators and helping us understand the personalities and how they work. She is very good at explaining what we should do and why and sometimes changing course, as needed. Secondary benefit to all of this is that she has really made a name for SMFR. She couldn’t be more thrilled with her interactions with Lobbyist Driver, as well as the efforts of Chiefs Dell’Orfano and Richardson.

Director Sokol stated that the session is January through May, but things get going on in November/December, so it is a season rather than a session.

Director Roche motioned to approve the Lobbyist Professional Services Agreement with 3015 Policy Center, Ltd. For lobbying services through May 31, 2025 with a compensation of \$1,750 per month from June 1, 2024 through September 30, 2024 and \$3,500 per month from October 1, 2024 through May 31, 2025. I direct the Fire Chief or his designee to execute the necessary documents to implement this board action. Director Stahlman seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

DISCUSSION/POTENTIAL ACTION ITEMS

- 1. 2023 Budget Amendment Resolution** – CFO Miskimins reported that the Self-Insured and Building Rental Funds exceeded their appropriated budget amounts in 2023 causing the need to amend the 2023 budget. Two main factors caused the fund to exceed its original budgeted amount: the District’s contribution to the employee’s health savings account (HSA) were incorrectly budgeted in the General Fund rather than the Self-Insured Fund & dental claims exceeded the original budget amount. This was the first year being self-insured for dental claims and under budgeted the amount of dental claims. Staff recommends holding a public hearing at the May 20th Board meeting and subsequently pass the presented resolution to amend the 2023 budget.

In addition, CFO Miskimins explained that the Building Rental Fund was over budget by a small amount due to a basement flood and the rise in utility costs, which exceeded the budget by approximately \$3,300. In total, the HSA budget was exceeded by \$537,000 and the Building Rental Fund was exceeded by \$3,300. As a part of the audit process, adjusting entries were found and that is the reason the budget amendment was delayed until now.

At Director Sokol’s request, CFO Miskimins stated that 45% over budget is a pretty big difference & does not have the details but can bring them back to the Board. The 2024 budget should be on track because part of the 2023 budget was used to cover overage. Only the Self-Insured Fund needs an amendment, not the General Fund because it is a positive variance of \$530,000.

At Director Sokol’s request, CFO Miskimins stated that \$600,000 was budgeted **under Miscellaneous Revenue in the Self-Insured fund** and we received just over \$1M with the difference being the pharmacy **rebates**, so we received more than budgeted.

INFORMATION ITEMS

1. **Sleep Study Update** – Chief Weller deferred to Chief Milan who reminded that in 2022 the Board approved \$1.5M to be used to improve the sleep environments in our stations. A plan was developed and executed collaboratively with Operations, Human Performance & Optimization (HPO), Facilities, Construction Management, and various design professionals. Staff has expended \$1.4M improving the stations and anticipate completing the remaining few items this summer with the remaining budgeted amount of \$100,000. Staff is tracking to complete the project at the end of summer and not exceed approved budgeted amount. Chief Milan provided additional information, highlighting:

- Crew Input
- Five Simple Fixes
- Construction & HVAC
- Expenses to Date
- SMFR Standards: All Stations

Chief Weller added that, as someone recently living in a station, appreciates the Board approving the funds to make these improvements. Staff is in the process of visiting each station and receiving very consistent feedback that these improvements have been good for everyone.

Director Stahlman stated that he happened to stop by Station 14 for a visit and received feedback that the in-room station capabilities were great and have made a big difference.

At Director Shriver's request, Chief Weller stated that every station received the simple fixes. The individual cooling with the mini splits was a smaller number but Staff will continue to evaluate as we move forward. Chief Milan reiterated that all of these things will be installed in the new station builds.

At Director Shriver's request, Chief Weller stated Staff is working to get all of the stations up to the same standard.

