

9South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District  
Special Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes  
June 23, 2025

Present:	Jim Albee, Chair (via Teams)	John Curtis, 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 (absent)
	Kevin Leung	Matt Weller, Deputy Chief – Internal Services
	William Shriver (via Teams)	Camie Chapman, CHRO - Employee Services
		Stephanie Corbo, CFO - Business Services
		Bob Cole, Legal Counsel (absent)

Others Present: Board Candidate Phillip McCart, SMFR Staff, Citizens

**MEETING CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chair Anderson called the Special Meeting of the South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District to order at 6:01 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Vice Chair Anderson led the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America.

**ROLL CALL**

Chair Albee & Director Shriver attended via Teams. All of the other Board members were present in person.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Director Leung motioned to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Director Roche. 6 were in favor, 0 opposed. The motion carried.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE**

Vice-Chair Anderson asked if there were any changes to conflict of interest affirmation:

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

N/A

**CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

*Consent Agenda items are provided for study in the Board packets and introduced in the General Session for the Board's review. They can be adopted by a single motion. All resolutions and proposed actions must be read by title prior to a vote on the motion. Any Consent Agenda items may be removed at the request of a Director and heard separately or tabled.*

1. **SMFR Resolution No. 2025-04 A Resolution Authorizing Condominium Conversion and Partial Conveyance of the Building Located at 9195 East Mineral Avenue and Appointing the Owner's Association Director**

Director Sokol motioned to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Director Leung seconded the motion. 6 were in favor, 0 opposed. The motion carried.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

1. **2024 Audit** – Lisa Horn, a Partner with Forvis Mazars, presented their findings on the District’s audit of the 2024 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR). The firm issued a clean or unmodified opinion and reviewed the ratios, trends & analytics statement of net position, governmental activities revenue & expenses, business-type activities revenue & expenses, capital assets, long-term liabilities, categorized deficiencies by severity, management letter comments and the upcoming standards for 2025-2026. If approved, the audit findings will be filed with the State Auditor tomorrow.

At Director Shriver’s request, Ms. Horn stated that the changes are included in the numbers that were presented as a part of the Board packet.

At Director Leung’s request, Ms. Horn confirmed that they audited both the new and old ERP systems to ensure the data was retained correctly. They also looked at the conversions from the old to the new system to ensure an appropriate level of transparency.

Director Sokol stated that the Audit Committee, which consists of him and Chair Albee, had an in-depth review with the auditors and everything looked good.

At Director Leung’s request, Ms. Horn stated there is potentially the need for an additional FTE or resources to assist the Finance team, rather than adding funds to the IT department budget.

Ms. Horn extended her sincere gratitude to everyone who participated in the process which started in January. The team will be back in August to begin a review of the employee benefits. Director Sokol stated that the auditors have a very good staff and that the financials are accurately reflected.

Chair Albee motioned to approve the 2024 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report as presented. Director Sokol seconded the motion. 6 were in favor, 0 opposed. The motion carried.

## **DISCUSSION / POTENTIAL ACTION ITEMS**

1. **Revenue Initiative Discussion – 2026 Budget** – CFO Corbo stated that this is a placeholder to touch base to see if the Board had anything that they would like to add to the process. The 2<sup>nd</sup> poll closes in about a week and the results will be presented at the July 14<sup>th</sup> meeting. The meeting with various elected officials and other stakeholders has been going well with similar feedback which is overwhelmingly in favor of the property tax versus the sales tax revenue request.

Vice-Chair Anderson stated that requesting a statement of support is helpful. So far, the response has been pretty good. Chair Albee reported that letters of endorsement have been received from the Mayors of Centennial, Lone Tree and Parker as well as from the Centennial City Council.