Director Sokol stated that he was at a station a few months ago and the crew indicated that these improvements are great but there are other things that were higher on their priority list & asked how we go about weighing the priorities. Chief Milan stated that it comes down to the standards of expectation. As a group, the Board and Facilities need to set a standard of expectations and dovetail in the wants and needs of the crews. There are going to be some hard decisions that need to be made. Chief Weller stated that he has been pushing to identify the standard and determine what it will take to bring all of the stations up to that standard. Staff is flexible. The beds were the initial upgrade and now Staff is working with the station crews to see what items are nice to have or what the station needs to get to the standard organizationally.

At Director Anderson's request, Chief Weller stated that Staff is working "life expectancy" of these items into the budget as predictive maintenance and being more proactive allocating funds.

Chair Albee stated that this project predated some of the Board members and informed that what was just reviewed was a process that started back in 2020 or 2021 and the specific effort was looking at a shift schedule change to address some of the issues that shift work has on the crews. At the end of that process, the Board opted not to proceed with the schedule change but rather agreed to address sleep issues and see what could be done with a couple million dollars. Now the crews are stating they don't want sleep number beds, but they were specifically to address issues with sleep and rest issues. We will continue to address issues, but wanted to provide some background information to help the new Board members understand.

2. **Vehicle Policy** – Chief Dell'Orfano stated that a few meetings ago Chief Sokol asked about the vehicle take home policy, and provided additional information, highlighting:

- Overview
- Work & Take Home
- Costs

At Director Leung's request, CFO Miskimins stated that liability insurance on the vehicles is handled as a general liability renewal for all apparatus and vehicles, including leased vehicles. Staff can pull that information for the Board. Chair Albee stated he would like to have that information.

At Director Stahlman's request, CFO Miskimins stated that Staff conducted a lease vs. buy exercise several years ago and found that for vehicles that don't have heavy upfit that the lease, at the time, was the better option relative to what we were experiencing for vehicles purchased outright. Chief Milan added that when looking to review the 2015 lease in 202 we were far ahead because of the pandemic and that whatever equity is left on the vehicle is rolled into the new lease. Fleet Services Director Frank stated that we also receive a substantial discount by leasing, and it is much more management from a fleet management perspective. Chief Richardson stated that we can net more when turning in the leased vehicles. Chief Milan stated that he would be happy to share the original presentation with the Board again.

At Director Sokol's request, Chief Dell'Orfano stated that the policy for personal use of the vehicles is limited as they should always be ready to respond. Chief Richardson added that the vehicles are tracked, and, in fact, 5 vehicles have been returned because we did not have use for them. Those assigned response vehicles understand that it is for response and not to use the vehicles for personal use outside of the direct path to and from work and home. CFO Miskimins stated that Staff is looking more at the outliers based on years in use and mileage. Chief Dell'Orfano informed that the Deputy Chiefs work to satisfy the criteria for Staff assigned vehicles and the need to take the vehicle home, with final approval from the Fire Chief.

At Chair Albee's request, CFO Miskimins stated that there are a few Staff members who receive a stipend as an alternative to having a vehicle assigned. Chief Baker stated that the vehicle stipend is an alternative to leasing a vehicle versus a vehicle reimbursement. Chair Albee stated that he would want to make sure that the assigned vehicles are proper and people that have a vehicle do not have it as a perk. At Director Roche's request, CHRO Chapman stated that the stipend is \$300.

At Director Leung's request, Fleet Services Director Frank stated that the vehicle registrations are covered in the lease cost. Chief Dell'Orfano reviewed the category assignments: 25 have one assigned just for work, 21 have one assigned for work and take it home, and there are 22 pool cars for anyone to use.

Chief Baker explained that the majority of people who have take home cars need to be response ready. There are a small group of people, like the Deputy Chiefs & Chief Dell'Orfano who have take home cars because they are doing things outside of regular work hours multiple times a week/month and he has total confidence that those individuals assigned a take home vehicle are adhering to the policy.