Chief Dell’Orfano informed that there are about a half dozen more presentations scheduled & Chief Eckmann is presenting at CENCON tonight. Next Monday there is a town hall style meeting at the Senior Center in Highlands Ranch, which will be a similar presentation but probably a much larger audience & outside of the usual elected official groups. Chair Albee reminded that Chief Dell’Orfano distributed a list of events to the Board to encourage anyone who would be able to participate in the presentations.

Chair Albee reminded that the July 7<sup>th</sup> meeting has been moved to the 14<sup>th</sup> and the results of the 2<sup>nd</sup> poll will be presented and the Board may be directing Staff to begin drafting the IGA & on August 4<sup>th</sup> will be directing Staff on ballot questions. On August 18<sup>th</sup> the Board will be approving IGAs with the counties, calling for the election, and certifying the ballot content which is due by September 5<sup>th</sup>. The next four Board meetings are critical. Vice-Chair

Anderson clarified that the Board will be directing Staff to begin preparation for a ballot question, not committing to a course of action but IGA wording would be created, similarly with the ballot question.

At Director Leung's request, CFO Corbo stated that the projections that Director Sokol received from Douglas County and a department projection of a 5% increase, she does not believe anything needs to be done to adjust the 2026 budget.

Director Sokol stated that the Board is going to decide in the next two months how best to ask for a fairly significant tax increase. Personally, he wants to be confident that we have cut our expenses to run lean before we ask for a 25% increase. Some of the cuts were listed in May but it was not clear to him that we have done enough. For his vote, he needs to be convinced & asked Staff to formalize what has been done so he can relay the information to our constituents with a clear conscience. Vice-Chair Anderson suggested that he meet with Chief Curtis and CFO Corbo to determine some of the details that he is looking for and share that with the rest of the Board. Director Shriver agreed with having a higher level of confidence and would be glad to join Director Sokol in the discussions with Chief Curtis and CFO Corbo.

At Director Sokol's request, Chief Curtis reviewed the information that has been shared with the SMFR members through the All Personnel meeting and other internal communications as well as beginning work with the budget managers and Local as they go through the budget process to thoroughly review their requests while maintaining the highest level of service that we are able to do. The ETeam has been very open about the ramifications.

- 2. Board Vacancy Interviews** – Vice-Chair Anderson reminded that we recruited candidates for the Board. Two candidates submitted their letters of intent by the June 9<sup>th</sup> deadline. One candidate withdrew. Vice-Chair Anderson invited the candidate to review their background and why they would like to serve on the Board.

Phillip McCart provided a short personal and professional background, including how he became familiar with SMFR through meeting Bruce Stahlman & former Fire Marshal Valdez. He has never been involved in politics as an elected official but wanted to be Director Stahlman's successor, even before the unfortunate circumstances, and wants to continue his positive representation of District 4.

At Chair Albee's request, Mr. McCart stated that he read in detail the standards of service, service plan and strategic plan. He also reviewed some of the board packets where the budget discussions began in preparation for potential appointment to the position.

At Vice-Chair Anderson's request, Mr. McCart stated that he feels that he can commit to the Board meeting schedule and answer questions when needed. The only reason he might not be at a meeting is traveling for business once a year and if there is an emergency.

At Director Leung's request, Mr. McCart informed that he has a sizeable group of connections in Littleton and some in Jefferson County and could possibly help Chief Dell'Orfano with scheduling meetings. He has no problem with going for a revenue increase but has not dived into enough detail to have an opinion on property tax versus sales tax.

At Director Sokol's request, Mr. McCart stated he can't imagine a situation where a revenue increase would be turned down by the voters unless they don't understand why there's a shortfall. It seems to make more sense to have a stable income source.

At Director Roche's request, Mr. McCart stated that he initially became interested in SMFR by hearing what the City of Littleton Public Works was saying about SMFR and wanted confirmation and that is when he got with Director Stahlman and Chief Valdez and was inspired to serve on the board of this very prideful organization. He does not have any thoughts on what can be done better.

At Director Leung's request, Vice-Chair Anderson suggested that he have a one-on-one discussion with Mr. McCart about his thoughts on the repercussions of whether the revenue initiative is not successful and philosophy on downsizing.

Vice-Chair Anderson invited Mr. McCart to attend the Town Hall Meeting on Monday in Highlands Ranch.

Mr. McCart stated that he has no further questions and had already discussed the time commitment with Chair Albee.

At Director Sokol's request, Chair Albee stated that the 60-day timeframe to appoint a director started on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, so an appointment would need to be made before the next meeting.

Director Leung motioned to move this to an Action Item. Director Roche seconded the motion. 6 were in favor, 0 opposed. The motion carried.

Director Leung motioned to appoint Phillip Aron McCart II to be the representative for District 4. Chair Albee seconded the motion. 6 were in favor, 0 opposed. The motion carried.

Chair Albee stated he was very impressed with Mr. McCart's preparation and eagerness to start understanding the organization before we got to this point & appreciated him attending the LODD Remembrance Ceremony on Saturday. Those are the type of things that ground you as a director and help you to really get in and understand the people as it relates to the organization. As the District 4 representative, you not only represent your district but the entire district & appreciates his willingness to serve.

#### **INFORMATION ITEMS:**

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

- Emergency Communications Director March:
  - Emergency Communications was reaccredited last week by the International Academy of Emergency Dispatch.
- CFO Corbo:
  - Now that the audit is complete Staff will be rolling into the budget process. Planning is for significant budget reductions in order to prepare for all outcomes of a revenue election.
- CHRO Chapman:
  - 2025-02 Academy of 20 graduated Friday night and will be on Line within the next few days. Next Academy of 20 starts on July 25<sup>th</sup> and graduates in December. Attrition year to date is 31; 95 percent are Line members.
- Chief Curtis:
  - Finishing up the Deputy Chief of Operations process.
  - Appreciates the Board's attendance at the various ceremonies last week. Chair Albee stated that he attended several and all were outstanding events & worthy of the people being recognized.
  - Addressing the CPFF State Conference tomorrow.
  - The Station 15 Grand Opening is Saturday from 10 a.m. to noon.
- Director Leung:
  - Presented with Chief Dell'Orfano in Aurora which went well.
- Director Shriver:
  - Presented at Centennial Airport.
- Chair Albee:
  - At the June 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting, there was discussion about the strategic plan and wove into a conversation about accreditation. He wants to make sure that everyone received the follow up memo from Chief Curtis. He received a text message inviting him to participate in a revenue survey from the City of Centennial, similar to ours, so it appears they are laying the groundwork for a potential November ballot item. He also attended the Arapahoe State of the County, and the majority of the conversation was around the things that they are doing with the 2024 tax increase and all was anchored and rooted in their strategic plan.

- Vice-Chair Anderson:
  - She and Chief Dell'Orfano will be presenting Monday at the Highlands Ranch Town Hall to get feedback on our revenue efforts.
  - Colorado Municipal League meets Tuesday through Friday and will be curious if there will be any buzz from the people that we serve about our revenue efforts.
  - Welcomed new Board Member Phillip. Chief Dell'Orfano stated that we will probably be doing an ad hoc orientation to get Phillip up to speed.
- Thank you letters/notes:
  - Thank you note to FF Dave Leikam and BC Mike O'Connor for their professional and excellent treatment of a citizen who was at a concert at Fiddlers Green.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION (UPON MOTION)**

N/A

**NEXT MEETING(S)**

The next Regular South Metro Fire Rescue District Board of Directors' meeting will take place on July 14, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at 9195 East Mineral Avenue, Centennial, CO.

The next Special South Metro Fire Rescue District Board of Directors' meeting will take place on July 21, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at 9195 East Mineral Avenue, Centennial, CO.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Vice-Chair Anderson adjourned the meeting at 7:36 p.m.

Attested by:  \_\_\_\_\_

Date: July 14, 2025