3. CFSI Annual Symposium Summary – Chief Dell'Orfano deferred to Chief Curtis and provided a quick overview of the symposium, highlighting:

- Legislative Overview
- Symposium Classes
 - Health and Wellness Concept – Early Cancer Screening
 - SMFR has taken a lot of great strides and reviewed the various changes incorporated and to be finalized as we get into the future.

Director Leung stated that SMFR has an awesome reputation. He had several firefighters from other states approach him expressing their interest in working for SMFR. We have awesome leadership at all levels, which contributes greatly to what makes us an awesome organization & he is very proud to be a part of it.

At Director Anderson's request, Chief Curtis stated that a very positive response was received regarding the efforts to have Dispatchers recognized as first responders nationally. Chief Dell'Orfano added that the bill's fate is unsure, it was reintroduced and has hundreds of co-sponsors but still does not go anywhere.

4. IGA Update – Chief Dell’Orfano provided an update on the following IGA changes:

1. Arapahoe Community College EMS Clinical Services Agreement (District Accepting Students): students in the ACC paramedic program can get clinical training from SMFR. Renews annually for a total of 5 years. This is a cleanup from previous agreements.
2. Colorado Department of Military Veterans Affairs Code Enforcement MOU: various state agencies have entered into an agreement with us to provide code enforcement services as required by the State Architect. This is our standard template.
3. WMFR First Amendment Auto and Mutual Aid Agreement: our practice is to help each with all types of incidents, but we wanted to make sure that is clear, particularly for dive and other special team incidents. Our existing auto aid agreement intended for that to be the case, but a portion only focuses on fire and EMS incidents. It has been modified to be more general. At Chair Albee’s request, we are still paying WMFR which was reevaluated this year and it was estimated to be around \$100,000, some years around \$30,000, and this year back a little over \$100,000 which was probably inflation because not a significant increase in calls. He can bring back exact number for the board & evaluating whether the payment is actually relevant.

Correspondence items in the Board’s packet are summarized below as well as other information items that were communicated:

- Local 2086 President Dzengelewski:
 - Working with Staff on the discipline policy.
 - Offsite meeting on Wednesday & Thursday with the Fire Chief and Deputy Chiefs to negotiate the next contract. Hoping for a good meeting that results in a positive outcome.
 - The Foundation Hockey Tournament is May 17-19 at the Edge Ice Arena. This is a legacy Littleton event and one of the biggest fundraisers of the year.
 - Former Local President Joel Heinemann’s retirement party is Thursday at 4:00 p.m. at Station 16.
 - The Local E-Board worked through the FYI process with Dan Peterson. Thank you to the Board for allowing them to participate. It was an excellent process.
 - The Department has done a lot of great things to address issues related to cancer, heart disease, PTSD and mental health. Reducing exposure is actually fixing the problem and will continue to educate the Board on the benefits of a reduced workweek.
- Chief Powell:
 - In week 14 of the academy, there are 19 recruits. Graduation is set for June 21st. Family night date has not been determined yet.
- Chief Dell’Orfano:
 - Senate Bill 24-233 was introduced today. This is a property tax bill that will continue to adjust the residential and commercial tax assessment rates and ratchet them down over the next several years. It will also cap revenue on local government at 5.5%. There was also a lot of testimony at the Capitol today, with a lot of focus on backfill. This is a bipartisan bill but not clear all of the things that it might impact.
 - Lori Jackson, Chief Troy Jackson’s widow, has been working behind the scenes to have a portion of a state highway designated as the Firefighters Memorial Highway in memory of Chief Troy Jackson, honoring his years of service, LODD, and contributions to cancer prevention. Lobbyist Driver helped navigate the process unfortunately it had some formatting issues when submitted by legislative staff, so it will have to wait and be presented next year. In the meantime, Representative Clifford read a brief tribute to Chief Jackson into the record, which was really nice and received a great response which may give Lori enough of a kickoff to get some financing for the portion of the highway dedication. More information will be provided later this year.
- Chief Eckmann:
 - Tomorrow (Tuesday) is the 5-year anniversary of the Stem School Shooting. A communication will go out tomorrow with information from those who responded.
 - The annual Line of Duty Death remembrance ceremony has been set for June 22nd. Save the date information will be sent out in the next couple of weeks.
- Chief Curtis:

- Formally introduced Chief Mullane as the new Operations Chief and provided a brief summary of his over 30 years of service and stating that he is super excited to have him be in the role.
- Chief Richardson:
 - A complete overhaul of the CAD system took place April 23-25. The major aspects of the overhaul were completed quickly and successfully and hats off to the IT and Dispatch folks. Still working on a few system enhancements but both teams did a phenomenal job. Director Anderson thanked them for the update & getting Pulse Point back up and working.
- Director Stahlman:
 - Provided an update on Cindy Hathaway (former board member that was hospitalized in 2022/2023). She stated that she is doing well overall but still has some nagging issues but appreciates everyone looking in on her as well as keeping her informed on SMFR topics. She also stated that she gets a lot of requests from people for more visibility from SFMR at community events & providing updates at council meetings.
 - Chief Burke and CRRS Manager Molitor are working with Littleton Councilmember Reichardt on some urban interface issues in Ketring Park. He will find out the current status.
- Director Anderson:
 - Curious about how the new monitor rollout is going. Chief Pietrzyk stated that they started assembling the monitors today and will start training for the super users tomorrow. Next week will start additional trainings and then will be doing department-wide trainings.
- Director Shriver:
 - State of the Town of Parker is tomorrow, several representatives from SMFR attending.
- Director Leung:
 - The May Castle Pines URA meeting has been cancelled.
- CFO Miskimins:
 - Completed a Finance podcast that includes information on the last budget cycle, which was different from others due to threat of Proposition HH. The podcast reviewed the process, the outcome and outlined the timelines and expectations for the 2025 budget, including budget allocations for facilities. The podcast will be coming out next week.
- Chief Baker:
 - Will be at the Metro Fire Chiefs Conference May 19th – 24th in Tulsa. Health and Wellness Officer Macklin and he will be presenting on cardiac issues called Transitioning the Fire Service to “PFAS-Free” Protective Clothing: Considerations, Trade-Offs, and Limitations.
 - The week following that conference, he will be on bereavement week and back in the office the first part of June.
- Chief Weller:
 - Station 15’s structural engineers are working to come up with the corrective action plan for the noncompliant masonry work. In the meantime, Staff is working with the General Contractor to continue work outside of the walls in question.
- Thank you notes:
 - A Thank you letter was received from Arapahoe Rescue Patrol expressing gratitude for SMFR utilizing their organization and for the exceptional people they worked with during the March 14th storm.
 - A thank you letter was received from Arapahoe County Public Health expressing their gratitude to SMFR for invaluable contributions to public health and reminded National Public Health Week is April 1-7.
 - A thank you letter was received from a citizen thanking the Littleton Fire Department, now SMFR, for helping his family over the years when there were emergencies.
 - A thank you note was received by Receptionist Mary Lema from a participant in a recent station tour for the amazing job done by the crew, going above and beyond with the tour and demonstrations & to Mary for helping coordinate the tour and rescheduling due to accommodate for bad weather.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (UPON MOTION)

N/A

DISCUSSION/POTENTIAL ACTION ITEMS CONTINUED

- 2. Chief Selection Process** – Facilitator Dan Peterson coached the Board through the next step in the process. From that discussion, the Board focused in on their top competencies they desire in the future fire chief, to be included in job descriptions and other materials when the position is ready to be posted.

NEXT MEETING

Special Board of Directors' Meeting to be held on May 20, 2024, 6:00 p.m. at 9195 East Mineral Avenue, Centennial, CO.

Regular Board of Directors' Meeting to be held on June 3, 2024, 6:00 p.m. at 9195 East Mineral Avenue, Centennial, CO.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Albee adjourned the meeting at 9:49 p.m.

Attested by: 

Date: Jun 3, 2024